



## ABC- Just One More! "Marketing Results In Students"

**Question:** Our flotilla has the instructors, the facilities, and the desire to offer more ABC courses. How do we get enough students to fill all of our classes?

**Answer:** Division 10 in 8CR has raised quite a few eyebrows with their large number of ABC certifications in 2005. In 2006, Flotilla 10-4, working with other flotillas in the division, expects to certify about 275 students in a non-mandatory boater safety education state. The key to success, they say, is effective marketing.

"Marketing allows our classes to be taught in four different locations around Division 10. The marketing network extends to marine dealers, marine supporting businesses, marinas, Justice of the Peace officers, area newspapers in all locations, organizations such as the Boy Scouts, and other youth organizations.

Website listings of class schedules are of great value. Some of the available websites are the Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife, sporting goods business, the U.S. Coast Guard, and local city recreation facilities.

City recreation facilities sometimes send quarterly mailings to registered citizens, listing available class offerings. We e-mail, fax, or mail class schedules along with boater safety and state legal updates to over 400 locations quarterly. We also email press releases to newspapers in the communities where classes are being offered.

We teach classes in places like city recreation centers, boat dealerships, marinas, Boy Scout camps and retail sporting goods stores. Sites often provide presentation equipment such as overhead projectors and VCRs with televisions.

We try to ensure that prospective students get connected with a person when they call, rather than a recording. We also invite students to bring their boats to class for safety inspections. Each class begins with introductions and a Q & A in which we ask students how they found out about our class. The Instructor Evaluations are amazingly specific, which helps direct our marketing efforts.

Finally, it helps to maintain consistency in all marketing efforts: class scheduling, locations, start and stop times, fees, and advertising contacts. Though every class is different, consistency helps to project professionalism."

The Education Department encourages you and your flotilla to try these effective marketing tips as you help promote ABC-Just One More.