

PRESIDENT'S *Corner*

The International Convention of Allied Sportfishing Trades (ICAST) 2009, held July 15–17 at the Orlando County Convention Center in Orlando, Fla., was one of the best shows we've had in many years, and I thank all the members of the industry—our Board of Directors, buyers, exhibitors, American Sportfishing Association (ASA) members, our partners and the media—for their support and participation. I also want to thank the ASA staff for the tremendous effort it made to ensure a successful show for our member exhibitors and attendees alike. Our theme this year was “Where Sportfishing Means Business” and we made that message our rallying point.

Florida is the epicenter of sportfishing in the United States and possibly the world. The tradeshow's Florida location made it easier for retail business owners and media representatives from the Southeastern United States as well as industry leaders from Europe and South America to attend the show, something they may not have been able to do in recent years.

I admit we were gun shy about leaving Las Vegas, but everyone seems to have embraced the Orlando show location and it exceeded our expectations in terms of attendance. We had a record crowd of nearly



7,400 representatives from the global sportfishing community at the show. With strong attendance from Florida and the Southeast, more than 2,300 buyers and 525 media representatives attended the show. International ICAST attendance also continues to grow with more than 700 attendees from 63 countries represented at ICAST 2009.

Each year the quality of products unveiled at the New Product Showcase amazes me and this year was no different. I congratulate all of the winners and everyone who participated in the New Product Showcase, from the companies who worked hard to develop these innovations to the buyers and media who served as judges. I could go on, but I believe what is most important is saying thank you for your participation and attendance. It's also important to note that the Showcase is not only for established companies. Three first-time ICAST exhibitors were Showcase winners. In addition eight returning ICAST exhibitors were also first-time winners with three 2008 showcase winners also taking honors this year.

Despite the sluggish economy and tough unemployment numbers, a strong show floor and attendance from buyers and media indicates that sportfishing remains a solid industry not just in Florida but across the United

States. In this economy people know they need to be smart about where and how they do business. I'm gratified that attending ICAST was high on everyone's list.

In addition to ICAST, there is no better forum in which to discuss the issues before the sportfishing industry than at the 2009 Sportfishing Summit being held Oct. 27–29 at the Rancho Bernardo Inn in San Diego. We have a great agenda planned for this year's summit. The association's annual business meeting is the best opportunity to hear the latest on sportfishing issues that affect your business and participate in the industry's future.

Attending the Summit is an investment of time and resources. For some of our retail and smaller manufacturing members, time away from your business can be difficult, but I assure you there is no better investment in the future of your business.

Once again, thank you for making ICAST a success, and I look forward to seeing you in San Diego. ■

Mike Nussman
President & CEO