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Media release



## **Stabicraft launches innovative Virtual Reality boat to North American customers**

Iconic New Zealand boat manufacturer Stabicraft is pioneering the use of virtual reality technology to market its product to customers at one of North America's largest boat shows later this month.

Customers at the Seattle Boat Show will be able to don a VR headset, climb on board a floating Stabicraft 1550 and enjoy an immersive and interactive experience, taking the controls on open water, walk around and try out different colours and optional fittings.

Stabicraft CEO and founder Paul Adams said the company is blazing a trail in the use of VR technology in New Zealand's marine industry, the first to develop an experience of this kind and take it to market.

"Up to 60,000 commercial and recreational fishing customers, companies and enthusiasts attend the Seattle boat show every year so we're always looking to innovate.

"We had customers asking to see this particular model, but it wasn't in production in time to ship to the show. We spotted the potential of VR technology to break down the barrier of distance between the company and our markets such as North America."

Stabicraft approached Digital Stock, the successful new Invercargill-based software development and technology company.

"What Digital Stock has produced is mind-blowing. It is incredible how real it is, a complete immersive and interactive experience without distraction, allowing customers to validate some key factors such as size, shape, vision prior to making any purchase decisions.

"The VR 1550 boat will be a learning opportunity for us as a powerful global sales and marketing tool, easing the costs of shipping vessels around the world to trade shows and their global distributors.

"No boat dealership is able to have all our models in stock at any one time nor are we able to have the full array at trade shows. Having the ability to give customers a VR ride is a perfect solution, much more powerful than a brochure or website."

Digital Stock director Jim Dowling says while VR is not new as a technology, it's in its very early stages of being shifted from the realm of gamers into the world of commercial practical applications.

"We can do a lot with VR. It has two key practical uses in a commercial setting, as a sales and marketing tool and as a way for teams in design and production to test concepts and prototypes."

**Notes to editor**

Stabicraft will launch its VR boat at the Seattle Boat Show from 27th January- 4th February 2017. An example of the VR clip is available.

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