

The Superyacht Report

A MAGAZINE WORTH READING

176
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BUSINESS

Moran Yacht & Ship President, Rob Moran

Responsible for the sale and management of some of the world's largest superyacht projects, the inimitable principal of the US-based firm is in a unique position to evaluate the state of the custom superyacht market and brokerage as a discipline.

OWNER

There are few more prolific owners than John Rosatti. Having owned 20 yachts of various sizes throughout his life, Rosatti knows a thing or two about running a tight ship. And he pulls no punches in conversation with TSR.

TECHNOLOGY

The aerial threat on the horizon

The privacy of owners and guests could be compromised by the growing prevalence of drones. So how can a yacht be fortified and what is the legality of proactive deterrence?

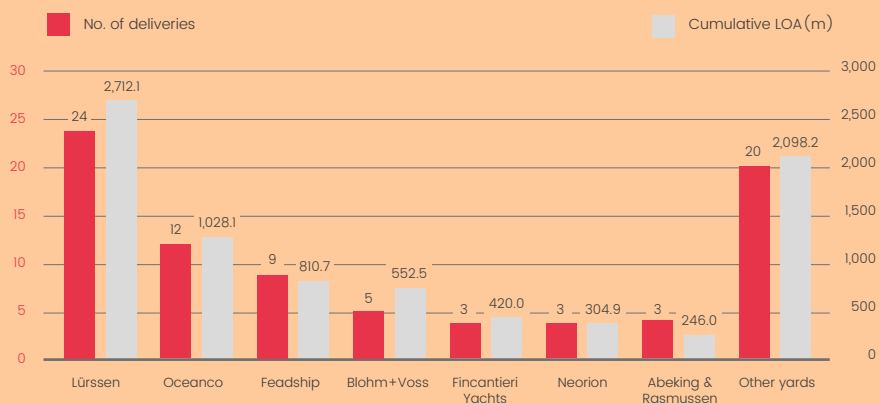
OPERATIONS

"There are too many managers and owners who assume 'no news is good news'."

FLEET

The Superyacht 80m+ Motoryacht Report

Number of 80m+ M/Y deliveries and cumulative LOA(m):
1997-2016



BUYER

Expanding into Asia

Camper & Nicholson's International is exploring Eastern frontiers amid a period of significant change for the organisation, as MD Paolo Casani explains.

DESIGN

The evolution of the owner's deck, and how this once-radical use of space on large yachts has now become the norm.

The disruptive professor

BY JUSTIN RATCLIFFE

Professor Hans Georg Näder heads the Ottobock medical technology group in Germany. In 2013, he became the majority shareholder in Baltic Yachts, where he is building his sixth Pink Gin. Justin Ratcliffe met the charismatic entrepreneur in Berlin to find out more about his high-tech, yet humanistic, approach to business and building boats.



An interview with
Professor Hans Georg
Näder in Berlin



BEAUTY



TECHNOLOGY OF BEAUTY: THIS IS FINCANTIERI YACHTS.
GENIUS DESIGNED FOR BEAUTY. THE DESIRE TO BE UNIQUE, ALWAYS.

FINCANTIERI
YACHTS

TECHNOLOGY OF BEAUTY

CHAPTER#1_UNIQUENESS
CHAPTER#3_GENIUS

fincantieriyachts.com

Professor Näder is not your typical corporate executive. With his shock of ivory hair and penchant for colourful scarves and Cuban cigars, he looks more like an artist or composer than the CEO of a company that produces 60 per cent of the world's prosthetic aids, generates annual revenues of over a billion euros and employs some 8,000 people in more than 50 countries. In fact, this first impression is not so far from the truth.

Näder sees himself as the 'conductor' of the Ottobock empire, identifying technological innovation and the employment of the right people in the right place as the keys to the success of the family-managed company set up by his grandfather almost a century ago. Since acquiring an 80 per cent stake in Baltic Yachts, he is applying the same business principles to reignite the Finnish brand in today's challenging market.

"I shouldn't give advice to people who have been in the industry for many years," says Näder in his self-effacing way. "I can only focus on best practice, which for me is driven by quality, innovation and expanding the portfolio."

The muscle house

Our meeting takes place at the Ottobock Science Center in downtown Berlin. Known as the 'muscle house' for its organic facade inspired by human muscle fibres that also recalls the flowing lines of a yacht, the building is an eye-catching piece of architecture among the city's traditional stone buildings. Näder has just flown in from Rio de Janeiro where he had attended the Paralympic Games. His company has been at the heart of the Paralympic movement since the 1988 Games in Seoul, and the Science Center provides interactive insight into the technologies the company has developed to enhance mobility.

These solutions range from carbon-fibre running blades and custom wheelchairs for Paralympic athletes to microprocessor-controlled limbs that simulate the natural movement of the knee joint and bionic hands that can be controlled by muscle signals to execute different types of grasping. The company's commitment to neuro-orthopaedic research is personified by two bronze sculptures of a homunculus on the roof of the Science Center. Derived from the Latin for 'little man', the curious figures represent a neurological map in human form of the motor and sensory parts of the body.

Disruptive design

The link between prosthetics and superyachts might seem a tenuous one, but the synergy derives from Näder's fascination with technology and progress. 'Neugierig' is one of those wonderfully concise German adjectives used to express our curiosity to know more and discover new things. Struggling to find the right translation, Näder draws on the word to describe his own inquisitive nature and, in particular, his obsession with innovation through disruption.

"Innovation is all about finding solutions that work," he says, flourishing a prototype prosthetic hand made from silicon. "At Ottobock, we innovate every day and have progressed from mechanical to mechatronic solutions in a disruptive way. We're now working on mind-body interfaces and moving into biotech with 3D-printed muscles and tissues."

In the same manner, Näder views the superyacht industry as fertile ground for disruptive design and technology. *Pink Gin VI*, in build at Baltic Yachts, is a prime example of his philosophy at work. When the 54m sailing yacht is launched later this year, it will be the largest carbon-fibre sloop in the world.



Below: Professor Näder with his former captain Henry Hawkins, now CEO of Baltic Yachts.

Right: Näder pictured during the interview that took place at the Ottobrock Science Center.



Justin Ratcliffe

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“I can only focus on best practice, which for me is driven by quality, innovation and expanding the portfolio.”



Justin Ratcliffe



SL RANGE

Pascoe Limousines represent the perfect combination of elegance, sophistication and practicality. Tailored to ensure that each client is able to demonstrate their own individual style.



But her innovative design goes beyond size and the use of advanced composites in almost every aspect of her construction. The yacht will also feature Baltic's Force Feedback System, a revolutionary electronic steering package derived from the automotive industry that mimics the nuances of load and movement. The system was developed in conjunction with Esoro, the Swiss company that designed *Tonic*, the amphibious tender to *Pink Gin V* that still holds the record for the fastest crossing of the English Channel by an amphibious vehicle.

"Ottobock already works with leading suppliers in the automotive field," says Näder, who recently ordered the new Tesla SUV. "What we're trying to do in a holistic way is gather our connections with other industries and the know-how we have throughout the group, then put them at the disposal of Baltic."

Lifelong learning

Like most owners of his generation, Näder learned to sail as a youngster at his local sailing club (one of his most vivid childhood memories is capsizing an Optimist when he was six). His love of the sea and yachting was further nurtured by holidays in Sardinia aboard a series of family motorboats that culminated in 82ft *Sunny Day*, the last wooden hull to be built by Alalunga in Italy, which remains in the family to this day. This classic yacht, completely restored and upgraded last year by Baltic Yachts, goes to show that traditional craftsmanship and technological progress can go hand in hand.



Justin Ratcliffe

Above: prototype prosthetic hands made of composite and silicon materials at the Ottobock Science Center in Berlin (top).



Ingrid Abery

It was in Sardinia that Näder first met Per Göran Johansson, one of Baltic's founders, and designer Rolf Vrolijk. The meeting led to a contract for the first 97ft *Pink Gin* delivered in 1999, and other orders followed. But by 2013, the brand was going through a difficult transition period in the wake of the financial crisis and Johansson's retirement, which prompted Näder to invest in the company when he was thousands of miles away in Uruguay aboard *Pink Gin V*. Based on the fundamental values of trust and reliability, one of his first actions was to install Henry Hawkins, his long-standing captain, as CEO of the company.

"Developing people and enabling lifelong learning have always been among my priorities," he explains. "Henry and I had covered many thousands of miles aboard previous *Pink Gins* and often talked about what would be his next step. He had both the knowledge and the talent – it was a natural choice."

Pushing the portfolio

As one of the first to eschew fibreglass construction in favour of carbon fibre, Baltic is renowned for its 'lighter, stiffer, faster' cruiser-racers such as *Visione*, *Black Pearl*, *Nikata* and *My Song*. But since Näder and Hawkins joined the company, it has branched out into more unfamiliar territory. Last year, the shipyard announced a partnership with Mercedes for the series production of its Arrow 460 sports boat; construction is starting on a 24m semi-planing motoryacht designed by Germán 'Mani' Frers; and during the 2016 Monaco Yacht Show, Baltic teamed



Collis Design Studio



Justin Ratcliffe



Guido Cantini/Sea & Sea

Above: the Baltic 115 Nikata.

Left, from top: the Baltic 130 My Song; the Baltic shipyard in Jakobstad, Finland; Tonic, the amphibious craft that was tender to Näder's Pink Gin V.

up with Australian Olympic sailor Mitch Booth to promote his BlackCat concept, a 50m super-catamaran with naval architecture by Malcolm McKeon. At the start of 2017, the shipyard further announced a new division, Baltic Motor Yachts, and its own range of power cruisers up to 41m. It goes without saying that all these projects will be built using advanced composites.

"Back in 2013, the management team was challenged to look at its reliance on big custom sailboat projects, and the peaks and troughs that come with that," explains Hawkins. "We were led by Professor Näder to pursue new partners and series projects that still remain true to the Baltic ethos in terms of quality and branding."

As a Baltic owner and majority stakeholder in the company, with invaluable contacts within the yachting fraternity and beyond, Näder is the ideal brand ambassador. Clearly he wants to grow the company – turnover is projected to almost double to €60 million by 2020 and there is tantalising talk of further acquisitions – but not beyond its means.

"We don't take orders when we know from the beginning that we will lose money, which some builders do just to survive," Näder points out. "We have to earn the money to reinvest, but there is no burden for growth and I don't want a shipyard with 500 employees. We want interesting, profitable projects where we can use our capacity and know-how to best effect."

Silicon Valley spirit

The second part of our interview takes place at the Open Innovation Space, an infrastructure set up by Ottobock on the site of the former Bötzwor brewery where academic institutions and start-up companies can develop and test their ideas. The initiative effectively recreates the entrepreneurial spirit of Silicon Valley in the middle of Berlin.

"With this unique combination of co-working spaces, high tech and creativity, we ignite our innovation rocket in Berlin," announced Näder at the facility's inauguration in 2015. Offering young minds affordable access to a digital fabrication workshop, 3D printers, laser cutters, CNC milling cutters and CAD software, he describes the facility as "a breeding ground for new, creative ideas that lead to inventions". One project underway is a rehabilitation app for patients with knee injuries to continue their post-surgery physiotherapy at home.

The fun factor

The launch of *Pink Gin VI* promises to be a milestone event for Baltic Yachts, and Näder hopes to harness the occasion to full effect. His plan is to invite superyacht owners, selected journalists and forward thinkers from outside the industry for a brainstorming or mapping session to generate feedback and ideas that can be integrated into future projects. Obviously, such a gathering serves a tactical purpose, but for the progressive, focused yet down-to-earth and playful entrepreneur, it would also be fun.

"Being an entrepreneur is fun," says Näder, taking a pull on his cigar. "It has to be, otherwise you shouldn't do it." **JR**