



Yacht Maker Transforms Customer Experience With Revolutionary Computing Platform

Customer: Lazzara Yachts

Web Site: www.lazzarayachts.com

Customer Size: 150 employees

Country or Region: United States

Industry: Manufacturing—Consumer goods manufacturing

Partner: Infusion Development

www.infusion.com

Customer Profile

Founded in 1990 and based in Tampa, Florida, family-owned Lazzara Yachts specializes in designing and building a limited quantity of high-quality, innovative yachts for customers worldwide.

Software and Services

- Microsoft Surface
- Technologies
 - Microsoft Virtual Earth
 - Windows Vista®
 - Windows® Presentation Foundation
- Windows Live
 - Windows Live Photo Gallery

Hardware

- Microsoft Surface

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Rich Lazzara, Vice President, Lazzara Yachts

Business Needs

Purchasing a yacht is an emotionally charged and uniquely personal experience. Prospective buyers often see the purchase as a long-term investment: the centerpiece of family entertainment, the realization of a lifelong dream, and the fruit of years of hard work. For five decades, family-owned yacht designer and maker Lazzara Yachts has carved out a niche in the yachting industry by offering a highly personalized buying experience to its clientele.

Over the years, the company used video segments to augment brochures, catalogs, and walk-through tours of the boats on display. Most recently, Lazzara used an Apple TV device for its multimedia sales presentation. But, this device did not offer the kind of interactive, multiuser experience that the company wanted.

Says Rich Lazzara, Vice President of Lazzara Yachts, “Customers want to see and touch and get a feel for how their choice of carpeting or wood paneling is going to look in their boat when it’s done.”

Solution

Recently, company owners attended a boat show, where a team of Microsoft® representatives provided demonstrations of Microsoft Surface™, a multitouch computing device and platform that lets users manipulate digital information without the need for a mouse or keyboard.

The company contacted the Microsoft regional sales team in Florida, which connected Lazzara with Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Infusion Development, a global technology-consulting firm that specializes in working with emerging Microsoft technologies. Says Greg Brill, CEO of Infusion Development, “After our first conversation with the Lazzara team, we knew they ‘got it’—that Surface is the ultimate sales augmentation tool.”

Realizing an Interactive Show Room

Brill’s project team created the Retail Concierge, a comprehensive presentation module designed around Lazzara’s experience in working with thousands of customers over the years. The module incorporates the four main tenets of Microsoft Surface computing

to provide a compelling way for interested buyers to interact with a Lazzara yacht before ever setting foot on its deck:

- **Direct interaction.** Prospective customers can “grab” and manipulate digital information, such as a yacht floor-plan display, to view it from different angles.
- **Multitouch contact.** Because the device recognizes dozens of contact points simultaneously—unlike most touch-screen displays, which register contact from a single input—Lazzara can encourage multiple parties to participate in the sales discussion.
- **Multiuser experience.** The horizontal form factor and highly intuitive interface of Microsoft Surface means boat captains, prospective owners, and Lazzara sales staff can all gather around the device together to explore everything from technical specifications to interior décor options.
- **Object recognition.** Lazzara uses the device’s capability for recognizing tagged objects to let its clientele instantly visualize a variety of customizations. For example, sales personnel can tag a wood sample and place it on a picture of the room to give would-be buyers a glimpse of what the interior of their yacht could look like.



Delivering a Revolutionary Yachting Experience

The second phase of the project involves installing Microsoft Surface in the salon of a Lazzara Yacht as a custom option.

Before setting sail, the boat owner, along with family members and friends, can access listings of restaurants and view detailed information about local attractions. The Infusion Development team created an application for Microsoft Surface called Nautical Way Finder. This application uses Microsoft Virtual Earth™ to let yachters plot a course and virtually navigate to destinations along the designated route.

While cruising at sea, travelers can enjoy photos taken during the voyage by simply placing any camera with an Eye-Fi memory card on the Microsoft Surface and watching as the photos spill out onto the display. They can then select individual photos to share from Windows Live™ Photo Gallery, which synchronizes automatically when a connection to the Internet is restored.

The yachting industry offers the perfect business scenario to take advantage of on-premise software capabilities and cloud-based computing services. Microsoft Surface and the Microsoft Sync Framework technology ensure that the application is functional, immersive, and fun, whether in port-of-call locations or on the high sea.

Benefits

By using Retail Concierge built on Microsoft Surface, Lazzara provides a more hands-on buying experience for its clientele. And, both the show room and onboard application of this innovative device reinforce the Lazzara brand identity as the foremost provider of custom yacht design and manufacturing.

Improves Quality of Sales Process

The unique functional capabilities of Microsoft Surface, including object recognition and simultaneous detection of dozens of contact points, gives prospective buyers a more compelling way to interact with information and visualize custom options. Says Lazzara, “We’ve found that the people who visit our show room are more engaged now because it’s not just our sales team presenting information; our clients realize they can help shape the buying process.”

Enhances Brand Differentiation

The company’s use of Microsoft Surface in its show room and its plan to include the device as an option on its yachts align with the company’s efforts to distinguish Lazzara from competitors. “Deploying Microsoft Surface in our show room has created a lot of marketing buzz. People can’t help but tell their family, friends, and co-workers about the experience at Lazzara Yachts,” says Lazzara.

Strengthens Customer Loyalty and Drives Future Demand

Historically, owners of Lazzara Yachts have been the company’s biggest and most important boosters, promoting the company’s commitment to quality, innovation, and personalized service. They fully expect that the addition of a Microsoft Surface device onboard its yachts will strengthen brand loyalty within its ownership network and drive increased demand for its yachts over time. “Yachters are competitive people,” says Lazzara. “When a Lazzara yacht pulls into a slip at a marina and people see the Microsoft Surface onboard, we’re confident that they’re going to want one of our yachts.”