

INDUSTRY TALK What do UAE brokers think the 2015 season has in store for them?

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Setting up shop

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While there is a high degree of confident expectation among regional yachting companies in regards the growth opportunity and potential returns of 2015, ART MARINE has reinforced its expectation with the opening of a new beachfront office in the lavish grounds of Emirates Palace Hotel in Abu Dhabi. Overlooking the iconic hotel and positioned close to all the ministries and palaces of the capital, it also benefits from being metres away from the luxury yacht haven, Emirates Palace Marina, which is also under ART MARINE management. Presented in true ART MARINE fanfare at an evening soiree attended by HH Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak al Nahyan, we caught up with CEO Gregor Stinner to find out how 2014 treated ART MARINE, and the vision behind re-opening an Abu Dhabi showroom.

One year on from your relaunch, how has the new ART Marine been received?

ART MARINE has successfully implemented its new business outlook and gone through a considerable re-structuring. With the change in brands to a more luxury oriented portfolio, it is our continual objective to re-introduce the best brands in the world. With Riva being ART MARINE's 'halo brand', we have already achieved significant sales and our aim is to become once again the best dealer for the shipyards we represent. Our customer base and clients have recognised this positive change, and the trust and confidence in all our activities has been re-established. We constantly strive to aim at maximum customer satisfaction whether soliciting a particular brand and yacht, or with our extensive scope of aftersales services and marine products to a larger spectrum of clients.



ART MARINE launched their new showroom at Emirates Palace Hotel with usual ART MARINE fanfare with a gala event attended by local dignitaries including HH Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak al Nahyan



and bespoke approach, engaging with our clients on larger projects and yachts. Our clientele in Abu Dhabi expects us to be with a full presence in their vicinity catering for their needs and convenience.

Do you see market growth outside of Dubai?
Naturally we believe in the entire region, with an already established set-up in Bahrain where we have our own Country Manager with a team that works in collaboration with our various competence centres in Dubai. Whether this is sales oriented or customer service, our five-strong team in Bahrain is actively engaged with all our divisions offering the same services that we have available in the UAE. Our next step, which is planned for the first quarter of 2015, is to replicate a further set-up in Oman for which we are already in discussions with our partners in Oman. Not to forget that Oman offers a fantastic array of "Destinations" for the passionate yachting enthusiasts who visit Oman regularly for weekend trips and excursions. Given the existing services and marina

also present when and if they need us. This is with a fully-fledged 360-degree leisure yachting approach, with activities ranging from yacht consultation and sales, to aftersales service, marine products, yacht valet service and last, but not least, marina management.

What is the purpose of establishing a footprint in Abu Dhabi?

Abu Dhabi, being the capital of the UAE and with its vast array of potential clients from high net worth individuals to royalty is for our mega yacht segment, which is of utmost importance to us. We are more-and-more focused on a custom

Is the opening of an office / showroom in Abu Dhabi a new strategic direction or part of a greater plan?

ART MARINE announced exactly a year ago that we will expand our presence in the UAE and the first phase has been accomplished with the opening of our first Boutique showroom at Emirates Palace in Abu Dhabi. The aim with this new high-end showroom is to enable our esteemed clientele to meet with our teams in maximum privacy and in a setting that is ideal for luxury oriented consultation, coupled with our management of the 169-berth superyacht marina beside it. Abu Dhabi is the capital of the nation and it was imperative that ART MARINE had its presence there. With the inauguration of our new Boutique showroom at Emirates Palace, we have assured our esteemed customers in Abu Dhabi that we are not only close to them, but





ART MARINE CEO Greg Stinner is confident in the brand strategy for attracting yachtowners into luxurious European brands through focusing on sales and a strong customer base

management, we seek to increase client interest in visiting Oman more often by offering the services that would enhance their experiences and conveniences. Equally, we wish to regain our foothold in Oman, regaining some of our most esteemed customers there.

Where do you see the new directions, type and geographically, for ART Marine in terms of sales and management?

For now with a strong focus on the UAE, Bahrain, Oman and Qatar we are quite satisfied and occupied maintaining a solid presence which requires dedication, perseverance and the right amount of professionalism to cement our capabilities there. On a managerial level we are sufficiently sourced and what we now need to focus on is strong sales and continue to create a solid customer base. Egypt, perhaps later in 2015, will be added provided the market indicates that yacht sales are coming back to its original levels prior 2011.

Which of your products have been most popular over the past year?

With a very strong focus promoting and re-introducing our 'halo brand' Riva, we have made the strongest advances. Thus far we have managed to sell in excess of USD 20m to new customers who were looking for something more up-scale. It definitely wasn't easy when competing with brands that are a lot more

Customers have become more selective to their real needs and requirements



affordable, but there are clients who simply want to be different and own the best they can buy. We have also made a lot of progress in regards Marine Products and After Sales Services, while simultaneously developing and enhancing our marina portfolio with three new marinas added as management projects and many more who joined our "Destination Program".

Any predictions for the future?

The leisure yachting market is unpredictable, but we're witnessing that the demand for luxury yachts and mega yachts is gradually increasing as the customer base is regaining confidence and the overall economic situation in the GCC is very positive. Customers have become more selective and have also matured in understanding what their real needs and requirements are. Moreover, the pre-owned market is thinning-out as the best deals have been concluded and the second hand market no longer offers killer-prices as it did post-2008 and thereafter. Clients also want to have up-to-date technology and design

incorporated in their yachts, which directs them again to new yacht sales rather than trying to get rock-bottom bargains. Also our customer base is no longer looking for the largest boat with the lowest price, as they are now more focused on what they really require, whether this be the brand itself, the type of yacht and/or the overall features

offered that meet their needs. Modern and new yachts offer today many advantages within a more confined size, but still offering volume and latest technologies incorporated while also offering better performing engines with lower running cost. Everyone realises that the purchase price is no longer the main determinant, but moreso the running and operational costs, and potential resale value down the road.

What were your most successful event participation of the past year?

For ART MARINE all our events and strong participation in all neighbouring boat shows have been the highlights and a great success. It has generated confidence in our clientele, as well allowed us to reposition ourselves being once again the number one "360 degree Leisure Yachting Enterprise". We believe 2015 will generate many more opportunities for ART MARINE, not only in sales and brand recognition, but equally for our divisional activities and regional footprint.

www.artmarine.ae