

Freedom Boat Sisters & Allies

The Playbook

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Welcome aboard!

Hello!

We are excited to welcome you as you embark on a journey to create a local chapter of **Freedom Boat Sisters** within your Freedom Boat Club territory.

At its core, Freedom Boat Sisters is meant to be a vehicle that empowers women to get on the water with confidence through educational, fun, and community-driven activations. This initiative aligns perfectly with the core values of Freedom Boat Club – simplicity, safety, education, and fun. Freedom Boat Club is well-positioned to be on the forefront of building boating participation, and this program is another tool to keep us engaging with existing - and new - boaters.

As you continue through this playbook and start to build your local chapter of Freedom Boat Sisters, please know that we are here to help you, whether you have questions, need ideas, or simply want to share your progress.

Cheers to your future success, and we look forward to seeing you (and your Freedom Boat Sisters) out on the water!

Sincerely,

Five Sisters and a Brother – Your Freedom Boat Sisters Task Force

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I. Introduction

- a. Objective - Relaunch Freedom Boat Club's women-focused initiative, empowering women to get on the water with confidence through educational, fun, and community-driven activations.
- b. Pillars – Freedom Boat Sisters stands on four (4) main pillars. Each activation that takes place within your group should hit at least one of these four pillars:
 - 1) *Community* – your group should foster an open environment where all members feel welcome.
 - 2) *Education* – boater education & training are a cornerstone of Freedom Boat Club's core offerings and should be weaved into Freedom Boat Sisters as we help build confidence and empowerment among our members.
 - 3) *Empowerment* – every member who joins Freedom Boat Sisters will enter with a different level of skill and empowerment when it comes to boating. Our goal is to build on that level and raise the collective group's confidence. *A rising tide lifts all boats.*
 - 4) *Fun* – boating should be FUN! As you build a community, promote education, and raise the bar on empowerment, having fun should be at the forefront of the group.
- c. Program Benefits – As a Freedom Boat Club owner, your time is valuable. Everything you do for your business needs to drive value and help you achieve your business goals. Activating Freedom Boat Sisters initiative provides many benefits to your Club. The following are some of the main benefits:
 - 1) *Building Current Member Engagement* – At our core, Freedom Boat Club is about providing simple access to the water for our members to get out and build memories. Beyond that, how we engage with our members and create a members-only Club atmosphere beyond boating is key to retention. Member social events, local partnerships (businesses that offer discounts to our members), fishing seminars, and specialty groups such as Freedom Boat Sisters, can help keep members engaged with your Club between their boating outings.
 - a. *Bonus*: Improve the capacity of your fleet by hosting several members per boat instead of just one member on each boat. Once they begin to build friendships, they will plan trips together on their own.
 - 2) *Converting Prospective Members* – We work hard every day to build leads, educate, and convert prospects into Freedom Boat Club members. Every prospect is different – one will be drawn to reciprocity, another will like the variety of boats at their home location, and the list goes on. Some members will be drawn to our training, the opportunity to meet new people with like-minded interests, and learn a new skill. Your team's ability to highlight your Freedom Boat Sister community is an opportunity to close prospects you may not have been able to close before. Invite them to an upcoming Freedom Boat Sister event – let them experience it firsthand.

Like open houses and personal tours, allowing a prospect to experience the brand firsthand provides a higher likelihood of them joining the Club.

- 3) *Build Awareness for Freedom Boat Club* – As a collective group, we are all focused on building awareness for Freedom Boat Club. Awareness drives lead generation. Lead generation drives sales. Sales drives Club growth and sustainability. Freedom Boat Sisters provides us a unique opportunity to promote Freedom Boat Club beyond our normal selling points (simplicity, training, size & experience, fleet, etc.). The following are a few examples of how Freedom Boat Sisters can help us build awareness:
- a. Media Relations – Freedom Boat Sisters inherently is a story that we can pitch to local, national, and trade media outlets.
 - b. Social Media – highlighting the on-going efforts of Freedom Boat Sisters provides us a wealth of content to promote via social media.
 - c. Member Referrals – building on the member engagement topic above, Freedom Boat Sisters provides a turnkey opportunity for members to talk about the Club and their involvement with Freedom Boat Sisters. And what's better than talking about it? Showing it! Encourage your members to invite guests to experience Freedom Boat Sisters – it quite likely could be the guest's journey to joining the Club!
 - d. Building Strategic Partnerships – Freedom Boat Sisters provides you an opportunity to partner with women-led groups within your local chamber, outdoor recreation women's groups, popular local women's owned businesses, and more.

II. Getting Started

- a. Identifying a Leader – Every great initiative needs a captain, a boss, a chief; someone to navigate Freedom Boat Sisters within your Club. This person should be outgoing, organized, and understanding of how Freedom Boat Sisters works and the main objectives of the program (exactly the reason this playbook has been created!). While there are benefits to identifying a female lead, it is not a requirement. The most important factor is that you find someone who is passionate. The following are two (2) likely paths you'll evaluate to select a leader for your Freedom Boat Sisters initiative:
 - i. *FBC Franchise Owner or Employee* – Ideally the person leading Freedom Boat Sisters initiative for your group is an employee. Whether it's the franchisee, an operations/training lead, marketing, or some other individual; find someone who is passionate about building the group. If the leader is not the franchisee, the franchisee should remain involved and supportive of the leader to ensure a positive Club experience. Previous women's initiatives have seen a variety of leaders – Karen Berry (Vice President of Operations for FBC of Myrtle Beach), Lisa Almeida (Owner of FBC of Jacksonville & St. Augustine), and Captain Marti Wagley (Director of Training of FBC of Southwest Florida).
 - a) Keep in mind that training initiatives will need captains' support (not that they need to lead the entire program per se, but they may need to be involved for certain events, such as training events or, possibly, destination trips)
 - ii. *Existing Club Member* – There are rare occurrences where you have a member who will step forward with a desire to form (and manage) a Freedom Boat Sisters initiative. Bev Rosella, franchise owner of FBC of Delaware, South New Jersey, & Greater Hudson Valley NY, is a great example of a member-led group. While there's a great level of authenticity to hosting a members-led group, it is important the franchisee is involved and supportive of the leader in this capacity. Typically, you will not proactively "source" a member to lead the group – it will happen more organically. If this is a route you look to explore further, start by keeping an eye out on your docks (with the help of your dock masters) to identify potential leaders.
- b. Creating a Plan - *"If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail!"* Freedom Boat Sisters can be as complimentary to your business as you see fit. But like anything you do, it needs a plan. Once the leader has been identified, the following are some considerations you should plan for when mapping out Freedom Boat Sisters at your Club:
 - i. *When does the group meet?*
 1. Ideally the group is meeting on a monthly occurrence – look to mix-up the day/time so more members can get involved based on their schedules
 2. As the group grows you may find there is appetite to meet more frequently (or less frequently). Let the group dictate the gathering cadence - within reason - over time to ensure the group is adhering to the program pillars (from *section I. Introduction*)
 3. Remain flexible to take advantage of any external events or activities that pop up that can be great group activities to participate in! Some

examples include a local dolphin count or osprey nest monitoring, or even a beach clean-up day that is organized by a local environmental group.

ii. *What activities take place?*

1. Create a mix of activities that are educational, social, and charitable – education should be the main driver of Freedom Boat Sisters
2. Leverage local events to minimize the planning and management time needed internally
3. See *section III. Activations* for specific activation ideas

iii. *Budget Considerations*

1. Once an activity roadmap is laid out, the leader should put together a budget plan to review with the franchisee (if the franchisee is not the leader). The following are a few areas of considerations when preparing a budget:
 - a. Training expenses: Captain(s) time, fuel for training or excursions
 - b. Social gatherings: Are you providing any food or drink at gatherings?
 - i. Note: Alcohol during boating activities (sunset cruises, etc.) are HIGHLY discouraged. Alcohol during non-boating activities (paint night, wine tasting at a restaurant, etc.) is acceptable, but the Club should not be providing/paying. All local & federal laws should always be followed.
 - c. Apparel: Do you want to supply swag (shirts, hats, etc.) to Freedom Boat Sister members?
 - i. Note: This might be an activation you rollout after the Club has formed and is several months in.
 - ii. Freedom Boat Sisters apparel will be added to the current Freedom Boat Club Collection in the coming months

c. *Promoting within the Club (Building a Group)*

- i. The leader is in place, the plan is laid out, and the budget is approved. Now we need to build a group! Consider the following outlets to help get the word out to your membership base (See *V. Supporting Tools* for marketing collateral assets):
 1. Newsletter inclusion – consider sending as part of your monthly newsletter send, or a standalone email. Be sure to include in your welcome email that you send to all new members!
 2. Signage & flyers at the dock, office
 3. Membership Executive / Sales training and updates – be sure your sales team is aware and knowledgeable about Freedom Boat Sisters and upcoming activities so that they can include in their pitch with appropriate prospects
 4. Dock staff training – train your staff to talk about upcoming Freedom Boat Sister happenings. Consider leveraging appropriate dock staff

members to help with events to continue to build relationships and that 'Club' feel for your members.

5. Social media – utilize private Facebook group for your local Club (if applicable) to start. As the group builds, start to promote across public social channels the activities that take place within Freedom Boat Sisters.

III. Activations

- a. Look to offer your Freedom Boat Sisters group a mix of activities that keeps them engaged. Ask them what THEY want this group to be/provide for them and use their feedback to create a prioritized list of activities and events. While boating education should be at the forefront of the group to promote confidence and empowerment, don't be afraid to mix in some fun and social non-boating activities that bring the group together. Include a mix of the following:
 - i. *Educational*
 1. Rules of the Road (waterway)
 2. Confidence in Docking and Undocking
 3. Boating with Confidence: Handling Your Boat Under Way
 4. Anchoring
 5. Emergencies on Board: Preparation for Handling Common Problems
 6. Knots and Line Handling: The Knots You Need to Know
 7. Being a good first mate (and educating others to be a good first mate!)
 8. Fishing seminars
 - ii. *Social*
 1. Fishing outings
 2. Paint night
 3. Golf outing
 4. Lunch/Dinner gathering
 - a. Potluck (everyone brings a dish)
 - b. Dine-out (course pairing meal, etc.)
Can be a great avenue to build a local partnership!
 5. Trivia Night at a local establishment
 - iii. *Charitable*
 1. Discover what your Freedom Boat Sisters group is passionate about collectively and partner with local organizations
 - a. Fundraising events (food, money, clothes, toys, etc.)
 - b. Donate time (soup kitchen, Habitat for Humanity, etc.)
 - iv. *Experiential*
 1. Trips that enhance boating skills and destination knowledge
 - a. Practice Sessions
 - i. Docking
 - ii. Anchoring
 - iii. Man Overboard
 - iv. Navigation
 - v. Basic boat handling
 - vi. Destination Exploration Group trips to local destinations to learn route (channels, hazards, etc.)
 - vii. Explore what to do in the local waters – expand their horizons, especially in unfamiliar waters
 - viii. Discover new destinations to share with fellow boaters
 - ix. Wildlife excursions (birds, dolphins, seals, etc.)

IV. Tips & Tricks

- a.** While this program may seem like a lot, the important thing to remember is success comes in different forms. The following tips were provided by members of the Freedom Boat Sisters task force based on their previous experiences:
 - i. Don't let the perfect get in the way of the good - just get started! Figure it out as you go at first if you must!
 - ii. Be sure to listen to what your MEMBERS want this group to be, not just what you want to give them.
 - iii. Keep a good mix of activities to keep the interest high to as many people as possible.
 - iv. Mix up the days/times to give others a chance to participate. Some may not be available during the week, while others may not want to go on weekends, for example.
 - v. Plan where possible but remain flexible enough to take advantage of external opportunities that pop up.
 - vi. Build and leverage relationships with your local businesses. Bring them more customers while providing value to your membership base!

V. Supporting Tools

- a. Logo
- b. Marketing collateral
 - i. Email banner
 - ii. Social media content
- c. Connect with an expert!
 - i. Have a question? Need to bounce an idea off someone? Simply want to share your progress? We're here to help – please reach out!
 1. Nick Gosselin – ngosselin@freedomboatclub.us
 - a. Director of Marketing – Freedom Boat Club
 - b. Project lead for Freedom Boat Sisters
 2. Lisa Almeida - l.almeida@freedomboatclub.com
 - a. Franchise Owner – FBC of Jacksonville and St. Augustine
 - b. As [The Boatanista](#) – Lisa LIVES for boating and is driven to get more people into the lifestyle
 3. Karen Berry - kberry@freedomboatclub.com
 - a. Vice President of Operations – FBC of Myrtle Beach
 - b. Leader of the local chapter of Freedom Boat Sisters for Myrtle Beach for several years
 4. Tracy Coughlin - Tracy@ybyboats.com
 - a. Marketing Lead – FBC of Maine
 - b. Passion for getting more people on the water – creating a Freedom Boat Sisters group in Maine in summer 2021
 5. Beverly Rosella - brosella@freedomboatclub.com
 - a. Franchise Owner – FBC of Delaware, South New Jersey, & Greater Hudson Valley NY
 - b. Local club hosts a Freedom Boat Sisters group (locally dubbed “Sea Sisters”) that is led by a FBC member
 6. Cheri Radovancevic - Cheri.Radovancevic@brunswick.com
 - a. Director of Marketing for Brunswick – Business Acceleration.
 - b. Active within Brunswick’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiative