

MARKETING GUIDEBOOK



For Boaters, By Boaters™

Version 1.0

December 8, 2017



MARKETING GUIDEBOOK



Purpose of This Guidebook

The purpose of the America's Boating Club® Marketing Guidebook is to help squadrons, districts, and national committees understand the background, philosophy and strategy for marketing the United States Power Squadrons®. We are promoting and advertising our organization around the America's Boating Club® concept, brand, and market image. In order to connect these new concepts with our traditional logo and actual name, there will be a transition period using both logos and the words *America's Boating Club®* along with *United States Power Squadrons®*. The timeline for this transition is not certain, but may be brief.

This Guidebook contains information on how to market membership and education, use the new logo and tagline, and understand specifics on rebranding our organization as America's Boating Club®. We have included many links to important documents that you will need such as PowerPoint presentations, videos, templates, samples, and other information. The text in this document introduces major concepts and provides the links to these critical files that, together, serve as the complete Guidebook. You will need a good internet connection. We recommend that you download each file and save it to your computer or a USB drive so that you do not have to download it again each time you use this document.

The Guidebook is a living document and will be updated from time to time as more information becomes available and as we go through the transition period.

For questions, concerns, or suggestions please contact:

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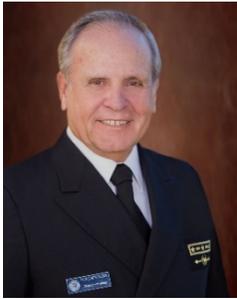
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1. A Message From Chief Commander Louie Ojeda



At the national Annual Meeting in Orlando FL in February 2017, I unveiled the concept of promoting the United States Power Squadrons with a new descriptor: *America's Boating Club*. The announcement was received with excitement and enthusiasm, but of course there were questions about how we were going to achieve our objective. America's Boating Club is a much more fitting label for who we are and what we do. It is a more descriptive, modern, and dynamic title that encompasses boating fun, learning boating skills, and working to improve the boating experience.

After the meeting, I asked the marketing leadership to assemble an ad hoc task force to take the concept further, develop a logo and tagline, and create a marketing strategy. I am happy to report that they succeeded, and the initial fruits of their labor is evident in the marketing approach contained in this America's Boating Club Marketing Guidebook. Special thanks are due to V/C Mary Paige Abbott, R/C Paul Mermelstein, Stf/C Glen Sherman, Stf/C Shirley Heald, P/R/C John Malatak, and HQ Marketing Director Tammy Brown.

I have created a short video that explains our vision for our great organization. It was shown at the fall district conferences and is available by downloading the link that follows.

Thank you all for your dedication to the United States Power Squadrons. We ARE America's Boating Club.

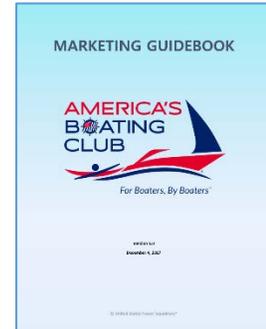


Click the image above to download the PowerPoint file containing the video. It is a large file and will take a few minutes. Save it to your computer and/or USB drive to avoid downloading each time.

2. How to Use This Guidebook

This Guidebook contains a great deal of information, ideas, suggestions, and material. It will take some time to review and digest it all. Do it in stages, and share it with others, to help integrate the information with your squadron, district, or national outreach and marketing programs.

1. First read all of the guidebook text for a comprehensive overview.
2. Download, review, and understand the PowerPoint presentation in Section 6. This presentation will be useful when discussing these concepts with the ExCom and squadron members.
3. Download other videos and PowerPoint presentations and save them to your computer or USB drive, as you get to them. Become familiar with them for discussion with other members.
4. Share this Guidebook among ExCom officers and review the material in the PowerPoint presentation mentioned above.
5. Publicize the America's Boating Club concept and marketing philosophy within your squadron.
 - ◆ Use the article in Section 6 as a starting point for your newsletter.
 - ◆ Present the material in the PowerPoint file and accompanying script to your members.
6. Discuss how your squadron can leverage the new concept and reinvigorate your marketing activities. See Section 3, below, to help you begin.



3. Let's Get Started

Rebranding and rethinking our marketing approach can be challenging. However, just like many organizations and businesses, we must adapt our image to meet the needs of the marketplace.

3.1 Organization

At the national level, the Marketing Committee (MARCOM) is a separate committee under the Vice Commander and National Executive Officer. MARCOM's role is to establish marketing strategy, messaging, imaging, branding, and other aspects of our marketing approach to promote membership and education. Other committees such as Public Affairs, Membership, Squadron Development, Communications, the Educational Department and others also are involved in outreach to the boating community, either directly or through assisting squadrons.

At the squadron level, it may be different. Typically, there is no separate Marketing committee. Most squadrons have a PRO for public relations, a Membership chair and an SEO, but not a cohesive and comprehensive marketing team. Consequently, these positions should be supplemented with interested members and ExCom officers.

Recommendation: Depending upon your needs, talent pool, time, and local culture, you may want to assemble an ad hoc group to serve as an overall guide or coordinator of your various outreach and



promotional activities. It should have EXCOM support and direct participation. Some squadrons have already done this or something similar in order to synergize their marketing efforts.

3.2 Recommended Steps

Examine the following steps and apply them to your squadron's or district's assessment to update your marketing and promotion efforts:

- Determine how the squadron/district “lives the logo” by providing on-the-water boating activities, additional social events, a range of educational opportunities, and service to the boating community. What needs to be improved and enhanced?
 - ◆ Are you emphasizing on-the-water activities such as raft ups, cruises, fishing tournaments, water skiing, and other water sports?
 - ◆ Do you conduct a sufficient number of public educational events such as America's Boating Course and seminars?
 - ◆ Are you conducting VSEs, participating in Coop Charting, and other public service activities visible to area boaters?
 - ◆ Are you promoting these activities through advertising, signage, articles in regional boating publications, boating-related calendars, etc.?
 - ◆ Is the website up to date, with educational and social events highlighted? Are there enough entries to attract attention?
 - ◆ Is there an *active* Facebook page with frequent posts?
 - ◆ Are members welcoming, friendly, informal, and accommodating to everyone?
- Decide on local branding, as suggested in this Guidebook. A sample of how you might use your burgee and the new logo are shown in Section 5, within the PowerPoint presentation in Section 6, and in the Brand Standards Manual downloadable from Section 7.
- Ensure your website reflects the new branding approach, messaging, and look & feel of America's Boating Club. Make sure it is up to date and shows all upcoming events and educational opportunities. Provide contacts. Show pictures of the desired demographic you want to attract, not just current members. Ensure the wording and presentation reflects the informal and fun aspect of squadron life, in addition to educational benefits. Avoid formality and a focus on the past.
- Review and update all squadron brochures, PowerPoint presentations, and other materials to reflect the new branding approach. Materials and examples are provided in the Guidebook.
- Create a viable and sustainable marketing strategy that works for your squadron. You will need volunteer resources and perhaps a budget. Develop a systemic approach that includes boat shows and other public events, public education such as America's Boating Course and seminars, advertising and publishing articles in local/regional boating publications, and public speaking engagements. More ideas and suggestions are available in Section 8.

One size does not fit all, of course. But squadrons face similar challenges and can use many of the concepts in this Guidebook. Please review the material and discuss it in detail so you can adapt these ideas to revitalize your marketing program.

4. Why Change?

Times have changed. Many organizations, including the United States Power Squadrons, have had difficulty in attracting members who are interested in joining their organization and participating in traditional ways of previous generations. Today's boaters are more diverse, with different interests, and with less time devoted to boating activities. Families seem to be busier, technology has changed entertainment and learning, the economic downturn a few years ago has had a lasting impact, introductory boating courses can be found for free on the internet, and traditional baby-boomer boaters are aging out.

The recognition of our name is not as pervasive among today's boaters as it once was. Many boaters have not heard of the United States Power Squadrons or they get us mixed up with other organizations. This situation has been exacerbated by leaving each squadron to develop its own marketing approach and image. Consequently, squadrons do not appear to belong to the same organization. Now, however, with a new national marketing strategy and advertising campaign, squadrons can better leverage the strength of the national image along with their local flavor and identity.

Additionally, we have ourselves continued to promote an image of a 100 year old, somewhat stodgy organization focused on boating safety and education. Today of course, most boaters learn what they need online or through experience, and do not consider themselves unsafe boaters. So our traditional image is not working.

Our name, the *United States Power Squadrons*, does not resonate with the public. What does a "squadron" mean? What does "power" mean? Nowhere does it imply that we are a boating organization.

Consequently, we need to update our image in order to appeal to today's boaters. It must identify who we are, and why someone should be interested.

Today's boaters are different from traditional members.

- Many have smaller boats, often less than 26 feet LOA, and on a trailer. Many boat on rivers and lakes and are not interested in learning piloting and navigation. Instead, they enjoy water sports, fishing, and hunting.
- Today's boaters fit boating into their lifestyle, but it may not be a primary focus. They have busy lives, and often have older children at home.
- Although some have mid-sized boats and go out in navigable waters, the number of younger boaters is less than those that are/were in the baby-boomer and older generations. That may change over time, but there is no guarantee that smaller boaters will upsize later on. We must reach them where they are currently.



We need to attend to all kinds of boaters including both our current type of member and future members across all kinds of boating venues. **Our target market segments and audiences are discussed in more detail in the PowerPoint presentation referenced in Section 6. Please download.**

We know from our growing squadrons, and from extensive market analysis by USPS and the boating industry, that our growth path must involve fun, action, togetherness, and a dynamic learning experience, both formally and informally. We have now developed an image that shows we are active, vibrant, and relevant to today's boaters.

We are a boating organization first and foremost. We support our members with interesting learning experiences. In short, "we boat together, learn together, and help each other and the boating community". This is identical to our triad of education, fraternity, and civic service, but with more modern language and a more direct statement of the benefits of our organization. Additionally, we are a welcoming and inclusive organization. We want everyone to feel comfortable.

Since announcing America's Boating Club at the 2017 Annual Meeting in Orlando, there has been tremendous support and enthusiasm for the new marketing name and logo. The name is exactly what we are: a boating organization. It allows for explanation of all that we do, from education, to fun, to service.

The logo is modern, and includes elements of power, sail and paddle craft. It shows fluidity, movement, and water. It demonstrates action and is forward looking.



Now, we need to leverage this image. Note that an image is not just a logo and tagline. Our image must be reflected in everything we do including boating with friends, dynamic learning experiences, helping other boaters, and enjoying the boating lifestyle together. As one squadron put it: "Let's live the logo".

5. Rebranding Approach

So how do we transition from where we are to where we need to be, to market ourselves more dynamically?

5.1 National Branding

We will start with dual branding, using the official name and ship's wheel logo along with the new logo for America's Boating Club. Both will appear on posters, headers, banners, and so on. This will allow both members and non-members, who do know us as the United States Power Squadrons, to identify who we are and how we will be promoting ourselves. It also builds on whatever name recognition that we have currently.

Over time, we will migrate to the new imagery of America's Boating Club, which is cleaner and less confusing than dual branding. Some examples may be found via Section 6; however, note that while we

will migrate as quickly as possible, we will monitor and measure how well it's going, and tailor our speed accordingly.

This approach will be used in a national advertising campaign during the winter and spring of 2018.

5.2 Squadrons and Districts

Similarly, squadrons and districts may incorporate both the traditional ship's wheel logo and the new America's Boating Club logo, along with their burgee. However, the result may look cluttered, dilute the local and national brand, and confuse the viewer. Instead, squadrons and districts may elect to migrate to the new logo and their burgee. Examples are shown in the PowerPoint presentation referenced in the next section. A sample concept is shown below (note the registration and trade marks in the heading):



Finally, remember, we are still who we are. We are still the United States Power Squadrons, but we are also America's Boating Club.

5.3 Timeline

The national organization is transitioning to the new identity, and so are squadrons and districts. The transition period is uncertain, and will be tested along the way, but it is currently estimated at 6-12 months. Squadrons may need more time to update their materials and website, of course, but many squadrons are excited to get started.

Based on feedback, early indications are that some squadrons will use their burgee and the new logo, instead of the traditional ship's wheel logo. Additionally, some squadrons are moving to promoting themselves as *America's Boating Club of XXXX*. Conversely, depending upon whether the squadron name is highly recognized in the boating community, you may want to keep the traditional name, but use the new name as a descriptor such as "XXXX Sail and Power Squadron: We Are America's Boating Club".

6. Discuss This With Your Members

Some of the foregoing, and more, is contained in a Power Point presentation that you can deliver and discuss with your members. We've included detailed instructions and a suggested script that you can use as a guide.

After you download and review both the slides and script, we would be happy to address any questions. Download by clicking on the images below:



Save to your computer and/or USB drive to avoid downloading each time.

Also, there is a great newsletter article by Stf/C Eileen Rickard that presents the overall impact at the local level. Download it [HERE](#) and use it with your squadron to help members understand what is, and is not, affected at this time. It is in MS Word and you may modify it as necessary.

7. New Marketing Materials

We are in the process of updating all of our brochures, presentations, advertisements, stationery, and other marketing materials and templates. As we progress, we will issue updates to this document and/or notices to squadron, district, and national leaders about what's new. Some materials are already available and some are under development.

We have inventoried the vast amount of material that has been developed and distributed, whether currently in-use or not, and obsolete or not. Some will be discontinued, others will be updated, and some will be newly developed.

Here is a brief summary of items that have been updated and are available for download at this time. Click on the images.

- **America's Boating Club logos** – Click on the image at right to access the approved logos webpage. There are four (4) versions including:
 - ◆ Rectangular
 - ◆ Rectangular, with the tagline “For Boaters, By Boaters”
 - ◆ Horizontal banner-type logo
 - ◆ Horizontal banner-type with tagline

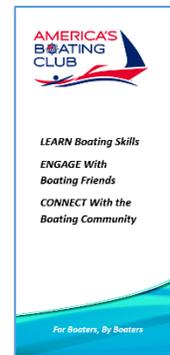


Each logo is available in several graphics file formats including png and vector files.

- **Brand Standards Manual** -- Guiding principles on layout and logo usage, specifications for colors, suggestions for application to marketing materials and stationery, social media, and so on. This document will be updated as we progress in our timeline for emphasizing America's Boating Club.



- **America's Boating Club Trifold Brochure** – The revised brochure may be downloaded and used at any squadron event, boat shows, public boating education session, or anywhere else where you want to recruit students and members. The brochure briefly describes our organization and benefits of membership, and stresses education by listing courses and seminars.



- **America's Boating Club Intro Slides** – Like the trifold brochure, these 10 slides encapsulate the benefits of membership and list courses and seminars. These slides are simple to present and should be a key component of any public boating education session, public seminars, boat shows, and other times you interface with the public.



- **Elevator Speech** – In response to demand, we suggest a few words that may be used to very briefly describe who we are. The message and the words are consistent with the intent of the America's Boating Club marketing philosophy. Remember, we get only a few seconds of attention. Use this or something like it in your own words to start a conversation:

"America's Boating Club is a nation-wide boating organization. We learn together, boat together, and help each other and other boaters on the water and on land. Our members learn boating skills, engage with boating friends, and connect with the boating community."

- **Promotional videos** – We have an excellent selection of America's Boating Club promotional videos, developed by P/D/C Marty Lafferty, creator of the USPS Digital Media Library videos on America's Boating Channel. These are excellent videos to use at all public encounters such as boat shows, public education events, dinner meetings and so on. They can be embedded in squadron websites, and posted on squadron Facebook pages. The 30- and 60-second spots can be provided to local broadcast television stations and cable systems to telecast as public service announcements. There is a selection of lengths ranging from 30 seconds to 10 minutes, and

some focus on specific demographic markets. The following links will allow you to download individual videos or all at one time:

1. "This Is United States Power Squadrons®" (Full-Length) [Download](#) / [Stream](#)
2. "This Is United States Power Squadrons®" (0:30 Version) [Download](#) / [Stream](#)
3. "For Boaters, By Boaters" (Full-Length) [Download](#) / [Stream](#)
4. "For Boaters, By Boaters" (0:30 Version) [Download](#) / [Stream](#)
5. "We Are America's Boating Club™" (Full-Length) [Download](#) / [Stream](#)
6. "We Are America's Boating Club™" (0:30 Version) [Download](#) / [Stream](#)
7. "Join USPS America's Boating Club™" (0:60 Spot) [Download](#) / [Stream](#)
8. Promo Package Compilation (Videos Play Continuously) [Download](#)

Here's a link to the download folder [USPS AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB™ Promotional Videos Package](#) containing all the videos.

- **Power Point Template** – For creating new Power Point presentations showing national branding, you can use this template for consistent branding. Squadrons can replace one of the national logos with your burgee.



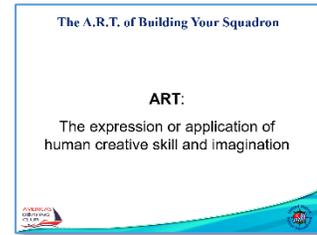
8. Marketing Techniques and Ideas

Based upon material we have presented at national and district meetings previously, we developed several Power Point presentations that should help squadrons and districts in their marketing efforts. We have heard positive feedback from squadron and district leaders that they have used parts or all of these approaches in boat shows, overall marketing strategies, promotion of educational programs, and so on. Please review this material with your members and see if they are useful to you. Click the images to the right to download the files and save it to your computer.

- **Boat Shows and Public Events** – The information in this presentation has been used by several districts and squadrons in preparing for regional boat shows and training squadron members in how to set up and successfully run a booth. Topics include booth layout and contents, common sense rules, messages we want to convey, salesmanship for non-salespersons, and follow-up.



- **The A.R.T. of Building Your Squadron** – This PowerPoint presentation contains many ideas for promoting your squadron. Note that while it was created prior to the advent of America’s Boating Club, and some of the graphics may be outdated, the contents are still quite useful. Topics include techniques and ideas for publicizing your squadron events and educational opportunities, as well as a focus on member recruitment.
- **Marketing Works** – This presentation uses a whimsical manufacturing metaphor to demonstrate a way of thinking about marketing your squadron. It provides a conceptual model, marketing and PR context, helpful ideas and hints and overviews existing resources for you to access.
- **Proven Marketing** – This is a very practical and understandable program of techniques to “fill the seats” at public boating education sessions, and an opportunity to recruit new members. It was created by P/D/C Susan Ryan and has worked well for several squadrons in the Northeast, and has consistently drawn over 40 students to public boating courses. This program can be replicated anywhere. It takes effort, all marketing does, but these techniques are very manageable.



9. Feedback, Questions, Suggestions

Thank you for your support of the America’s Boating Club marketing initiative of the United States Power Squadrons. If you have any questions, suggestions, or feedback please let us know. Also, please tell us how you are doing and about any successes or challenges.

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