

# The Superyacht CEO Report

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INTRODUCING THE SUPERYACHT POWER INDEX - THE MOST INFLUENTIAL PRINCIPALS IN THE INDUSTRY





# **The tech of tomorrow, today**

Michael Köhler, CEO of Silent Yachts Austria, explains why the clients of tomorrow will expect their tech to be clean and why the superyacht industry should embrace solar-electric power now.

## ABOUT SILENT YACHTS

### **BUILT THE WORLD'S FIRST AND ONLY**

OCEAN-GOING  
PRODUCTION YACHTS  
THAT ARE FULLY  
SOLAR-SUSTAINABLE

### **INVENTED A NEW CLASS OF YACHTING**

COMBINING THE SILENCE AND  
LOW MAINTENANCE OF A SAILING  
BOAT WITH THE LUXURY AND  
SPEED OF A MOTORBOAT

### **WINNER**

ENERGY GLOBE AWARD 2012/13,  
I-NOVO AWARD 2016, I-NOVO AWARD  
2017, GLOBAL WARMING AWARD 2018,  
MULTIHULL OF THE YEAR 2018

### **FOUNDERS MICHAEL AND HEIKE KÖHLER**

DEVELOPED THE HOLISTIC  
CONCEPT THAT MADE THE DREAM  
OF NOISELESS AND EMISSION-  
FREE CRUISING COME TRUE

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## You have to start with a blank sheet of paper and redesign the whole boat, question everything you've done up to now and what you learned at university.

In our hearts, we are all sailors. Personally, I've travelled 60,000 miles on sailing monohulls and catamarans, crossed the Atlantic Ocean twice and spent about 5,000 days and nights at sea. We love to sail, mainly as a means of propulsion to get from A to B without the noise of a diesel engine.

But often, the wind either blows at the wrong time (while still in harbour), from the wrong direction (headwind) or not strongly enough (less than 10 knots).

Depending on size, current sailing yachts and motoryachts require three to four diesel engines. Cooking with propane is perilous and heats up the interior of a yacht. Every two or three days, the captain is obliged to visit a marina to recharge the batteries and to purchase water for bathing and drinking. Most yachts less than 80 feet have a range of 300 to 500 nautical miles under a diesel engine. Larger yachts have watermakers, air conditioning and generators, providing a level of self-sufficiency – but the price is noise, vibration, pollution and expense.

Is this really what you want while enjoying a blue-water anchorage in The Exumas?

After 20 years on board our own sailing and motoryachts, we were not happy

with existing solutions that forced us to run the engine frequently – even in a quiet bay – and meant we had to visit a marina too often. Therefore, we started to develop a system that made us independent from fossil fuels, marinas and filling stations. Now, after 15 years of research and development on solar-electric propulsion, only one diesel engine (for the generator) remains on board our electrically powered vessels to recharge the batteries in times of above-average demand on energy such as on long-range cruises at higher speeds or when the sky is overcast for more than two days. After two prototypes, our Silent 64 was the first electrically powered production boat to cross the Atlantic Ocean with solar power.

In future, clients will demand this technology for one simple reason: after a stressful week in the office, they'll want silence and comfort. When at anchor, everybody prefers to swim in a quiet, clean bay without oil film on the water. Many people are aware of the impact of fuel-based propulsion on the environment and solar-electric propulsion reduces this to close to zero.

A journalist at one yachting magazine who didn't believe this was possible told me some years ago, "If I calculate the consumption of my own motorboat, it is impossible to see how this works." In

fact, if you do it the conventional way, it doesn't work. It's the same with cars. Put an electric motor into a fuel-based car and it will move, but it won't perform well. You have to start with a blank sheet of paper and redesign the whole boat, question everything you've done up to now and what you learned at university. Unfortunately, most people prefer to do things the same way they did it before.

But it's a fact – the future is electric. With a technically well-designed solar yacht, an owner can drive more than 100nm per day without fuel, can reach a top speed of 20 knots and can stay in a bay with every luxury such as air con, TV, freezer and fully electric galley – all without the need to start the generator for weeks.

Therefore, a solar-powered propulsion system reduces the operation hours of diesel engines to next to none and virtually eliminates the costs for fuel and maintenance. At the same time, a solar-powered yacht offers more luxury, comfort, independence, reliability and safety.

Silent solar power is the solution, delivering a totally unique exposure to nature and marine life. – and you depart a bay safe in the knowledge that the only footprints you are leaving behind are those in the sand. **MK**