



Nov 28, 2013 13:44 GMT

Digital Yacht Aqua Adapt PC brings Windows 8 to NMEA on-board networks

November 2013: PCs are getting more popular on board and with the introduction of Windows 8.1 with its tiled interface, it makes a great choice for touch screen navigation and finger-tip control. Many boaters use a notebook but they're not designed for the hostile marine environment and also generally can't connect to the boat's DC power source without an adaptor or inverter.

Digital Yacht have introduced a new chunky, mini PC designed specifically for use on board. The Adapt PC connects direct to the boat's battery system and

operates from 8-19V DC. It's completely electronic with no moving parts and utilises the latest technology in solid state hard drives. It's also passively cooled so there's no fan to swirl moist air around delicate electronics. Despite its tiny 170 x 110 x 65mm dimensions, it packs in a powerful Intel i3 processor and 8GB RAM as well as a 64GB solid state drive. 128 and 240GB options are also available. With this spec, Adapt is ideal for use with graphics intense 3D navigation programs whilst still only consuming around 25W of power. 802.11 g/b/n Wi-Fi is also built in with dual antennas to improve performance. This can be configured as a Wi-Fi server for remote display apps so a tablet or iPad can act as a PC remote display out in the cockpit.

With Windows 8.1 supporting multi touch features like pinch to zoom, it makes sense to pair the PC with a touchscreen. The Adapt PC has two independent HDMI video outputs allowing two displays to be connected.

Most users want the PC to act as a hub for a navigation system to take advantage of software features like downloadable weather overlays, multi-screen chart displays or route optimisation. Here the Adapt system really scores as two additional external modules have been developed to allow plug 'n play NMEA0183 and NMEA 2000 navigation network integration as well as an Adapt Communication interface for internet access. The Adapt Navigation interface has two NMEA 0183 inputs and a certified NMEA 2000 connection to hook up direct to boat networks. Also available is the Adapt Communication interface which brings high power Wi-Fi to the Adapt PC for easy internet access whilst afloat. This option allows access to shore side hotspots with ranges up to 5NM depending upon conditions. The Adapt PC can also be set up to share this internet connection with other mobile users on board.

Both these interfaces match the rugged style of the Adapt PC and connect with just a single cable to the main processor.

The Aqua Adapt PC costs £895 and the Navigation Interface is £375. The Communication interface with high gain 1m external antenna is £495. Prices exclude VAT. Further details from Digital Yacht TEL 01179 554474 or visit www.digitalyacht.co.uk

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