

MOBILE

Wally introduces yacht racing app in anticipation of continued market growth

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Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup 2015

By FORREST CARDAMENIS

Yacht manufacturer Wally is sailing uncharted seas with an industry-first mobile application.

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Wally's owner's association and race organize Wally Class is touted by the brand as the first dedicated app for a sail racing division. With yacht racing undergoing a popularity surge, a mobile app will help get the next generation of consumers interested.

"The yachting market is very conservative and Wally has always led the pack, introducing all the main innovations today used by the industry," said Monica Paolazzi, communications and public relations at **Wally**. "Similarly, we'd expect the market to respond also to the Wally Class app generating more interest around our racing division."

First to finish

Since 1994, Wally has been building its yachts with carbon fiber, making them ideal for racing. When Wally Class was founded in 1999, it remained ahead of the curve, as superyacht racing was still a burgeoning sport.



Wally Class app

Racing's popularity has grown significantly since, with the new app also being ahead of the curve. Wally Class' model has helped spur the popularity of racing among its owners.

With Wally Class, teams are penalized if the owner is not the one steering the yacht, whereas most forms of racing have professionals with experience at America's Cup, Volvo Ocean Race or the Olympics. Keeping the real owners of the yacht involved in the race rather than subjugating them to professionals makes the sport more appealing to potential clients.

The app is geared not just at current owners, but also as an accessible point of entry for prospective clients. Hence, the app includes a brief summary of the brand upon opening and includes a tab with contact information.

The younger prospective clients Wally is targeting are digital natives, making an app an intuitive way for them to engage with yacht racing. Additionally, the increase in mobile use among all consumers gives established clients and racers a more convenient way to access information.



Wally Class app

The app includes a racing calendar with significant races, allowing users to look at the results, the fleet and the standings of each. Racing information is updated live and includes access to leg-by-leg performance. All pages can be downloaded and printed.

Users can also sort by yacht, with a grid showing which race each yacht is participating in. Clicking on a yacht will take the user directly to the relevant section of Wally's Web site with photos and descriptions, while yacht club names will redirect toward their respective site.

The Wally Class app is currently available in both iTunes and Google Play stores.

Yachts on the rise

Trends in wealth distribution and increase suggest that superyacht sales could increase with proper marketing, making this an ideal time to get ahead on the emerging market segment.

Superyachts provide a peerless luxury for the ultra-wealthy, but selling the segment on the industry is still a challenge, according to an executive at Wealth-X.

Superyacht owners make up an elite portion of the elite, as the 4,476 of them average \$10 million at resale while Wealth-X's ultra-high-net-worth threshold begins at \$30 million, meaning many of the 212,000 of them cannot afford superyachts. The segment is still concentrated in Anglophone nations, but the changes in the industry are slowly making the product more appealing to a broader portion of the ultra-wealthy ([see story](#)).

Moreover, changes wrought by the digital economy are leading yachting startups to target millennials in a different way.

New luxury travel company Immidia is launching its app with a promise to be Uber for yachts.

Immidia will allow consumers to hail a yacht to charter for private use, with delivery promised in no more than a couple hours. The new digital economy has encouraged a consumer mindset based around immediately fulfilling wants and needs, and the app represents a further step in the direction of on-demand luxury ([see story](#)).

"[The app aims to reach] new millennials, capturing their technology and digital interest to bring them to our community, Ms. Paolazzi said. [It taps into the] increasing interest and passion about racing superyachts."