

Barcelona's Cluster success

Maritime firms in the Catalan capital are joining forces to boost their superyacht income

DENNIS O'NEILL REPORTS



The city's marine sector is benefitting from initiatives spearheaded by Barcelona Clúster Nàutic's CEO Alejo Trullás (centre)

In a striking move of mutual business co-operation, a large number of Barcelona's marine firms have come together to form a highly successful formal partnership that is helping them increase turnover from their international revenue streams.

This partnership, known as the Barcelona Clúster Nàutic, started just three years ago but now represents more than 80 companies, most of which are related to the superyacht sector.

"We want to make Barcelona even more attractive to foreign superyacht visits," explains the Cluster's CEO, Alejo Trullás. "Our city has

The Cluster's superyacht members believe that membership of the association has already resulted in important commercial benefits.

"We are very pleased to be part of the Barcelona Clúster Nàutic," says Varador 2000's CEO, Xiqui Mas. "It brings together the most important companies in Barcelona's marine industry. It is very important to know that someone cares about industry trends and is trying to identify the needs of marine companies in terms of economic and business opportunities. It is also very good from the point of view of innovation and training. We feel that the Cluster is a great initiative and

Barcelona has successfully established itself as a major superyacht hub, reaffirmed by the recent news that the MYBA Charter Show will be held in the city for at least the next three years. The first show, which runs from 24-27 April 2017, is expected to bring together 60 superyachts of up to 100m.

Another indicator is the €80m investment by UK-based Salamanca Group in OneOcean Port Vell to construct 150 berths of up to 190m. An additional €5m redevelopment will see eight more berths open this year.

Yacht Chartering conference

Barcelona is also holding The Future for Yacht Chartering conference this year on Tuesday 11th October at OneOcean Port Vell.

"There are still a lot of issues to discuss in connection with yacht chartering in Spain and further afield," explains Lorna Titley, a director at Quaynote Communications, which is hosting the conference in partnership with Barcelona Clúster Nàutic and *Superyacht Business*.

"There is the new Customs Code, tax variations between EU countries, what to expect from Port State Control inspections, and the process of applying for a charter licence.

"With the scenic city of Barcelona providing an impressive backdrop, The Future of Yacht Chartering will be a first-class networking opportunity for brokers, superyacht managers, lawyers, regulatory authorities, yacht registries, captains, industry associations, and anyone with a business interest in the growth of superyacht chartering. **SB**

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excellent infrastructure and it is our mission to boost our superyacht competitiveness in order to encourage wealth generation and job creation in and around the city.

"Our membership includes all parts of the marine industry, but the superyacht sector is our main focus because most of our members now work in superyacht refit, technical services and marina management.

"We have excellent backing from regional and national government, and we have been working very hard to improve the legal and fiscal issues of superyachting in Spain."

that it deserves our full support."

It's a view shared by other major superyacht players. "The Cluster opens up business possibilities," explains Pepe García-Aubert, CEO of superyacht refit and repair firm, MB'92, which is currently investing €45m in new infrastructure – a move that will create around 300 new jobs.

"Through the Cluster we are actively working to make important advances in national legislation and the interpretation of fiscal regulations that apply to the Spanish superyacht sector," adds García-Aubert.