Digital Yacht's affordable AIT1500 Class B AIS transponder makes a splash at the London Boat Show

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Digital Yacht complete their family of Class B AIS transponders with the introduction of the very affordable AIT1500. Designed specifically to bring the benefits of Class B AIS to smaller vessels, it uses a high sensitivity internal GPS antenna to save on space and cut down on installation time. Simply connect to power and a plotter, plug in a VHF antenna and you’re in business. It also has a 2nd output for a DSC radio (useful as a GPS source) and a USB interface for programming or for PC/MAC based navigation.

An AIS transponder send your boat’s identity, position, course and speed to other vessels equipped with an AIS unit. This data can then be interfaced to a chart plotter display to present an overlay of targets with their heading information. It greatly aids navigation and helps with collision avoidance. Signals are transmitted over two dedicated VHF frequencies so typical range from a Class B unit is 10-20 NM depending upon antenna height. All commercial ships over 300 GRT are mandated to carry a Class A AIS transponder.

Other users including yachtsmen can opt for the cheaper Class B type units like the AIT1500. Class B units are fully integrated into the AIS system but have a lower 2W transmit power and only send their data every 30 seconds.

The AIT1500 is waterproof and tough and can be hidden away behind the console or tucked into a locker. The NMEA 0183 interface is compatible with the vast majority of AIS ready chart plotters. There’s also a silence capability so the transmissions can be muted (keep those pirates away!) yet it will continue to receive AIS target data. It joins the AIT2000 and AIT3000 in the Digital Yacht family.

See it first at the London Boat Show 9-18th January Stand. A press launch will be held at 1pm, Friday 9th January Stand A079.