

Trawler Talk

Marketing Trawlers in the Midwest

Now that the word “trawler” has become a familiar term in the Midwest it brings back memories of the first years that we brought the tugboat trawlers to market. While there had been some trawlers in the Great Lakes at this early time not many people understood what they were, let alone who would buy such a boat and why.

Questions like “how big a boat can you push with it” were common. After explaining these were pleasure crafts and not working tugs, the next most asked question was “why a tug”. Let us touch on that one right now. The tug style is simply taking the good attributes of a working tug and applying them to a cruising trawler. Starting with the raised pilothouse, the quick access to the deck and the 360-degree visibility are evident. Having all the electronics, charts, binoculars, camera, and many other essential items in one place (the pilot house) is very desirable. The generous deck space on the bow and stern (cockpit and swim platform areas) allow for great flexibility in handling of lines and getting on and off the boat. The American Tug and Nordic Tug are good examples of the tug style trawler.



American Tug 41 - Pilot House Style

Another popular style of trawler is the sedan version. This generally features a flybridge and an interior helm on the same level with the salon and galley. Cabins can be forward and aft in the larger vessels whereas in the pilothouse style they are usually all forward. The Camano and the Grand Banks are good examples of the sedan trawler style. Both types of trawlers generally feature

single diesel engines and the full keel hull design to lend the stability, safety, and fuel economy trawlers are so noted for.



Camano 31 – Sedan Style

Our goal as a dealer is to help buyers choose the right boat for them. One of the things that has changed in marketing is that the dealer gets less chance to educate the buyer because of the internet. Buyers used to come to the boat shows to see the different boats and find out what to consider. Now it seems that the buyer has looked at many boat choices on the web and has made a decision before talking to the experts. So now, especially in a niche market like the trawler market, the dealer depends less on the shows and more on having a large enough inventory of trawlers, both pilothouse and sedan trawler styles and mono hull and catamaran hull designs, to make it more worthwhile for customers to come directly to the dealership. Demo days and Trawler Fests have become the gathering place for many who seek out the cruising life style and want to learn more about it as they make their decision of which boat to buy.

From a dealer prospective, quality is most important. Finding a manufacturer with a quality product and a willingness to work with their dealer and customers is essential! The dealer's willingness to work with the customer during the purchase process and at the time of delivery is also very important!

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