

Connecting People To The Water

An Interview with Kyle G. Langbehn, President, Retail Operations, MarineMax

EDITORS' NOTE Kyle Langbehn has served as President, Retail Operations since July 2020. Previously, he served as Vice President of Operations beginning in October 2018. Langbehn performed in numerous positions of increasing responsibility including Sales Consultant, Sales Manager, General Sales Manager, General Manager and Regional President since joining MarineMax in 2002. Langbehn is a graduate of the United States Naval Academy and holds an MBA from George Washington University.



Kyle G. Langbehn

enhance and simplify the customer experience, MarineMax provides financing and insurance services as well as leading digital technology products that connect boaters to a network of preferred marinas, dealers, and marine professionals through Boatyard and Boatzon. In addition, the company operates MarineMax Vacations in Tortola, British Virgin Islands, which offers charter vacation guests the luxury boating adventures of a lifetime.

Will you discuss your career journey?

I began my career with MarineMax in sales in the early 2000s, and I recently celebrated my 22nd year with the company. That journey has given me the opportunity to understand the business from the ground up and to appreciate the many roles that come together to create an exceptional customer experience. I started in sales, then moved into Sales Manager and General Manager roles, followed by multi-store leadership responsibilities. I also had the opportunity to lead our financial services business, which gave me a broader perspective on the customer lifecycle and the importance of supporting customers well beyond the initial boat or yacht purchase. Today, as Executive Vice President and President of Retail, I have the privilege of working with an outstanding team across our retail organization.

My career has really been shaped by the people around me – team members, customers, manufacturer partners, and leaders who invested in my development along the way.

One of the things I value most about MarineMax is that it has always been a company where people can grow. We are entrepreneurial, relationship-driven, and focused on doing the right thing for the long term. My own career is an example of that culture. I have been fortunate to grow with the company, and much of my focus today is on helping create those same opportunities for others.

How do you describe MarineMax's mission?

MarineMax's mission is to consistently exceed the greatest expectations of our customers, our team members, and our stakeholders. That mission is simple, but it is also very meaningful because it gives us a clear standard for how we operate and how we lead.

We are certainly a boat and yacht retailer, but our purpose extends well beyond the transaction. We are in the business of connecting people to the water and helping them experience boating and yachting in a way that is memorable, enjoyable, and confidence-building. Boating has a unique ability to bring people together – families, friends, and communities – and to create experiences that can last a lifetime. That emotional connection is at the heart of what we do. When a customer buys a boat or yacht, they are not



Azimut Fly 68 and its salon



Azimut Magellano 60 and its cockpit

simply buying a product. They are investing in time with the people they care about most. They are investing in adventure, relaxation, discovery, and shared experiences. Our responsibility is to help make those experiences exceptional.

Our mission also challenges us to think broadly. Exceeding expectations means going above and beyond with manufacturing partners, service, education, financing offerings and the right support across the entire ownership journey. It also means creating the best environment where our team members can grow, contribute, and take pride in the impact they make.

Will you provide an overview of MarineMax's services and capabilities?

MarineMax is the world's largest recreational boat and yacht retailer, marina operator, and superyacht services company. Our integrated business includes more than 120 locations worldwide, IGY Marinas, Fraser Yachts Group, Northrop & Johnson, Cruisers Yachts, and Intrepid Powerboats, along with a broad range of retail, service, marina, brokerage, financing, insurance, manufacturing, and lifestyle capabilities. That scale is important, but what really differentiates MarineMax is how those capabilities come together around the customer. We serve customers across a wide range of needs – from first-time boaters to experienced yacht owners to superyacht clients – and we are able to support them throughout the full ownership journey. From a retail perspective, what makes MarineMax distinctive is that we do not view the sale as the finish line. In many ways, it is the beginning of the relationship. Through the hundreds of Getaways!® we do annually, on-water events, owner education, service support, storage, trade-ins, and brokerage, people build confidence and fully enjoy the boating lifestyle. We are not simply selling boats and yachts. We are supporting a lifestyle, building a community, and helping customers get the most out of their time on the water.

How critical has it been to build the MarineMax team?

It has been essential. Our team is the foundation of MarineMax. In a business like ours, the customer experience is deeply personal.

Customers are making emotional, discretionary, and often significant investments. They want trust – and trust comes from people who care, who know the product, who understand the customer, and who take pride in delivering an exceptional experience.

MarineMax has always placed a high value on culture. Our foundational values – honesty, integrity, trust, loyalty, professionalism, consistency, always doing the right thing, and always considering the long term – shape how we lead and how we serve. When our team members feel valued, supported, and empowered, that flows directly to the customer. Building the team is also critical because our business continues to evolve. The needs of a first-time boat buyer, an experienced yacht owner, a service customer, a marina customer, or a superyacht client can be very different. We need leaders and team members who can operate with expertise, adaptability, and a strong sense of ownership.

One of my highest priorities is helping develop leaders across the organization. MarineMax has been very good to me over the past 22 years, and I feel a responsibility to help create opportunities for others. Our future growth depends on our ability to attract, retain, train, and develop the best team in the industry. Our recognition as a "Great Place to Work" validates our efforts to create a winning environment for all.

How is MarineMax adapting its retail strategy to continue to lead in a challenging retail environment?

Interest rates, consumer confidence, inventory levels, and broader macroeconomic uncertainty all influence discretionary purchases. At the same time, the long-term appeal of boating remains very strong. People continue to value time with family and friends, outdoor experiences, travel, and the lifestyle that boating and yachting provide. In this environment, we are focused on controlling what we can control. That means strong retail execution, disciplined inventory management, thoughtful pricing, high-quality customer follow-up, service capacity, expense discipline, and consistent leadership at the local level. The fundamentals matter in every

environment, but they matter even more when the market is more complex.

We are also focused on the broader customer relationship. MarineMax is not dependent on one moment in the ownership journey. We have meaningful opportunities across pre-owned boats, brokerage, service, storage, marinas, financing and insurance, events, education, and long-term customer engagement. Those capabilities allow us to serve customers through different points in the cycle and strengthen the overall business.

The companies that lead in challenging environments are the ones that stay disciplined without becoming defensive. We have to be responsive to current conditions while continuing to invest in our people, our customer experience, our digital capabilities, and our long-term strategy.

How is MarineMax bridging digital and in-person experiences?

The customer journey has changed significantly. Customers do more research online, expect faster communication, and often arrive at the dealership, marina, or boat show with a much clearer understanding of what they want. At the same time, boating and yachting remain highly personal and experiential purchases. Customers still want to see the boat, understand how it fits their lifestyle, meet the team, and feel confident in the ownership experience. Our goal is to make the digital and in-person experience feel connected, not separate. We have invested in tools and technology that help us better understand customer needs, communicate more effectively, and create a more seamless experience across every touchpoint – whether that starts on our website, through email, by phone, at an event, at a marina, or in one of our dealerships.

But technology does not replace the human element. It should amplify it. The in-person experience is still where trust is built and where the lifestyle becomes real. Our team members bring the product, the water, the community, and the ownership experience to life. When the digital experience is strong, it makes those personal interactions more informed, more efficient, and more valuable for the customer. ●