Digital Yacht launches a wireless AIS & navigation system for the iPhone & iPad

Have you ever thought about using an iPhone as a sophisticated marine device? Digital Yacht are leaders in developing and producing innovative and affordable marine electronics and have developed a new, low cost navigation device specifically designed to work with Apple's popular range of mobile products. Called iAIS, it wirelessly links a boat's navigation data to the Apple iPhone, iPad or iTouch. It also incorporates a highly sophisticated, dual channel Automatic Identification System (AIS) receiver and NMEA data converter allowing compatible “apps” access to NMEA instrument, GPS and AIS data.

Digital Yacht has its own free app which provides an AIS overlay on a simple radar like display plus also an AIS target list. It’s also supported by the premier navigation app, iNAVx, which provides a complete set of navigation functions that turns your portable Apple device into a fully functional, electronic chart plotter. We expect many more compatible apps for iPhone, iPad, Android and other WiFi enabled hardware platforms to become available soon.

In simple terms an AIS receiver helps boaters identify other yachts, ships and vessels nearby, that are equipped with an AIS transponder. The iAIS device decodes these transmissions, so iPad and iPhone users simply turn on their device to wirelessly connect to the iAIS hot spot. No connection to the internet is needed and there are no cumbersome cables to connect. The AIS data (which brings information such as position, name, call sign, MMSI number, course and speed of other ships) then becomes available for any compatible application. This information is essential in alerting boaters to others in close proximity and can help calculate if paths are likely to cross and how soon. AIS is an essential piece of kit that enthusiasts and professionals alike will not set sail without, as it is proving to be key in collision avoidance.

iAIS also multiplexes any other NMEA data that is available on board the boat â€“ for instance GPS, depth, speed, wind etc. All of this information is combined with the AIS data into the wireless feed. You’ll also get substantially improved GPS readings on any compatible application as iAIS can use your on board systems
for position fixing – not the internal micro GPS installed on some Apple products. The iAIS black box just requires a connection to a standard AIS / VHF antenna.

iAIS is priced at $499 and is also compatible with any PC or other application (Android, Windows Mobile etc) that can accept wireless (TCP/IP) data for navigation information. With hundreds of millions of potential display platforms already in the market and an eager consumer base looking for ways to expand their functionality, Digital Yacht are expecting a huge demand for these types of consumer to marine market bridging products.

iAIS is compatible with apps such as iNAVx—providing users with a wireless data feed of instrument AIS and GPS.