



ART MARINE THE VISIONARY

Known in some circles as Riva's greatest enthusiast, after establishing the exclusive brand's number one "emerging market" dealership in Egypt, Greg Stinner has taken the helm of ART Marine to pioneer the region's best-known 360-degree leisure marine enterprise. Yachts sat down with Greg for a discussion of the future of this leading marine business in the region.

By **Shaun Ebelthite** Images **Natasha Boddey**





Greg, how did your appointment as the new CEO of ART Marine come about?

Well, since ART Marine was founded in 2005, it has been very successful in the various regional markets in which we operate. ART Marine has built a reputation as one of the leading companies in the leisure marine sector throughout the region. After the economic downturn, certain measures had to be thought through, and together with our main shareholder The Abraaj Group, we had to decide how to progress. Sales were down across the board, for ART MARINE and all yacht dealerships in the region, and in fact the world. I am ready and excited for the challenge of setting up a coherent, lean and clean organisation that is talented, accountable and professional.

Emirates Palace Marina is a flagship destination within the Art Marine Marinas network

So you're here to re-launch the brand and take it in a new direction?

Yes, we are essentially re-launching ART Marine as a brand that is focused on meeting the needs and requirements of the most discerning clientele in the region. We do not want to be perceived as an average yacht dealership and aftersales set-up. We want to be the most dedicated 360-degree leisure yachting enterprise, offering all necessary services our esteemed clients require to enjoy a trouble-free, pleasurable and memorable yachting experience. Instead of selling 30 to 40 'mass market' boats and yachts annually, we will be selling fewer yachts of a higher value with timeless designs and state-of-the-art technology. ART Marine will cater to the

most discerning clientele who not only want a fantastic product, but also expect and deserve 100 per cent peace of mind and an enjoyable yachting experience. This is the new direction we are taking, our goal is to be again the most celebrated leisure yachting enterprise in the region.

And how do you intend to accomplish this?

For a start, we will take on perhaps two or three really exclusive brands, for which we are in the final stages of negotiations at the moment. These brands are part of one of the most exclusive groups in the industry, and part of our joint strategy is to eventually represent them for all brands in the markets we are already active in, namely the UAE, Bahrain, Oman and Qatar. We will not take on any other brands other than these because we believe that one cannot be a master of all trades and there is great added value to be found in representing the brands of one particular group. It makes after sales much easier in terms of

Now is the time to reinvent ART Marine with a new image and focus

standardisation of parts and processes, ultimately benefiting our clients the most. All training is on the same supplier's parts and technologies, which rationalises our spare parts contingency, catering for inter-changeable components, which are normally not randomly available.

What are the plans for ART MARINE's existing divisions?

All existing subsidiaries will remain an integral part of ART Marine. We have consolidated our activities into five main divisions: yacht sales and brokerage, after sales and customer service, marine products, marina management, plus our latest addition a fully fledged yacht valet service. All five of these divisions cater for a fully integrated 360-degree leisure yachting experience. We are not here to simply offer stock-boats for which we may have taken a commitment, but moreover to specify and personalise the yachts we offer. Also our aftersales service division will accompany and deliver from the point when a yacht is being ordered, getting prepared for pre-



ART Marine's aftersales department will be reorganised to focus on specialist yacht services



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delivery inspection in order to deliver to perfection what our clients require and desire. We have a dedicated team of 25 specialists who, when and if we have a yacht ready for delivery, will be on-site and carry out detailed pre-delivery inspections, taking control of quality and making sure we deliver excellence. For our marina management division we shall continue expanding its already significant portfolio of marinas under our management. Currently, we are managing 4 marinas worldwide, of which perhaps our crown jewel is the Emirates Palace Marina. We are seeking a greater presence in the MENA and South Asia regions and are targeting significant marinas. We are currently finalising a deal with partners in China and we have our eyes on a particular marina in Dubai. As part of our growth strategy we introduced 'Destinations' ART Marine's network of top-notch marinas. 'Destinations' allows more collaboration opportunities between marinas internationally by offering reciprocal benefits for all the marinas affiliated with the ART Marine Marinas network. 'Destinations' membership represents a professional recognition of quality, excellent services and outstanding facilities.

You also mentioned a 'yacht valet' service; will this be a new division?

Yes, our yacht valet division will be a new service targeting the day-to-day maintenance and conditioning needs of our existing clients, gradually extending this service to owners of yachts outside our portfolio. This includes specialised divers who check beneath the yacht periodically to clean and remove marine growth below the water line, making sure that propellers, shafts and rudders are properly aligned and cleaned and ensuring anodes are intact. We offer various packages including restoration of gel coats, carrying-out interior detailing and treating the teak woods on the deck. We shall also start offering 3M coating on windscreens and windows, which significantly reduces the greenhouse effect of the yacht interiors by up to 80 per cent, keeping energy requirements and the extensive use of air-conditioning at minimum.

This valet service can always be used in conjunction with our service department so that the yacht can be prepped before and after maintenance and repair work is done. We will be the only company offering specialist insurance for our work, so the yacht is fully protected. The whole idea is to protect value for the owner, guaranteeing a longer life for all components and structures, maintaining and increasing the yacht's re-sale value for the client. For ART Marine there is nothing more important than having a satisfied and happy client. Our promise is to fulfil our clients' wishes in the shortest response time possible with the most professionalism and serve to our best aptitude.



ART Marine will offer a 360-degree solution, from yachts sales to crew management and training

You mentioned Qatar as one of the market's in which you'll be representing your new brands?

ART Marine recognizes the importance of this growing market and has made the strategic decision to re-establish its past presence in one of the most prestigious marinas starting with a «bespoke sales boutique» opening in early 2014. Given its proximity to the UAE, ART Marine will be in a position to cater to the needs of the most discerning clients, replicating the services provided by the divisions established in our homes base Dubai |