

6 types of first-time buyers



Gear Guys

14.6 million people
17% of audience

The Gear Guys are young men motivated by hobbies with specialized equipment. They are intrigued by the tech and the specs. They crave details, so when they're ready to buy a boat, they want to talk to the experts. For the Gear Guys, it's not about being on the water—it's about the boat.

How to spot them:

- They'll care more about what's under the hood.
- They'll want to talk to people who own the boat they want.
- They'll drive a hard bargain.

How to help them:

- Give them hands-on experience with the boat they want to buy.
They're impulsive and need to truly feel it before they buy.
- Offer them the independent perspective.
They need to know all the ins and outs of owning the boat they have in mind.
- Feed their passion.
Make them feel special with a behind-the-scenes look.

Merry Mates

13.7 million people
16% of audience

For Merry Mates, family is at the core of everything they do—especially their activities. When it comes to boating, Merry Mates rarely plan events, but they love going along for the ride. For them, boat ownership is the best way to connect as a family.

How to spot them:

- They'll tag along with a partner or spouse.
- They'll care about the practical side of ownership.
- They'll have a better handle on the financials.

How to help them:

- Help them make memories.
Give them the tools to help preserve family memories.
- Simplify the practical considerations.
Help them with "their list" of all the other, non-boat purchases they'll need to make.
- Make them comfortable with the cost of owning.
Be completely upfront about all costs, but show how they can fit the boat into their monthly budget.

Luxurious Leisurers

15.1 million people
18% of audience

The Luxurious Leisurers are image-conscious and surround themselves with the finer things. They are always up for trying a new hobby or activity. For the Luxurious Leisurers, owning a boat is an achievement that gives them a boost in status.

How to spot them:

- They'll have a lot of nice accessories: a statement vehicle, fancy watches, etc.
- They won't know a lot about the boat they want to buy.
- Their expectations may be a bit inflated.

How to help them:

- Celebrate with them.
This is a moment they've been dreaming of for quite some time.
- Educate, but don't overwhelm.
Focus on what they can easily show off, not every technical detail.
- Build them up instead of letting them down.
Make this dream attainable for them.

Water Weekenders

19.2 million people
23% of audience

Water Weekenders enjoy being by or on the water. While they love the water, they didn't grow up boating. In their social circles, the Water Weekenders are the ones who plan outings on the boat. They're into the boating basics: Tubing, cruising, fishing and water skiing. For them, owning a boat is driven by their desire to host friends and family.

How to spot them:

- They started boating relatively recently.
- They're more interested in boating activities than the boat itself.
- They are frequent renters.

How to help them:

- Get them excited about what is to come.
Help them see what's to come in their new life, with a boat.
- Help them do more of what they love.
Expand their "activity" horizons.
- Show them the benefits of owning versus renting.
Beyond the cost, help them see why owning is so much more satisfying than renting.

Seclusion Seekers

10.6 million people
12% of audience

The Seclusion Seekers are nature lovers. Their daily life is stressful and full of obligations. Seclusion Seekers escape to the great outdoors through activities like hunting, hiking, camping or kayaking. For them, boating is about getting away from the daily grind and connecting with nature on the water.

How to spot them:

- They talk about outdoor activities they participate in.
- They don't have very big demands for the boat they want to buy.
- They're unlikely to fully understand what ownership entails.

How to help them:

- Fuel their escapism to the great outdoors.
Inspire them with all the ways you can go boating to escape.
- Don't bore them with all the detail.
They just want a boat that will get them outside.
- Help them with the other things that boat owners need to know.
From ancillary purchases to owner responsibilities, help them get smart on boat ownership.

Nautical Natives

11.9 million people
14% of audience

For Nautical Natives, boating is in their DNA. Nautical Natives understand the appeal of boating and take joy in getting on the water. With lots of experience under their belt, they see themselves as boating experts. Their desire to own a boat is rooted in continuing a family legacy.

How to spot them:

- They go boating frequently.
- They'll talk about their childhood boating experiences.
- They'll know the ins and outs of boating—for better or for worse.

How to help them:

- Get them out on the water.
This is where they are most excited about owning a boat.
- Celebrate the next chapter of their boating tradition.
This is a momentous occasion in their life.
- Honor and expand their expertise.
Inspire and educate by showing all the options.

First-time buyers' journey to purchase

Develop > Desire > Dream > Decide > Do

Life experiences form an affinity for boating.

People who boated as children, boat with friends, participate in outdoor activities or who have gone boating on vacations tend to be drawn to boating.

A spark ignites the desire for boat ownership.

Participation is the number one trigger for boat ownership: it's while on a boat they decide to own.

Key Barriers:

- Lack of access to boating.

How we can help them:

- Inspire them to get on the water.
- Educate them on new ways to participate.

They start to imagine their life on the water.

The clearer their picture of life on the water, the closer they are to purchase.

Key Barriers:

- Overwhelming amount of information.
- Lack of comprehensive resources.
- They don't have people to turn to.

How we can help them:

- Make it simple for them to connect their dream to reality.
- Introduce them to helpful resources.
- Take a page from a similar playbook (automotive and real estate).

They navigate the realities of buying and owning a boat.

They encounter unpleasant surprises as they try to close the deal.

Key Barriers:

- They feel intimidated and unprepared to go into dealers.
- They discover hidden costs along the way.
- They find out there's a lot more to boat ownership than they thought.

How we can help them:

- Start by understanding their original dream of ownership.
- Balance the need to sell with the need to serve.
- Be transparent and upfront about the total cost of ownership.

They set out, open to all the possibilities of life on the water.

They revel in the joys of boat ownership.

70%
of people take less than a year to move from Desire to Do.