

AHOY CLUB

Whether chartering a superyacht around the Med or planning one night on the water in the Caribbean, a new app means you can book the whole thing in under five minutes.

More than 3,600 yachts can be chartered on Ahoy Club's platform



■ In 2018, Australian entrepreneur Ian Malouf and his daughter Ellie launched Ahoy Club, a digital platform through which clients can book a superyacht charter, access a 24/7 concierge service and see updates on their favourite fleets, such as refits and renovations. “The inspiration for Ahoy Club came from our love for yachting,” says Ellie. “But it was clear that the industry had three primary areas for improvement—accessibility, tech innovation and value for money.”

In an age where we demand technology does all the work for us, and does it now, Ahoy Club follows in the footsteps of Uber and Airbnb, fast becoming a charterer's essential download. “You can book a charter within 24 hours, while traditional communication methods can still take months,” says Ellie. When she and Ian bought their first yacht *Mischief* in 2015, they realised that sending out brochures and signing physical contracts were just small parts of a painfully out-dated system. “We kept asking, as both owners and charterers, why can't we just send links?”

Now, Ahoy Club members can swipe through over 3,600 boats, comparing factors like speed, size and location, and then send an enquiry. If it's accepted, a digital contract is automatically drawn up via DocuSign, and the booking completed in minutes. “We had one client in Ibiza who wasn't happy with the hotel they booked—so they got in touch with us, and by the time they'd got a cab to the wharf, we had a yacht lined up for them. That was on a Saturday.”

But the very nature of technology means it ages quickly—so how does Ellie's team keep up? “It's important to be prepared and be able to pivot quickly to be the best. As a company, we have a path of constant improvement for all of our features, and there are a series of great improvements which we are constantly implementing to enhance the charter experience.”

And while it's an experience many are willing to pay for, Ahoy Club also ensures that users make a saving when using the platform, by cutting out the middle man. “We've significantly reduced the once-standard 20 percent commission structure

of the industry,” Ellie explains. “Anyone that charters a superyacht with Ahoy Club gains access to significant discounts and can save as much as 30 percent, too.” Prices can be tailored by yacht owners, too, depending on low-season demand or last-minute offers, and filtering options is quick and easy with pricing displayed in real-time according to the dates that a user selects.

Ahoy Club's team visit the hottest charter destinations prior to peak seasons so they can advise on the latest things to eat, see and play. With digital itineraries and video content built into the platform, users also benefit from travel tips and a concierge on hand 24/7 to help with last-minute reservations. “That's what sets us apart,” says Ellie. “Not only do we provide a seamless experience at your fingertips, but we have a global concierge service based in Sydney, London and France which means we can customise trips according to requirements, and people get the all-important human touch alongside our automated technology.” Where do we DocuSign up? ahoyclub.com **Anna Prendergast**