Digital Yacht announce new product that takes NMEA 2000® data and makes it available via WiFi

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It’s not surprising that the iPad and other WiFi consumer devices have caught the eye of most boat owners with their gorgeous, touch sensitive, colour displays and interesting range of navigation apps. But getting data from the boat’s system has been tricky – up until now.

At the Southampton Boat Show (CA Clase stand G091), Digital Yacht, will introduce a revolutionary new product called NavLink which takes NMEA 2000® data and makes it available via WiFi, so devices like an iPad or iPhone can be used to display on board navigation data. Existing laptops or netbooks can also link wirelessly to NavLink. And for a more permanent, wired installation there is also an optional USB interface, which is available to communicate with a PC or MAC running navigation software.

NMEA 2000® has become the new standard for onboard, electronic, system networks. Most major electronic equipment manufacturers now support this plug ‘n’ play standard as it allows equipment to inter-communicate without interfacing issues. Leading boat builders are also embracing the standard on all new builds. What makes it even more appealing is that it greatly eases installation, by utilising a backbone type arrangement where items connect using simple spur cables to create an integrated system. Strict standards ensure the system is fool-proof and inherently reliable.

NavLink creates a local, onboard, WiFi “hotspot” and sends data across the network using either a UDP or TCP/IP connection which is compatible with many PC Navigation packages and iPad/iPhone apps such as iNavX, iOnBoard and NMEA Remote. You don’t even have to be hooked up to the internet for the system to work. Just connect to the NavLink hotspot and you’re in business. Navigation data from the NMEA 2000® network including AIS, GPS and instrument information is then available on your wireless device. NavLink creates an onboard network which should footprint most vessels up to about 20m in length. It’s also possible to extend the range for larger vessels.

Digital Yacht has their own, certified version of NMEA 2000®, called N2NET, and in the future customers will see more and more products enabled with this interface. NavLink costs £349.95 excluding VAT and will be available from September. For further information visit us at Southampton Boat Show on the CA Clase stand (G091).