



The Marine Industry Certification Program is designed to highlight for the consumer those dealerships that have made a commitment to quality products and services. The dealership certification process uses a stringent, yet achievable set of criteria that raise the bar on interactions between dealers and consumers.

The certification features a set of standards for dealers to attain and provides tools that enable participants to enhance the retail process and provide every customer with a positive retail experience, every time. It focuses on the areas that affect dealership quality:

- a. Operations
- b. Facilities
- c. Professional Sales/Service Processes
- d. Customer Satisfaction and Employee Training/Satisfaction

Benefits of Buying From a Marine Industry Certified Dealer Include:

- a. A Marine Industry [Consumer Bill of Rights](#)
- b. Assurance of Dealership's Commitment to Excellence
- c. Raises Service Standards, Improving Overall Boating
- d. Knowledge of What to Expect From a Marine Dealer
- e. Guaranteed Opportunity for You to Provide Feedback and Resolve Issues

Is Dealer Certification Worthwhile?

You need brain surgery and it's time to pick your doctor. Who would you rather have perform this delicate operation? Do you put your life in the hands of some guy who's said to be pretty good with a knife, or do you place your trust in a certified neurosurgeon?

If you're like most people, you'll go with the latter. Now take a moment and consider why your response was so quick and automatic.

Did the word **trust** come to mind? When it comes to picking a marine dealership, studies show that a majority of consumers follow that same line of thought – they value dealing with companies that subscribe to recognized quality standards as measured by an independent, third-party. They feel they can trust them.

The Marine Five Star Dealership Certification program was developed in 2005 as part of the Grow Boating Initiative. Conceived as a way for professional dealers to differentiate their businesses, the program focuses on seven different areas of business impacting consumer satisfaction and dealership excellence – training, facilities, professional sales and service processes, employee satisfaction,

customer satisfaction and customer follow-up, with focus on sales growth and dealership profitability.

“Dealer certification benefits on different levels,” says Terry Leitz, Director, Marine Industry Dealership Certification and CSI Programs for the NMMA. “Certification benefits the customer by raising our standards and improving their overall boating experience, and providing an assurance of the dealership’s commitment to excellence. And the entire industry benefits because certification enhances the professional image of the recreational boating industry while reducing customer attrition resulting from poor service.”

“In a recent study,” continues Leitz, “79% of respondents said they were more likely to purchase from a certified dealer. That figures in itself demonstrates the value of the Marine Five Star Dealer Certification program. It is a promise of quality, and that goes a long way with the customer.”

Consumers were polled and their impressions recorded. Most people expected that certified dealers would provide a higher level of service, operate in a more professional manner, provide a higher quality of repairs, and employ better-trained staff who could be considered more honest, trustworthy and helpful. Respondents felt they would be well-cared for at a certified dealership, regardless of their needs and budget. Fully 89% of the respondents felt performance of a certified dealership would be better than that of a non-certified dealership. Even more interestingly, a majority of respondents said they would expect a certified dealership to be more competitive on price than a non-certified dealer.

The Left Brain Marketing study clearly suggests that the idea of certified dealerships resonates with consumers, a concept supported and widely adopted in other industries, including the auto sector. Indeed, Marine Five Star Dealer Certification can trace its roots back to a dealership program initiated by Chrysler. Certified dealerships exist in other big-ticket industries, and consumers have come to expect the same in the boating business.

What Consumers Think - A 2007 study for Discover Boating by Left Brain Marketing found:

- 89% of consumers felt that the overall performance of a certified marine dealership would be better than that of a non-certified dealership.
- 79% indicated they would be more likely to purchase from a certified dealership than a non-certified dealership.
- Individuals with a preferred dealership that is currently certified were more satisfied than those whose dealership was not certified.

- 51% of those who did not indicate their dealership was certified felt the dealership would be improved after going through the certification process. None felt it would be worse.

Click on this link to see why dealing with a Marine Certified dealership is worthwhile.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4q6pj5fKY&feature=player_embedded