



www.seemysea.com: boat swapping network

For a boat owner, whose free time is limited by professional constraints, it is not easy to go sailing far away from his usual mooring spot. The only possibility is renting a boat, an addition to an already plump "boat" budget.

As he was tickled by his desire of discovering new sailing grounds, and confronted to the impossibility of bringing his own boat there, due to lack of time, Jacques Moy checked the Internet to find out if there was a boat exchange system similar to those that allow home exchanges so successfully. He was very surprised to find nothing and the more he was thinking of it, the more he was feeling like digging the idea.

Bruno Maschelein and Philippe Le Goff later joined him in this adventure and, together, they launched www.seemysea.com without dropping their respective professional activities. A more professional approach, absolutely necessary to develop an efficient offers matching tool, quickly followed the initial "amateurish" one.

The purpose of www.seemysea.com is to create an extensive network of boat owners who wish to discover new destinations and share their knowledge of their respective usual sailing grounds on a background of free exchange and open-mindedness.

Since it has been launched beginning of 2008, www.seemysea.com has welcomed boat owners from all over the world. From Seattle to the Great Lakes of North America, from the Norwegian fjords to Geneva Lake, from Brittany to Marseille and from the Balears to La Rochelle via the Canaries and the Caribbean, an extensive selection of destinations is made available and preliminary contacts are taking place.

The principle of swapping

Home swapping appeared in the early fifties at the initiative of French and American teachers and has been booming in the past decade.

This simple and cheap way of travelling first flourished among teachers and scientists as this community was keen on a formula which facilitates international relations and human contacts.

It then spread by word of mouth and organisations involved in publicising swap offers blossomed.

The earliest one, Intervac, has been active since 1953.

For quite long, the system remained rather confidential, swap offers were published in paper catalogues edited several times every year. [The emergence of the Internet and on-line ads](#) created an upheaval. The concept gained in popularity everywhere and specialised sites multiplied on the web.

Currently, it is estimated that close to 250 000 exchanges take place every year, worldwide. Medias generously relate this spectacular craze in countless articles and reports. [The foundation of the formula, free exchange in an atmosphere of open-mindedness, is a guaranty per se as it operates an auto-selection of the partners involved and bad surprises are rare.](#) The pioneers of the system note that vandalism and theft never happen.

It is this well-tested model which [www.seemysea.com](#) undertakes to apply to boat swapping. Of course, sailing requires competencies other than a mere home occupancy. However, the objection is quickly swept aside by the fact that all the network participants own a boat and share the same spirit in their approach.

When SeeMySea facilitates boat exchanges SeemySea:

Allows its members to save plenty of time: they reach a new destination flying, driving or riding a train and use all the time left discovering it.

Allows them to go sailing all over the world, cheaply. Compared to boat rental, depending on seasons and boat types, it can represent an economy of between two and five thousand euro.

And, above all, it triggers encounters between pleasure craft owners who will certainly take great pleasure and pride showing others their boat, informing them about 'must see' spots, 'must do' things as well as possible sailing hazards.

Exchanges take place according to a charter which stresses respect for the others and the environment.

SEEMYSEA toolbox

To build up an active boat owners network, the website had to be dynamic and friendly at the same time. As the system design was under progress, operational constraints surfaced, and the 3 project partners realised that **the development of www.seemysea.com required a professional approach**. They then hired the services of a specialised company.

Specifications included an on-line registration of members and their offers via a personal data form, a multi-criteria search and an automatic offers matching system, the possibility to edit all the contents and an access to some features at the disposal of the members. As a result, on www.seemysea.com members can enjoy:

- A **personal subscriber' form** which can be accessed and edited by the subscriber himself at his (her) own convenience.
- Some **spaces dedicated** to the community: forum, tips...
- A **powerful search engine**, to locate matching offers.
- A **bi-lingual** website (French & English) soon to be enriched with the addition of Italian, Spanish, German and Dutch versions.
- Technical and legal contents (advice on insurance, liabilities, etc...) to help prepare exchanges.
- Downloads to prepare for departure (typical swap agreement, inventory and supply lists...).

The screenshot displays the SeeMySea website interface. At the top, there are browser tabs and a banner for '300 inscriptions d'un an offertes pour l'inauguration du site'. The main navigation bar includes 'échanges de bateaux', 'partage d'horizons', and 'Actualités seemysea.com'. The central content area is divided into several sections: 'Edito' with a photo of a woman and text about boat exchange; 'Comment adhérer ? Rechercher une offre'; 'A propos de SeeMySea' with links for 'Qui sommes-nous?', 'Concept', 'Conditions d'usage', 'Revue de presse', 'Partenaires', 'Chartes seemysea.com', 'Mentions légales', and 'Nous contacter'; 'Informations' with links for 'Actualités seemysea.com', 'Newsletter seemysea.com', 'Livre d'or', and 'Liens'; 'Actualités seemysea.com' with a sub-section 'L'équipage s'étouffe'; and 'Www.seemysea.com à l'honneur dans le Caribbean Compass' with a sub-section 'La nouvelle se répand dans la Caraïbe'. A search bar is located at the bottom right, and a globe with regional offer counts (7, 45, 11, 0) is in the center. The footer features a blue wave graphic.

Subscription

To join the SeeMySea network it is required to pay a **subscription fee of 10 euro, yearly**. It gives access to contacts and the various services proposed to prepare encounters and navigations in the best conditions.

The horizons

To date, around 300 swap offers, to the most diverse destinations, have been posted by www.seemysea.com members.

With slightly over 50% of the swap offers, France is the most active country. It is already possible to locate suitable hull swappers on the Atlantic coast, between Hendaye and Granville, and in the Mediterranean between Seyne sur Mer and Port Camargue. In the rest of Europe, there are some opportunities in the Netherlands, in Spain, the Balears and the Canaries, in Switzerland, for high altitude sailing, and in Norway, to discover fjords. In Granada and Guadeloupe, there are several opportunities in the Antilles. The northern Caribbean, from Miami to the Bahamas is not outdone either. Nor are the US and Canada, in particular the East Coast and the Great Lakes. Inspired by the idea of exchanging, some also propose their home.

The screenshot shows the SeeMySea website interface. At the top, there is a banner for a special offer: "Offre spéciale 300 inscriptions d'un an offertes pour l'inauguration du site". The main navigation menu includes "Comment adhérer?", "A propos de SeeMySea", "Informations", "Préparer votre voyage", and "Rechercher sur le site". The search results section displays two listings:

- Annapolis, MD in summer, Bahamas in winter (États-unis)**
7 réponse(s)
Sparkman & Stephens - Chris Craft Apache
Longueur : 10 à 12m
Type de coque : quillard
Nombre de couchettes : 4
- Port of Indiana, Portage, Indiana (États-unis)**
Sea Ray - Express
Longueur : 10 à 12m
Type de coque : dériveur
Nombre de couchettes : 4

The search filters on the left include options for propulsion (Peu importe, voile, moteur), length (Peu importe), type of hull (Peu importe), number of berths, and country (Peu importe). A map shows the search zone over the Atlantic and Caribbean regions.

Terminé

SEEMYSEA, who are we?

Jacques MOY

"quite difficult to dislike the taste of salt when you have been living by the sea since your childhood...

69 First tacks onboard a caravelle (joys of team work!) followed by memorable capsizing in a vaurien (ah, what shouting bouts with my partner).

73 The first sailing board on the beach of Fort Bloqué was mine and my brothers': no trainer, no instructions, a 40kg wishbone, we suffered a lot...

76 Sailing instructor course, because it made it possible to work during summers without suffering in vain.

78 High school graduation (bac CB)

78 to 85 Sailing instructor.

85 Encounter with a meteor which caused the apparition of 4 cherubs (not all in one go)

86-96 You also have to feed them: opening of a seafood restaurant (no kidding), in Nantes.

97 There is nothing like studying, training and diploma in management.

98-2000 Brest organises its third edition of maritime celebrations. How can you turn down a proposal of participation in the organisation of one of the biggest sailing boats gathering in the world? I say "yes".

2001-2008 Brest lasted as long as a celebration, the opportunity of managing a network of museums in the region of Lorient presents itself...and I grab it.

C'est en songeant paresseusement à ma prochaine croisière avec les enfants et en passant en revue toutes les destinations possibles dans le laps de temps relativement court de mes vacances que je me suis dit que cette année, je changerais bien d'horizon. La seconde question est venue naturellement après la première : comment faire ? et c'est ainsi que SEEMYSEA est né, simplement, avec l'aide de deux amis qui partagent la même passion pour la mer et le même respect des autres.»

I was daydreaming of my next cruise together with my children and reviewing all the destinations which we could reach during a relatively short vacation and I told myself that I would gladly explore new horizons. The second thought came naturally: what can I do next? That's how the idea of SeeMySea was born, simply, and nurtured with the help of two friends who share with me a common passion for the sea and (hopefully) a respectful approach to others".

Bruno MASCHELEIN

"First boating experiences on the charming Erdre river, in the region of nantes and first adventures of "skipper" on a small boat down the river.

Later, I was a teenager, I discover sailing during training not far from Lorient. One week onboard a muscadet, an ascetic 20 something footer, confirms an existing inclination, a kind of "list" toward sailing.

As I was a stranded sailor, I made good use of the Navy's sailing clubs to obtain a thorough training, including during winters and races, mostly in the region of Cherbourg. I become a skipper on cruisers, racing boats and I miss no opportunity to gain some experience and go sailing on these exciting sailing grounds.

I started as an anaesthesia medic in military hospitals before a stint as an independent nurse to finally join a public hospital where I occupy the position of health executive with a speciality in anaesthesia. I still grab the tiniest sailing opportunity, sometimes with my wife who, I must admit, steers much better than me! We are the happy parents of 3 adorable mermaids.

There is the personal satisfaction of correctly steering a boat but it is topped by the sensations that the maritime world in general brings me.

To me, being part of SeemySea adventure, means sharing this vision and these values."

Philippe LE GOFF

"I was born in January 54 in Lorient in a family of hoteliers from the island of Groix.

After graduation, I replace my father, in the kitchen.

1979 I leave for Asia to take delivery of a sailing yacht meant for a resort in the Maldives.



Various delays kill off the "Maldives" project. I keep myself busy delivering boats between Hong kong, Manilla, Singapore, Brunei, Taiïwan, etc...

1981 during a stopover in Singapore, I find a job in the field of seismic surveys (one of the stages of oil exploration).

I work in Indonesia, mainly in Java and Kalimantan.

1983: I am hired by a start-up (some pioneers) which proposes on-line services to companies active in offshore oil exploration. I am very much involved in the development of the system.

1985: I get married and we manage the restaurant of a small marina in Singapore.

1986: I sell the boat, the cause of it all...

1989 I become a managing partner of a resort located on a Malaysian island (the island of the big pig, Pulau Babi Besar in Malay).

1992: Singapore: I collaborate with a French consultant specialised in public and architectural lighting. I liaise with the clients in the region.

2000: je rentre en France et deviens gérant de chambres d'hôte.

Je suis le père comble d'une fille de 19 ans. »

2000: I come back to France and I presently manage a bed and breakfast cum residence. I am the happy father of a dragon (female type)"

SeeMySea is a private limited company with a registered capital of 80 000 euro owned by three partners, with sailing experiences spanning over 30 years, in France and abroad, who have held positions of responsibility in the fields of tourism, hospitality and nautical matters.

The founding partners of www.seemysea.com:

Jacques MOY
Bruno MASCHELEIN
Philippe LE GOFF



Contact:

contact@seemysea.com
tel: + 33 (0)6 60 87 43 49

