

THE BERTHON SERVICE

In a challenging market, deciding which broker will handle the sale of your yacht is a key decision as whoever you choose will need to be nimble and effective to find a new owner for her at market value within a reasonable timespan.

A lot is talked about commission rates. These only become relevant once a buyer is found, and if the yacht remains unsold, a favourable commission rate is wholly irrelevant.

At Berthon, we aim to provide a thorough, practical and efficient service for yacht sales. We believe that there are a number of components which are necessary to succeed in the market :-

- 1. Experience and Product Knowledge.** The Berthon Sales Team have all been in post for a number of years and each part of the market is managed by a broker who is a specialist in their area. The Team is the glue that holds the business together; so whether you are selling a motor yacht in the South of France, a racing yacht in Newport, Rhode Island or a yacht that is handled by us anywhere in the world, you will receive our total support and commitment to achieve a positive result.
- 2. Co-operation.** We are members of the YBDSA (Yacht Brokers, Designers & Surveyors Association) and MYBA (Mediterranean Yacht Brokers Association) and co-operate with other international brokerage houses around the world. We enjoy a great relationship with the brokerage community with around 35% of our business is generated by joint deals with other brokerage houses. Another broker bringing a client will be paid up to 7% of the selling price of the yacht by Berthon, thereby we encourage other brokers to bring their clients to Berthon listings. We write to around 60 globally-based brokerage houses monthly to update them about our central listings. We also use local agents in areas like Turkey, Spain and Australia to ensure that our service levels are maintained wherever in the world your yacht is.
- 3. Contract and title.** Unlike an estate agent, the broker does all the contract work too. The numbers are significant and therefore accuracy and knowledge are essential. Of course we hold full PI cover, but more importantly, we typically use a sales contract exclusively drafted for Berthon by the maritime law division of Hill Dickinson, our London-based solicitors (or the use of the MYBA contract is available on request). These contracts are regularly updated as regulations change. We are also able to advise on VAT, RCD and a myriad of other issues that arise when transacting yachts.
- 4. Financial security.** We have separated client accounts for all yacht transactions in £, € and US\$. However, it is also comforting to know that the Berthon Sales Division is part of the Berthon Group; which has no bank debt and is a net lender. Berthon Boat Company and Berthon Lymington Marina are successful sister companies. This financial strength also enables us to assist with currency trades, importation of non-VAT paid yachts coming to the Shipyard and other processes of this type.
- 5. Preparation of Particulars.** We cannot emphasize enough the importance of comprehensive and technically accurate particulars in the sales process. Yacht buyers have access to an enormous amount of choice and your yacht needs to stand out in terms of information available and pictorial content. We are used to taking running shots of yachts to enhance particulars and sourcing photographic material to show yachts to their best advantage.
- 6. The Web.** An essential part of any modern sales organisation's marketing programme. On our team is a dedicated listings manager whose job it is to manage your yacht's promotion on the various websites that we use – IYC, YachtWorld, The Yacht Market, RightBoat, YBW.com and other specialist websites as appropriate. All particulars are kept up to date in real time. In addition our website developers are optimizing our site continuously and maintaining Berthon blog and twitter accounts.

7. **Magazine advertising.** At Berthon we have been around a long time and whilst over 55% of our yacht buyers are repeat clients or referrals, we need to continue to generate new enquiries. Magazine advertising remains a key way of accomplishing this. We consider that it is an indispensable part of any successful marketing campaign. We advertise in Yachting World, Boat International, Motorboat & Yachting, Yachting Monthly, and Seahorse. We have annual campaigns in all these covers with positional guarantees and the Berthon pages are professionally set so that your yacht looks her best. Our text you will find is quite original. We also advertise in relevant lifestyle magazines from time to time as well as reprinting our Winter Collection of brokerage offerings in Yachting World's February issue – traditionally the largest issue of the year.
8. **Direct Marketing.** Another key part of the brokers' sales armoury. We put out a Berthon 'enews' monthly featuring happenings at Berthon and news about our listings and sales which has a circulation of around 10,000 yachtsmen. In addition, we publish a Market Report annually in soft copy for our client base which is an all encompassing review of the market from Berthon's perspective. We also print and send out an annual lifestyle magazine. All these promotions are managed in house and are written and put together by the Sales Team with our promotion designers and not farmed out to a PR house, as we believe that those working in our business understand how best to bring it alive. Uniquely, the articles in the lifestyle magazine are written for us by our own clients and no stock articles ever appear.
9. **Boat Shows.** Each September we stage an annual Berthon Collection at the Shipyard, run concurrently with the Southampton Boat Show. This is supported by a full colour printed catalogue sent out at the same time as the lifestyle magazine. We also participate in various Brokers' Village promotions at Southampton, London and Dusseldorf Boat Shows as well as having a brokerage presence at Cannes Boat Show and exhibiting brokerage yachts in Mandelieu and Antibes Brokerage Shows in the South of France. Our new yacht commitments mean that we are also on hand to market brokerage yachts at London and Paris Boat Shows.
10. **Events & Sponsorship.** At Berthon we recognise that profile is important, and we therefore, support events like the World Cruising Club's Atlantic Rally for Cruisers and the Panerai Cowes Regatta. We are also the exclusive brokers for the Ocean Cruising Club. These promotions emphasize our commitment to the various market sectors that we specialise in, eg. Blue water cruising and classic yacht sales. This increases our marketing reach whilst putting something back into these events.
11. **Customer Relationship Management.** At Berthon, we have a custom built data handling system called BOB which holds all the information about the yachts that we have for sale and the yacht buyers with whom we are working. This enables us to match suitable yachts to clients and to keep them updated about your yacht, which is an invaluable tool for our brokers. We can also catalogue marketing activity so that every yacht has a complete sales profile being built on her all the time. This system is written, managed and updated by our in-house IT manager so that it continually adapts to meet the changing needs of the market.
12. **Market Information.** We consider that the sale of your yacht is a voyage that we undertake with you as the owner. We will therefore be in touch regularly to update you on where we have got to with the sale, to discuss market conditions with you and to assess how she is being received in the market. In this way you are in a position to make an informed decision when an offer is made on your yacht.

These components give you a proactive platform for the sale of your yacht. We prefer to do the job thoroughly and charge a proper commission rather than charge less, and reduce the level of service offered. In our view, in a difficult market it is important to have every weapon possible available in your sales armoury. We are committed to continuing to provide this level of service and we are looking constantly at ways of improving it. This is why the Berthon commission rate is 8% + VAT for a UK sale and 10% for an international sale, for an effective sales programme for your yacht and our undivided attention.