

IBEX tradeshow Is a New Product Launch Pad

Artificial Intelligence helps bluewater sailors “see” what’s out there, and is a big show hit.

By Theresa Nicholson
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Oscar Navigation’s use of artificial intelligence in its Sentry navigation system is a bluewater sailor’s Wow moment. Oscar Navigation was recognized as an IBEX Innovation Award winner for its high-tech, forward-thinking product. *Theresa Nicholson*

The sailor’s innovative spirit was alive and well and on display at the International BoatBuilders’ Exhibition and Conference, this week in Tampa, Florida. IBEX is known for its display of new and

innovative products and after a 2020 hiatus, this year's IBEX 2021 three-day conference offered boaters that unique peak at the future and what is to come. IBEX took place September 28-30 at the Tampa Convention Center.



Guardtex's Kanvaslight integrates optical fibers into Bimini tops. Optical fiber strands inject light into marine fabric, creating a practical and unique way to light up canvas. Having introduced Kanvaslight in Europe, Chief engineer Jean-Come Maziere (left) looks forward to bringing the product to North America. *Theresa Nicholson*

Experiencing Oscar Navigation's use of artificial intelligence in its Sentry navigation system is a bluewater sailor's "Wow" moment. Oscar uses AI and real-time updated algorithms to recognize objects at sea. Mast-mounted cameras detect objects in the water and Sentry's software identifies the object and reports a visual on chart plotters and multifunction displays in the cockpit.

The system detects objects floating above the surface, using thermal readings to detect differences between the object's temperature and the surrounding seas. There are cameras for day sailing and night vision. AI can identify from its data base the difference between thousands of objects, and can alert the navigator if the spotted object is a drifting shipping container or a whale, for example. Oscar is currently working with bluewater sailors exploring Iceland and Greenland on collecting enough data to correctly identify icebergs.



Dometic brought its new Breathe Ionizer to the IBEX floor. Air purification is a hot topic during pandemic times. The Breathe Ionizer puts static electricity to work, using positive and negative ions to reduce pathogens and mold spores by attacking the core structures. *Theresa Nicholson*

Sentry was one of 14 products recognized in the IBEX 2021 Innovation Awards. Judges recognized 11 winners and three

honorable mentions among products submitted by marine trade companies. The new and innovative products, along with judges' observations include:

Safety Equipment: Oscar Navigation, Sentry: "The Sentry's advanced use of machine learning from millions of on-water events makes boating safer underway and at rest," said judge Ben Stein.

Honorable Mention: inteliPlug, The Vault.

Boat Care and Maintenance: Gibco Flex-Mold Inc., Re-Deck: "This is a comprehensive selection of gelcoat decking patterns that simplifies and reduces the cost of decking repair," said judge Bill Bishop.

Boatbuilding Methods and Materials: Sika Corporation, Adekit A236: "A great low temperature curing, high-strength, two-part adhesive that can be used in volume without discoloring gelcoat," said judge Bill Gius.

Deck Equipment and Hardware: LilliPad Marine, Ghost Mount: "Nearly invisible yet unbelievably strong, this versatile floor-mounting system is a true game-changer for both builders and consumers," said judge Brady Kay.



Classic marine products including West System joined the new and now in IBEX's three floors of exhibits. IBEX attracts exhibitors and visitors from across all spectrums of the marine trades. *Theresa Nicholson*

Honorable Mention: Seaworthy Innovations, Scuppers.

Electrical Systems: Discover Battery, Lithium Blue: "Completely serviceable in the field, Lithium Blue is sure to have an impact on this growing segment," said judge Adam Quandt. Honorable Mention: Raymarine, YachtSense Modular Digital Control System.

Entertainment: RideController, LED+: "This is an innovative use of neopixel LEDs and advances the art of yacht lighting," said judge Bill Bishop.

Furnishings and Interior Parts: Guardtex, Kanvaslight: “The flexibility of the optical fibers in this product is a versatile way to provide practical and decorative lighting integrated into a soft Bimini top,” said judge Steve Davis.

Mechanical Systems: XLYEM, Jabsco Quiet Flush E2: “A simple solution to a potentially messy situation,” said judge Ben Stein.

OEM Electronics: Volvo Penta, Assisted Docking: “Volvo’s Assisted Docking lets the skipper take a breath in stressful situations while giving them pinpoint control of the vessel,” said judge Ben Stein.

Propulsion Parts, Propellers: HydroFin, Super Fly: “A well-engineered hydrofoil system that significantly improves the ride and performance of any double pontoon boat,” said judge Brady Kay.

Trailers, Parts and Trailer Accessories: Innovative Group Inc., Roller Bunk: “A new way to avoid power loading and boat launch erosion that can be adapted to an existing trailer,” said judge Adam Quandt.



IBEX returned to the Tampa Convention Center for its three-day 30th Anniversary show, September 28-30. IBEX includes indoor and outdoor exhibits, along with industry training, marine trade professional seminars, Tech Talks, and new product demonstrations. *Theresa Nicholson*

The IBEX Innovation Awards for the 30th Anniversary Show was judged by Boating Writers International (bwi.org). IBEX is the marine industry's largest technical trade event in North America. IBEX is owned and produced by the National Marine Manufacturers Association (nmma.org) and RAI Amsterdam (rai.nl). For information visit ibexshow.com.