

A Day in the Life of a Smart Marina

By Irena Cadez M.Sc.

There is no question regarding the transformative impact of smart technology on the future of the marina industry. The single most crucial step for marina owners and operators in embracing a smart technology approach is to automate and digitize marina processes extensively. This entails deploying automated and adaptive services and facilities that can be remotely accessed and managed via digital platforms from any device.

Exploring the experiences of marina personnel and customers on a normal day in a smart marina might be the best way for marina owners and operators to understand this transition. Smart technology has the ability to support all processes in marina operations, from automated reservations, boat arrivals and berthing payments to each customer's stay at the marina, extra services and each boater's final departure.

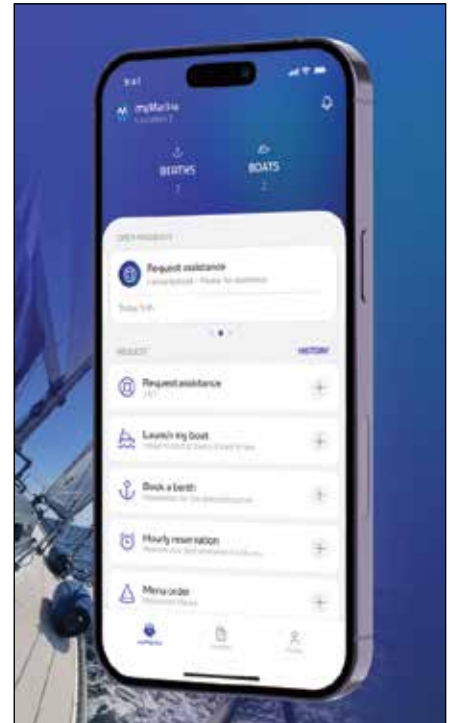
Breaking Down Processes

Smart reservations: The smart technology approach process begins when a boater makes an online berth

reservation. Many marina management software platforms, such as Marina Master, include a mobile app that marina managers and customers utilize. With the mobile app, managers accept the reservation, which is customized to suit the marina, and confirm the boat's arrival. Immediately after the reservation confirmation, the boat is on a system that is visible to all on-site marina personnel.

Advanced invoicing: Upon arrival, the customer receives a welcome email that outlines the marina services, service level agreement and basic terms and conditions. Through an app, customers are often able to schedule service orders such as boat lifts, painting or other amenities, like having coffee delivered to the boat. These services are automatically sent to marina personnel. Invoices are then generated and sent to the customers to confirm, sign and pay.

Automated contract creation: The platform then creates and sends a contract to the customer's email to sign digitally. Most contracts are pre-filled with the customer's data, allowing them to review it, along with the terms

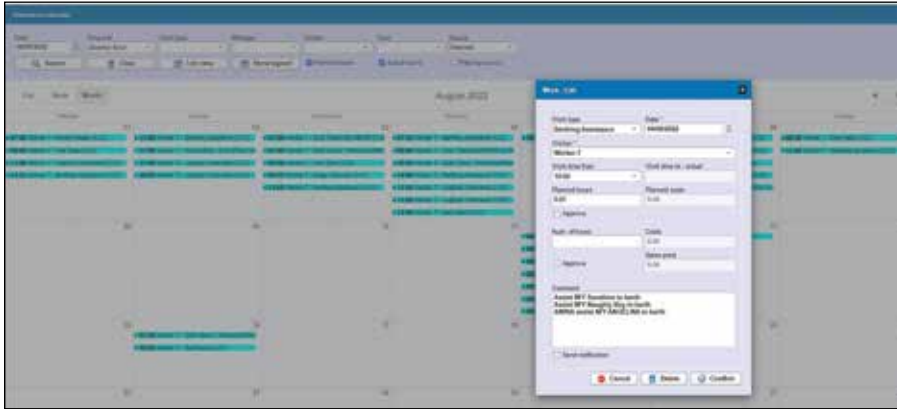


Customers are able to reserve slips and pay invoices on their cell phones thanks to marina management apps.

and conditions. Customers are able to upload additional documents, such as an insurance policy, and add comments before signing. Marina personnel are automatically informed that a new contract has been signed and confirmed. The fee for the contract and utilities is then invoiced and processed.



A digital map of the marina allows staff to determine which slips are open or reserved.



Boater information can be stored in one place, allowing marina owners and operators to know when customers arrive and depart.

Enhanced communication: With several boaters arriving and departing a marina every day, smart software can allow marina personnel to regularly and automatically update customers on their vessel's overview and safety status or send promotional content such as event invitations and facility updates. Marina staff can easily capture and send photos of vessels to customers from any mobile device.

Berthing control: The need to physically see if a boat has left a berth isn't a necessity with a software platform. While using CCTV cameras and regularly scheduled dock walks help to determine whether a boat is berthed or not, on the day of departure, a customer can simply leave without notifying the reception desk. The departure is automatically recorded, and berths are marked as empty on the system. After a

departure, customers will receive a thank you email from the marina, inviting them to share their experience and suggestions.

Improved Customer Service

Smart technology gives marina personnel a powerful tool for efficient planning and control, leading to increased productivity and revenue. Marina staff can redirect their focus toward meaningful client communication, nurturing empowered marina-customer relationships that foster an environment of superior customer service.

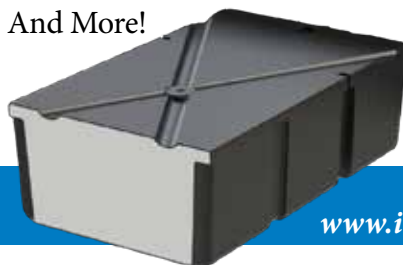
"I have worked in the marina industry for 20 years and have developed an acute awareness of how significant the role of an effective office management system is to the running of a successful marina property and business," said Scott Marshall, general manager of Breakwater Marina in Townsville, Australia. "Since working through the inevitable teething problems that come with the transference of such a bulky data set and setting parameters that are specific to our property and business,

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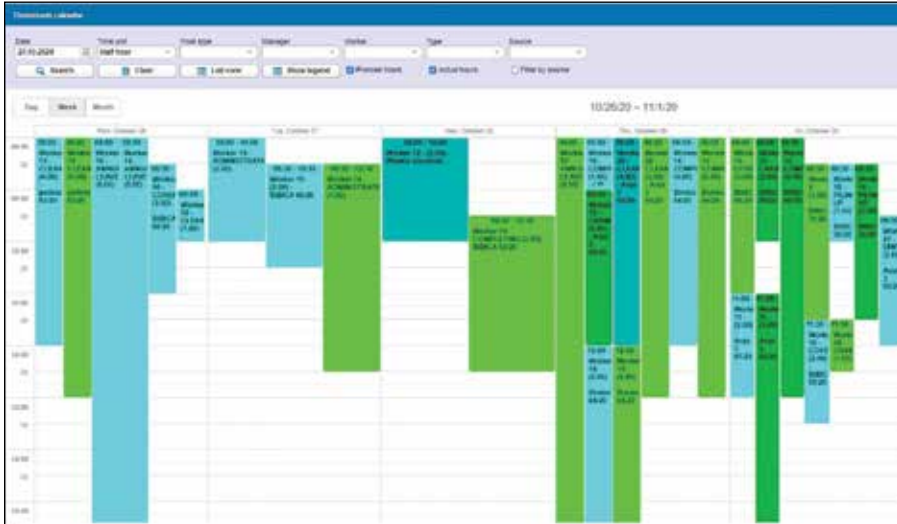


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Keeping track of staff time sheets is simplified and easily accessible within marina management software.

I've found our business has improved markedly. That's due in large part to having a far more efficient management system that allows staff, across the business, to spend more time in other productive areas of the business."

The ultimate goal is to make every

customer feel as if visiting a marina shouldn't be an urgent duty, but an unforgettable experience. The boater's journey through a smart marina can result in a seamless experience and increased loyalty. If marina management teams are able to keep their promises and

create an inviting experience, customers should have peace of mind knowing their expectations will always be met.

What's on the Horizon

Marina management software will continue to evolve as new technology is developed. Renewable energy systems and sustainable practices; Internet of Things (IoT), which include internet devices, cameras and sensors that monitor and control various operations; cybersecurity; and artificial intelligence (AI) are just a few technological advances that will impact the marine industry.

AI will likely have a significant impact on the world and maritime activities, including intelligent automation of operations, autonomous vessels, automated alerts, maintenance improvements and optimized fuel efficiency, all aimed to help marinas save operational costs and more. ⚓

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