

Industry Looks to the Future as Doors Close on Successful Oceanology International Americas Show



Organiser Reed Exhibitions reports that Oceanology International Americas 2019 (OiA '19), which took place in the San Diego Convention Centre, experienced significant growth on 2017's debut North American event. A total of 174 exhibitors put on a cutting-edge display of technology, equipment and services for a total attendance of 3,133 visitors from across the Americas (against 2,968 in

2017). OiA '19 was also the flagship 50th anniversary event in the long-running Oceanology International ocean science and technology exhibition and conference series, which began in relatively modest circumstances in Brighton in 1969.

"It's very rewarding to consider that Oceanology International has been such an indispensable shop window, networking portal and facilitator for the ocean science community for half a century now," says Exhibition Director Jonathan Heastie, "and it's a pleasure to confirm that the 50th anniversary celebrations in San Diego went incredibly well. The occasion was marked by a presentation on the show floor where six ocean science and technology community leaders spoke about the most momentous ocean science advances to have occurred over the last five decades.

"The presentation concluded with a thought-provoking glimpse of the future, when Pete Warden of Google Brain and Blair Thornton from the University of Southampton outlined their thoughts on the continuing development of artificial intelligence and robotics, and what this could signify for the world of ocean science."

New products and new opportunities

On a typically well-stocked show floor, space was given over to the fascinating Future Tech Hub, devised to showcase boundary-pushing products from new-to-market technologists including Blueprint Lab, Deck Marine Systems, Loggerhead Systems, Thayer Mahan and DiveNet.

However, many OI exhibitors of long standing were also in attendance, among them Kongsberg Maritime. "Oceanology International is an important event for us to connect with existing customers and demonstrate new capabilities to the industry, both on the show floor and in the technical sessions of the conference," said Richard Mills, Director Marine Robotics Sales, Kongsberg Maritime. "At OiA '19 we showcased our HUGIN Superior and Eelume subsea vehicles to people who may not have seen them before, as well as presenting complex topics such as collaborative systems for over-the-horizon unmanned survey capabilities. We appreciate the growing exposure gained and the opportunity that being here has provided."



Oceanology International Americas 2019 exhibition floor.

"The event provided an awesome excuse to show current and potential customers our new products as well as discussing new opportunities," added William Mildon, President, Hydro Group Systems Inc. "We also loved Reed Exhibitions' new Emperia app, which enables exhibitors to digitally collect sales leads."

"It was such a great show," enthused Sarah Zweng, Field Marketing Manager, Liquid Robotics, "a massive improvement upon the 2017 event here, with exhibitors and attendees all making it a worthwhile and beneficial event. Socialising was also great fun and well executed."

In- and on-water demonstrations

Many exhibitors took advantage of OiA '19's waterside location, staging in- and on-water demonstrations which ran across all three days of the event. These included daily outings for the DriX autonomous surface vessel from iXBlue, a global provider of solutions and services for navigation, positioning and imaging. Teledyne Marine also seized the opportunity to demonstrate its imaging technology on the water, while Marine Sonic displayed its towed side scan sonar in the bay behind the convention centre.

San Diego itself was well represented. On OiA '19's opening day, delegates were invited to meet some of the prime movers behind the 'Propel San Diego' initiative, wherein six partner organisations are collaborating to reinforce the resilience of the area's defence supply chain in the face of fluctuating budgets and other factors. Similarly, representatives from the Port of San Diego outlined their plans and requirements for future port operations across a number of fields including inspection, hydrography and technology.

On the opening day, attendees enjoyed the OceanSocial Happy Hour in the Marine Institutes Pavilion, one of a number of networking events throughout the show designed to introduce delegates to buyers and suppliers from the marine science and ocean technology community. Reflecting Oceanology International's British origins, the UK Government Office even hosted an 'English tea break and networking hour'.

Catch The Next Wave

The OiA '19 conference schedule also exceeded its brief in the sheer scope and detail of the content it provided. The one-day Ocean Futures Forum event, making its US debut, examined the role of ocean science and technology in shaping the trajectory of a viable Blue Economy. Dr Wendy Watson-Wright, Chief Executive Officer of the Ocean Frontier Institute (OFI), delivered a vitally important 'one planet, one ocean' message, stressing that the development of the Blue Economy should not come at the expense of the ocean environment.

Another one-day event, Catch The Next Wave, covered the complementary and mutually motivational disciplines of science and exploration. Don Walsh, President of International Maritime Inc, delivered an opening keynote address which paid warm tribute to the late Walter Munk, the storied physical oceanographer and geophysicist who did so much in his eight-decade career to foster an understanding of ocean currents, tidal behaviour and, in latter years, climate change and its effects upon sea levels.

Catch The Next Wave highlights also included a talk from Pieter-Jan Note of Project Mahi, who outlined his team's efforts to develop, build and launch an unmanned, autonomous vessel to cross the Atlantic Ocean, and the presentation of a Lifetime Achievement Award to the Scripps Institution of Oceanography Director, Dr Margaret Leinen.



The one-day Ocean Futures Forum event made its US debut at OiA 19.

"Wherever attendees looked, there was something to attract their attention," adds Jonathan Heastie. "Quite apart from the plethora of information on offer, many were only too happy to avail themselves of the chance to try out interactive models on exhibitors' stands, like Blue Robotics' ocean-exploring robots, which delegates could operate by means of an Xbox controller. The feedback we have received has been unanimously positive, and all of this obviously bodes extremely well for the next Oi event back in London."

Oceanology International 2020 is scheduled to take place on 17-19 March 2020 in the ExCel, London. You can register your interest, book an exhibition space or simply find out more at: <https://www.oceanologyinternational.com>.

<https://www.hydro-international.com/content/news/industry-looks-to-the-future-as-doors-close-on-successful-oceanology-international-america-show>
