

The Yacht Designer

For this issue – our yacht design issue – we have canvassed all superyacht designers for their comments and thoughts on this area of the industry where passion, creativity and engineering meet or clash. The response was enormous and the complete version is available as a Synfo extra. Here we show a selection of the comments with some also shortened to keep this issue under the page count of a dictionary!

Q In your opinion, what makes a good design in today's market and, converse to that, what makes bad design?

Good design – clean, simple, aerodynamic, light weight, fuel efficient, low wake, beautiful lines. Bad design – complicated, heavy, high drag, inefficient, large wake, poor styling.

Orion Shuttleworth
John Shuttleworth Yacht Designs Ltd

As in the past, timeless originality will always stand above all else.

Tim Heywood
Tim Heywood Designs Limited

Sailing or powering ability, comfortable ride, safety and reliability.

Bruce Johnson
President & Chief Designer
Sparkman & Stephens, Inc.

In any market, a good design is the result of technical innovation and beauty. In today's marine market we have included a third element: environment.

In any bad design, there is an imbalance among such elements, a lack of one or all of them.

Horacio Bozzo
Axis Group Yacht Design

The criteria for good design haven't really changed over the years: man-made objects with one or more functions are given an emotionally appealing (or should we say beautiful?) form...

Conversely the rules for bad design might be as follows: put as much on it as possible, do things that nobody has done before (and don't ask yourself why), copy all the latest features from the new designs from the internet and avoid at all cost to make it look like a ship.

Walter Penndorf
WP Associates Automotive and Yacht Designers

A good design – and that's a basic rule for all sorts of design and architecture – fulfils the requirements and demands perfectly, but in addition it adds emotional value through its use. Since those emotions differ individually, good design often polarises and is either loved or hated. Bad design in this regard would be mediocre, without identity, not touching our emotions.

David Münscher
Atomare yacht design

Good is the design that sells. Bad is the design that does not. Either in charter or in purchase the client is

Good or bad design...



“Any yacht designed by me (is good) and, converse to that, what makes bad design? Any yacht that is not designed by me.”

Donald Starkey
Donald Starkey Designs

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Good or bad design...



“Yacht design cannot be separated from naval architecture and engineering; this is a three-legged stool that will dump you unceremoniously on your butt if you remove a leg.”

Michael Schutte (far right)

Brilliant Boats

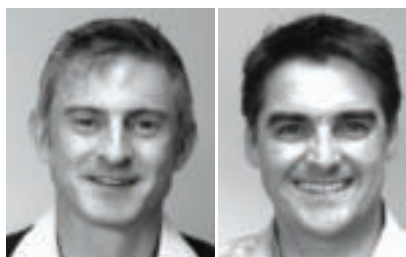
Image by Bila Hoche



“Bad design is when you want absolutely something different, as per the motoryacht A, for example; a good design exists when the function, the ergonomic and the shape are working perfectly together.”

Jacques Pierrejean

Pierrejean Design



“A client’s dream and a designer’s vision will not on their own make a good design. They may get the plaudits and fill the pages of the yachting press, but these aspects have to be coupled with the work of experienced engineers and naval architects to create a yacht that functions well as a boat or ship.”

Chris Earl (left) & Stuart King (right)

Burness Corlett Three Quays

always happy with the commercial performance of his boat.

Giorgio Vafiadis

Giorgio Vafiadis & Associates

By definition, design is all about innovation and creativity. Offerings which display no such creativity or innovation are either bad design or indeed NO design.

Kenneth Freivokh

Kenneth Freivokh Design

The good and the bad have always been very subjective, although there are projects universally considered horrible and others really cool and unique. A beautiful boat is the one entering the market without making too much noise, which creeps up on the observer; the boat that you know and discover slowly. A beautiful boat is proportionate in the form and content. The simplest things are often those most difficult to obtain; we aim for simple design for a pure, easy cruising.

Mattia Massola

Italstyle

Q Do you feel that the market needs to challenge itself with more innovative and unique designs, moving away from the conventional styles, plagiarised concepts and common place exterior shapes? If yes, what would you like to see?

More multihull superyachts.

Orion Shuttleworth

John Shuttleworth Yacht Designs Ltd

The market needs changes that’s for sure, especially the production series; the best part of flying bridge yachts have a ‘90s style... some concepts are moving in the right direction, especially for big yachts; just to give an example we think that the OceAnco Y-708 made by Lubanov is at the top of its league. The yachting industry in general should take its inspiration from car design...

Antonio Romano

Hot Lab Yacht & Design

I find that about 70–80% of clients like designs that are similar to their friends’ boats, and seldom are they truly groundbreaking. We tend to be about two to four years ahead of what is currently in style in newbuild concepts, but also specialise in making additions that look like original construction in the style the yacht was built in.

We find that few clients are themselves innovative enough to want to risk money and development time to come up with something quite a lot different. As a result, about every 10 years or so these yachts, houses, and cars all start looking the same, as the designers narrow down the most efficient styles and functionalities, then something new comes along to change it. Like the 1980s’ straight-line Bertone styling craze, the late 1990s’ Bill Dixon wedge powerboat, and the 1980s’/90s’ Broward/Burger raised pilothouse cruiser. It’s not much different with them than houses – only one in a hundred ‘custom’ houses is individualised to stand out from its neighbourhood, and they seem to be the first to be torn down when they get old.

Kevin M. Kerwin, P.E.

Kerwin Naval Architects, Inc.

God yes... I am afraid that the industry in general is hobbled by conservatism... There have been very few vessels launched that have been truly innovative – or even different. Most of these have been commercial disasters in spite of their getting all kinds of attention. Think Wally Power here – maybe not the best example but you’ll get my point. I never liked this boat personally but was floored that someone had the balls to build it – Starship Enterprise among Vauxhall Cavaliers. Bravo.

Michael Schutte

Brilliant Boats

Particularly as far as sailing boat design is concerned we would like to see more ‘human’ size boats rather than ‘big is better’.

Lorenzo Argento

Luca Brenta Yacht Design

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This market is so diverse that there is room for any type of design. As long it is well designed everything is allowed.

Guido de Groot
Guido de Groot Design

Innovation is a must, but not with designs that create a 'wow' with a short life span. We have seen enough of that. Today's requirements are for intelligent multi-functional designs with lasting resale values.

René van der Velden
René van der Velden Yacht Design

We are comfortable with our own development in terms of our designs. We have moved design cautiously forward during our 81 years of business.

Bruce Johnson
President & Chief Designer
Sparkman & Stephens, Inc

From this point of view, the classic styles and lines are always a guarantee, and in general it means a yacht looks like one, and not like an apartment or a shore house.

Andrea Splinakis
Naval Architect
ZerotoNineDesign TM

I do think that the market needs to continue to challenge itself but at the same time remain cognisant of the power of the sea.

Patrick J. Bray
Bray Yacht Design And Research Ltd

I would like to see new concepts whereby the functionality of a vessel is not second to merely its aesthetics.

Horacio Bozzo
Axis Group Yacht Design

You might have to ask the customers this question! For designers we much prefer to be innovative and unique but in my recent experience clients are looking for other things such as value for money and longevity at present. To be fair, I think the designs of yachts have moved on quite considerably over the last five or six years and this inevitably leads to a period of stagnation and 'plagiarism' until the next big idea. You only have

to look through an old magazine to see what I mean!

Jonny Horsfield
H2 Yacht design [part of H2 design group]

As far as plagiarism is concerned I think there is a fine line between creating a copy of something and developing an idea even if it is somebody else's. There are cases where the 'recreation' is better than the 'original'.

Walter Penndorf
WP Associates
Automotive and Yacht Designers

Houses do not all look the same, why should yachts?

Kenneth Freivokh
Kenneth Freivokh Design

I do not think there is a need to create strange shapes.... A highly innovative element creates initial interest, but that can very quickly fall into oblivion and become old in a few years. Our next yachts will have shapes inspired by the past, filtered by actual mentality with an eye to the future.

Mattia Massola
Italstyle

We always enjoy seeing new, innovative and unique concepts but unfortunately at some stage there also needs to be a large dose of reality. Maritime regulations, the laws of physics and economics are a difficult combination to challenge, but that doesn't mean we should stop trying!

Chris Earl and Stuart King
Burness Corlett Three Quays

Within our prolific design market place I see too many designs that are based on style over substance and glamour over practicality. We need to see more creations that are solid mixes of style plus substance and glamour plus practicality. A yacht in my opinion is feminine in gender and usually addressed as 'she' – more recently we are seeing a lot of seriously masculine, para military and aggressive exterior styling. Elegance and beauty seem to be forgotten criteria.

Terence Disdale
Terence Disdale Design

More innovation...



"For me, I hope, 'more innovative' is not a change but a constant aim. The development of new and original designs should always be the designer's ambition."

Tim Heywood
Tim Heywood Designs Limited



"More simplicity, going back to the essentials. Uncomplicated, practical and most of all elegant."

Pieter van Geest
Van Geest Design



"As a designer I strongly feel the urge to see new concepts and shapes also in reality, not only on the drawing board. Whether the styling is classic or futuristic doesn't really matter, as long as the yacht's expression and way of use touches one's soul in one way or another."

David Münscher
Atomare yacht design

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Restrictions & obstacles...



“The brokers with an old way of thinking – in these last years some very incapable brokers made a lot of money with no real quality... Also some shipyard owners. I think that the designer should be more free to talk with the final clients.”

Antonio Romano (second left)
Hot Lab Yacht & Design



“The only restrictions I can think of are the lack of a budget for design or the lack of creativity or professionalism of the designers.”

Walter Penndorf
WP Associates Automotive and Yacht Designers



“The only real obstacles to good design are people designing vessels without ever having experienced time on a boat. They have no idea what it is really like to put their fantastic ideas into use.”

Patrick J. Bray
Bray Yacht Design and Research Ltd

Q What restrictions and obstacles to good design, exist in the market?

Time, money and regulation remain unavoidable and challenging obstacles.

Thibaut Tincelin
Stirling Design International

The encroaching regulation climate is quite restrictive, as are the environmental issues that, in my opinion, in yachting are merely theatrical in nature. The current glut of yachts and political incorrectness of yachting is also quite restrictive to future innovation. The regulations in the commercial shipbuilding field are staggeringly restrictive. You'd think every ship built before now was a disaster, judging by the extent of rules to follow. The Classification Societies are inventing all sorts of “Class Notations” to sell as pieces of paper that are supposed to give value to a client. The new Ballast Water Management Rules are REALLY bad.

Kevin M. Kerwin, P.E.
Kerwin Naval Architects, Inc.

None; each clients demands and new safety regulations are only challenges to meet, develop and overcome.

Tim Heywood
Tim Heywood Designs Limited

Courage, inertia and a requirement to pay the bills every month.

Michael Schutte
Brilliant Boats

Too much attention (is) paid to too many designers who think they know yachts and have no experience at all.

Donald Starkey
Donald Starkey Designs

We do not see real obstacles. We see that the most popular designs (again as far as sailing yachts are concerned) pay more attention to the actual interior volume and comfort than to the actual sailing capabilities (not necessarily performance), and simply the pleasure to sail is somewhat forgotten. But this is what people ask for

Lorenzo Argento
Luca Brenta Yacht Design

Some of the current safety regulations are ‘scaled down’ versions of the rules for commercial shipping and do not always represent realistic situations, leading to sometimes expensive solutions that do not always provide the safety they seem to promise. A more realistic approach, also respecting the way a yacht is used, would be welcome.

René van der Velden
René van der Velden Yacht Design

Generally budgetary.

Bruce Johnson
President & Chief Designer
Sparkman & Stephens, Inc

I don't think there are restrictions to ‘good’ design but there is some restriction to ‘innovative’ design; at present there is a reluctance from yards to commit to developing new ideas whilst keeping to a sensible budget. They are competing very much on price at present and this means using tried and tested formulas and solutions rather than developing something that might cost them more to build, or might not even work properly. Your question suggests that you currently think there is much ‘bad’ design around at present...Beauty is in the eye of the beholder remember!

Jonny Horsfield
H2 Yacht design [part of H2 design group]

Feasibility, rationality, financing and of course to find a client.

Giorgio Vafiadis
Giorgio Vafiadis & Associates

Client expectations usually fail to push the designers to explore new and unique solutions, as some of these owners prefer to stay in their comfort zone. This is exacerbated by yards preferring to stay with their conventional ‘technical platforms’ for ease of construction, and to avoid unexpected problems and control costs.

Kenneth Freivokh
Kenneth Freivokh Design

Today I believe that the only limit for the submission of new forms and design is the mentality of some

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shipyards. At a time when customers are few and very demanding, we must innovate and create something new, not necessarily shocking. Yards need to give designers the opportunity to propose and support them also in particular stylistic choices.

Mattia Massola

Italstyle

Recently we are finding that a number of large yacht projects, with more than 12 guests and/or in excess of 3,000gt, are to a certain extent in limbo from a regulatory aspect as no one knows what the Passenger Yacht Code regulations are going to look like or when they will come into force.

Chris Earl and Stuart King

Burness Corlett Three Quays

The efficient use of space.

Robin ten Hoop

Van Dam Nordia

The lack of knowledge of production cost in the design process.

Marnix Hoekstra

Vripack

Q How is your studio dealing with the Maritime Labour Convention and the rules being imposed on crew accommodation space requirements?

We usually leave these decisions to the shipyard...

Antonio Romano

Hot Lab Yacht & Design

We are incorporating them and using them to better the accommodation.

It does mean that more space needs to be allocated to the crew areas, but comfortable and safe living space is essential.

Tim Heywood,

Tim Heywood Designs Limited

This (MLC rules) is making the boats bigger.... As simple as that.

Detlev Loell

Detlev Loell and Partners

We intend to ignore them completely, naturally, like most people...

Donald Starkey

Donald Starkey Designs

The short answer is that when this comes into force, large yachts are not specifically excluded and there will be impacts to manning levels, overall arrangements, crew space sizes, deck heights, and hotel services (ventilation, lighting, etc.).

Bruce Johnson

**President & Chief Designer
Sparkman & Stephens, Inc**

We are trying to join forces to fight against what we think will severely penalise a segment of the already down-trodden yachting industry.

Horacio Bozzo

Axis Group Yacht Design

Where we had input on crew design we have met most of these regulations on most of our current projects anyhow.

Jonny Horsfield

H2 Yacht design [part of H2 design group]

The importance of optimised crew quarters is enormous, since only a happy crew is a good one. However, with the limited space available, clever special solutions are necessary to provide a pleasant working and free time environment for the crew members.

David Münscher

Atomare yacht design

We think it's fair. Good crew accommodation makes the crew perform better.

Giorgio Vafiadis

Giorgio Vafiadis & Associates

We are currently investigating the requirements for crew accommodation aboard yachts and how these can be integrated into designs.

Sea Level Yacht Design & Engineering

We are designers, not legislators. All we can do is to comply with the code. Designers, yards, naval architects and brokers should jointly have a representative body, to fight for common sense and prevent

Restrictions & obstacles...



"There are of course limits to creativity; those you will find generally in technical feasibility, in costs and in question of safety. The main restriction in the development of new technologies is the cost."

Felix Messerschmitt

Messerschmitt Yachts GmbH

MLC & rules...



"We try to have our clients have the keel of their yacht laid before they apply... As a member of trade organisations in this business we count on the lobby for better rules that make sense and will be successful."

Guido de Groot

Guido de Groot Design



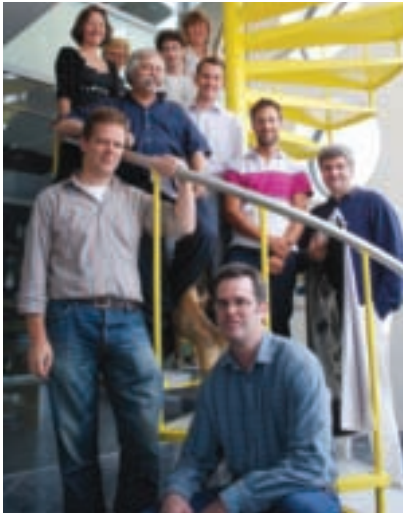
"Obviously these rules are totally out of concept with the average yacht crewing necessities. Clearly our industry needs to gather together a loud unified voice in the matter."

Terence Disdale

Terence Disdale Design

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New materials...



“LED technology has finally come of age, to be soon followed by improved lithium ion and lithium polymer batteries. There is a slow take-up of new composite technology and glass technology. Some less conventional naval architects are exploring the merits of designs which maximise waterline length for best efficiency and speed; Azipods are allowing better manoeuvrability and control.”

Kenneth Freivokh (centre left)
Kenneth Freivokh Design



“A simple and fantastic development is that a new paint is being developed by Akzo Nobel, parent company of International and AwlGrip paints. It is low energy absorption paint. We are using it on a new 39-metre project, which is to be painted dark blue. In reviewing two samples we had ‘normal’ dark blue painted on aluminium and the new LSA on another sample. We were barely able to touch the normal paint while the new LSA was cool to the touch. As a result air conditioning demand is much, much less.”

Bruce Johnson, President & Chief Designer
Sparkman & Stephens, Inc

unreasonable and unwarranted legislation.

Kenneth Freivokh
Kenneth Freivokh Design

Application of the MLC regulations raises some interesting questions. If the yacht in question is in excess of 3,000gt and carries more than 12 passengers it will be categorised as a passenger vessel (or presumably a passenger yacht in terms of the PYC regulations) and it will be acceptable to have mainly twin berth cabins for crew members as is usual for such vessels. However, if the yacht is in excess of 3,000gt but has only 12 passengers it will be classified as a cargo vessel and all crew cabins must be single occupancy, which will of course significantly increase the internal area required for crew accommodation and change the character of the yacht. The solution could be to classify the yacht as a passenger ship regardless of passenger numbers, but this would involve additional costs in meeting full passenger ship regulations including more rigorous damage stability requirements etc compared with the cargo ship regulations.

Chris Earl and Stuart King
Burness Corlett Three Quays

As we have always treated crew areas well, this is not giving us a real hard time. Smaller sailing yachts will be hugely challenged though.

Marnix Hoekstra
Vripack

Q Are there any new materials, finishes and solutions that you feel the market needs to look at or will start to integrate into future projects, based on efficient construction, environmental considerations or just pure innovation?

Yes, bio-composites are now becoming feasible. We are looking to utilise these on one of our smaller projects under 60ft. I'm sure we will see them used for larger yachts in the near future.

Orion Shuttleworth
John Shuttleworth Yacht Designs Ltd

We are involved in a research and development project with Ultra High Performance Concrete (UHPC). If such material will never become the basic construction material for yachts, such material is of interest for specific areas, where fire insulation, sound insulation and mechanical requirements offer UHPC to be competitive in terms of space, weight and cost compared with steel.

Thibaut Tincelin
Stirling Design International

Sure – notably some of the synthetic decking products, although the best of these (MarineDeck from Stazo in Holland) has been around for 30 years. Only now is it becoming a ‘popular’ subject as manufacturers jump on the ‘green’ bandwagon.

Michael Schutte
Brilliant Boats

For environmental and political reasons teak will slowly be replaced by alternative materials more often. When composites become ‘greener’ they may replace aluminium, but until now they are difficult to recycle.

René van der Velden
René van der Velden Yacht Design

All green technical solutions, and those that are environmental friendly have to be investigated and introduced in the yacht market: solar power, fuel cells, bio-diesel and bio-mass fuel as first. Also, paint solutions and painting technologies are under continuous innovation and progress; also the possibility to reduce the filler for fairing should be considered: to this purpose we are approaching our designs by limiting the use of aluminium (too soft and a greater amount of filler needed) for the superstructure design, and are pushing on with the use of high tensile steel for the entire vessel structure.

Andrea Splinakis
Naval Architect
ZeroNineDesign TM

As ‘stylists’ we are invited to work with the material portfolio offered by the yards. Yards with high labour costs are constantly seeking ways to reduce this through faster/simpler/

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more mechanised solutions within the current framework of materials and construction techniques. The yards with lower labour costs are always trying to reduce their material costs to the cheapest materials around. I see innovation coming on hull design, power plant solutions and sensible environmental solutions that are cost effective.

Jonny Horsfield
H2 Yacht design [part of H2 design group]

As everybody can observe there is a global trend towards energy efficiency and sustainability, I think we will see more composite superstructures in order to reduce vessel mass overall, lower the centre of gravity, and gain more freedom in design.

Walter Penndorf
WP Associates Automotive and Yacht Designers

We believe that the time to market (length of time it takes from a product being conceived until its being available for sailing) is an important aspect. Efficient construction implies delivering a yacht within a shorter span of time. To establish that, we need to make sure that our information management is quick, in order to supply the required data at an early stage. We find it very important to focus on innovative structural engineering so that the yards can produce more efficiently. New solutions make the multidisciplinary manufacturing easier for the yard. Modular structural sections are prepared and equipped with piping, insulation and machinery, and are being assembled. Special features such as sea balconies are manufactured, conserved and delivered to the yard as one unit and just need to be integrated into the hull. Integration of large interior parts is the next step. Based on environmental considerations we started to research the use of bio-resins and fibres in non-structural and structural parts for yachts.

Sea Level Yacht Design & Engineering

Lighting – as an integral design approach! With focus not only on new, energy-efficient lamp sources such as LEDs, but also the way the lighting is being used, installed and integrated. Also, the shipyard needs to realise that the LED technology is rapidly changing and that in five years the same product will not be available anymore.

Beatrice Witzgall
I3D, Inc.

Q Is the cost of design and the budget for the yacht as a whole becoming more closely scrutinised by clients in the current economic climate, which could lead to downsizing or more conservative projects in the future?

Damn right it is.
Kevin M. Kerwin, P.E.
Kerwin Naval Architects, Inc.

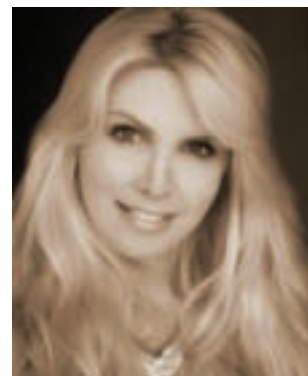
The budget for each of my projects has always been a prime consideration, the designer who does not consider the cost will quickly antagonise his client and the project will hit the rocks. This has always been true and nothing has changed. A costly solution to a design question still has its place, but, as always, needs to be carefully explained to the client writing the cheque.

Tim Heywood
Tim Heywood Designs Limited

A professional, intelligent design package will save the owner far, far more than it costs...I deliver boats, not projects. The smart customers gets this and are prepared to pay what it costs to do a proper design, so that their boat is delivered faster and cheaper. I hope that nobody will accuse us of being conservative as designers, and in point of fact our creativity is aimed at the whole project, including the engineering and build strategy, not just the profile and arrangement. Good design delivers a cheaper boat, not just a flash one.

Michael Schutte
Brilliant Boats

New materials...



“Green products such as bamboo, cork, leathers, and fabrics made from green fibres, textured and natural stones, metals and glass. Design will be moving towards an organic approach as we move into 2010.”

Karen Lynn Poulos
Karen Lynn Interiors, Inc.



“Light weight to low cost. Strong enough to last a life time. Good price quality ratio.”

Robin ten Hoope
Van Dam Nordia



“Cost impact of materials applied is more and more important. Not only is the cost of the hard material important, but also the time and effort required for installation need more attention.”

Marnix Hoekstra
Vripack

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The cost of design...



“‘Speed’ and ‘unlimited budgets’ are now terms that belong to the past. Still, the demand by sophisticated owners for quality in design and in construction is what has driven the superyacht market so far. I strongly believe that this will not change in the future regardless of the size of the project.”

Horacio Bozzo

Axis Group Yacht Design



“Particularly in the large size yachts owners tend to implement all the design costs into the builder’s costs, in order to have a single package to deal with. It makes sense.”

Lorenzo Argento

Luca Brenta Yacht Design



“We see this effect only in the mid-size range up to 30 metres length. The large projects suffer only in cases where they are commercial (like passenger sailing vessels) because the financing banks are more difficult now.”

Detlev Loell

Detlev Loell and Partners

Yes, sure. However, for the downsizing part I see a new challenge, smaller yachts but still with the items that are found on board larger yachts.

Guido de Groot

Guido de Groot Design

Downsizing may be part of the answer for some clients, but conservatism definitely not. Designers and builders should carefully look if what they have been doing for years is still the best solution or just a habit. Clients can have another look at their requested top speed and sometimes oversized generators and wonder if they want to pay for something they hardly ever use. Intelligent and efficient design and building processes will ultimately lead to a better product.

René van der Velden

René van der Velden Yacht Design

Absolutely they are more sensitive to costs but I am not aware of any downsizing - rather value for money in their projects.

Jonny Horsfield

H2 Yacht design [part of H2 design group]

The first is probably true for most clients in the current economic climate and we will probably see more cost driven designs in the future, which is not necessarily a bad thing - necessity is the mother of invention.

Walter Penndorf

WP Associates Automotive and Yacht Designers

The cost of design is related to budget but not exclusively. Low budget projects are requiring more design time and cost to reach good quality.

Giorgio Vafiadis

Giorgio Vafiadis & Associates

Yes, at least for a while.

Kenneth Freivokh

Kenneth Freivokh Design

It will lead to more repetition and less innovation. It's actually quite sad that some of the most prestigious projects compromise on something as representative as lighting that defines the atmosphere and sculpts a space.

Beatrice Witzgall

I3D, Inc.

Yes, but not only due to the economic climate. In general yachts are too expensive to build and often too complex; this also gives huge hassle in maintenance.

Marnix Hoekstra

Vripack

Q Are you seeing any increase in client enquiries for new builds and if yes, are they from emerging markets, brand new clients or from current clients wishing to capitalise on the financial squeeze that the industry is facing?

Not yet.

Thibaut Tincelin

Stirling Design International

I am pleased to report that we are seeing an increase in the level of enquiries for new designs and new builds. These enquiries come from old and new clients and are in the larger sector of the market. I am sure that this activity will work its way down to the other sectors of the market...

Tim Heywood

Tim Heywood Designs Limited

Funny, but yes. In a market full of doom and gloom we remain busy - in fact busier than ever and growing to cope with the demand. I see two 'new' types of clients out there today. First are the bottom feeders, lurking around to pick up a superyacht bargain from the receivers... The second type (and I like this guy, a lot) is the one who is sitting on top of 500 million accounting units and has realised that the return he is getting on his money today is very poor, and/or fraught with risk. Two years ago, taking 30 million out of his portfolio would have cost him 3 million a year in lost (low risk) income. Today this is categorically not the case - low-risk investments are paying peanuts and the high risk stuff is wobbling than ever. So our man has decided to actually spend some of his money on something that gives him pleasure.

Michael Schutte

Brilliant Boats

We do not see any increase in

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the private sector; we see a slight increase in the commercial sector.

Detlev Loell, Detlev Loell and Partners

There is a certain interest in new concepts from current clients. Clients wishing to squeeze the industry tend to step into existing projects. Everything is changing. It used to be a designer to customer direct relationship, now it is more via Project Manager or directly from the yards. As far as sailing yachts are concerned (our market) we do not really witness, as we did in the past, new clients who may have never had a yacht before. I guess it is to do with the 'easy' money that is not there any longer. I wish this 'old' wealth would show up again. It has been very shy in recent years!

Lorenzo Argento

Luca Brenta Yacht Design

In terms of client enquiries I definitely see an increase; partly from existing clients but also from emerging markets.

Guido de Groot

Guido de Groot Design

Yes, but not enough (client enquiries) to make a real difference. Current clients usually already have a yacht.

Donald Starkey

Donald Starkey Designs

Yes, I see enquiries for new builds, mostly from current clients.

Horacio Bozzo

Axis Group Yacht Design

Yes we have seen a recent surge but all from existing client base and yes they are moving now whilst they can get a great price.

Jonny Horsfield

H2 Yacht design [part of H2 design group]

The huge offer of pre-owned yachts and the continuous price cuts are pushing owners towards the 'used boat market'. Those few who have the courage to build something new are repeat clients.

Giorgio Vafiadis

Giorgio Vafiadis & Associates

We see an increase in enquiries for new builds by our current clients. People who have had several series-production-boats often decide to have a custom or semi-custom yacht designed.

Sea Level Yacht Design & Engineering

Yes – some clients are recovering from the shock!

Kenneth Freivokh

Kenneth Freivokh Design

No significant change compared with a couple of years ago.

Marnix Hoekstra

Vripack

We are positive as we have some new enquiries. However, we believe this year will not be filled with real orders for yards. But 2011 – for sure! There are still yacht people out there and they have started sending their "letters of interest".

Frank E.H. Neubelt

Newcruise-Yacht Project+Design

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The Yacht Designer

New clients...



"We are in contact with potential African customers, and we got rumours on Indian clients increasing."

Andrea Splinakis

Naval Architect

ZerotoNineDesign TM



"Today there is no increase in requests for new projects. Customers are few and demanding. The European market is stable. The client who owns a boat looks to the resale market, perhaps to take a more comfortable and larger yacht, and in the meantime talks to yards for possible future new projects. The countries of the east are acting, to our market, in part as observers interested in collaborating, learning, taking know how then maybe realising projects tomorrow themselves independently."

Mattia Massola

Italstyle

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