



advantage boating

There's No Other Lifestyle Like It!

Advantage Boating Marketing Strategy - 2016

As we enter our 24th year of introducing people to the sailing lifestyle and all that it has to offer, we are more eager than ever to attract new “wanna-be” sailors and turn them into lifelong passionate sailors. Building on our past successes, we want to do even better in 2016. One area we wanted to pay attention to was finding ways to share the pleasure of sailing with more people than ever before, and we drafted a marketing plan to help us do just that. But we can't do this all by ourselves. As instructors, you are valuable members of the Advantage Boating team, so we'd like to share our thoughts with you, and see how we can find ways to work together to increase the number of students we reach every year.

Our strategy:

As we thought about what we wanted to achieve, it became clear there were three things we wanted to focus on this year:

1. Increase registrations in Basic Cruising course
2. Increase Sail Share memberships
3. Increase community visibility

We identified a four-part strategy to achieve these goals:

1. Ask instructors and school alumni for help in obtaining referrals and to put a personal face to the image of the school.
2. Find ways to ease the transition from Basic Cruising to Sail Share membership and further sailing experiences, through social events, mentorship and information sessions.
3. Create a comfortable community atmosphere that encompasses new sailors, alumni and instructors, via social events and an online community.
4. Expand the school's visibility into the broader community, and use this visibility to promote the sport of sailing in the Ottawa area and to educate residents that sailing is accessible, affordable and fun.

As you can see, there's a lot to do. That's why we'd like to ask for your help.

What we would like to ask of you:

- ✓ **Help us promote the school** and its courses, to everyone you know....and even those you don't. You've already received a few posters in the mail, and we hope you've put them up in places around your neighbourhood. Don't be shy to ask for more - the more we put up, the more people will have a chance to find out about the school.
- ✓ **Tell your friends, family, neighbours and colleagues about us.** This year, we've instituted a special referral program: if someone you referred registers for a course, they will **get 10% off** the price of the course. All we need is a call or email from you to let us know who they are.
- ✓ **"Friend" us on Facebook**, then share our news onto your Facebook pages or Tweet about us to your followers. It's fast and easy to do, and gets the name of the school out there. Doris works hard at keeping the Facebook page up to date, so there's always lots of interesting news to post.
- ✓ **Become an Ambassador!** We will be posting new items on the Advantage Boating website, and we'd like to showcase our most valuable resource: you. We'll post a picture...tell your story of how you got into sailing....all to help students get to know who their instructors will be.
- ✓ **Talk to your students about Sail Share** as an affordable and easy way to practice the sailing skills they've just learned. To help you, we've produced a "Next Steps" brochure that will give students an idea of how they can continue sailing, once their Basic Cruising course is done.
- ✓ **Help us deliver "wow" moments to our students**, every time they're with us. Students take a sailing course because they already have a sense of the pleasure and - dare we say it - the romance of sailing. As instructors, you have a golden opportunity to add to that feeling when you're teaching. So be creative: encourage graduates to come out on the monthly grad cruises. Use students' last day on the water to go for a picnic or cruise to Aylmer Island. Look for ways to translate the learning experience into an unforgettable memory.

Of course, these are just our thoughts. We're eager to hear your ideas too, so don't be shy about letting us know of what else we can be doing. Before we even get started, though, **THANK YOU for all that you do** to support Advantage Boating; we could not have had 24 successful years without you!

Questions about any of this? We're here for you. Just call or email

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