

## THE MARINE AQUARIUM EXPO

The Marine Aquarium Expo ("MAX"), presented by Sunset Promotional Services, Inc. is one of the largest and most innovative consumer trade shows in the aquatics industry. MAX is a hybrid event that combines the best of both industry and consumer interests all in one spectacular event. Those new to the show may notice many unique attributes that keep participants coming back year after year.

The timing and location of the MAX event is by no accident. There are more than 150 saltwater-related retail stores and over a dozen wholesale facilities in Los Angeles and Orange County alone. There is simply no other location on earth that can claim this proliferation of businesses all dedicated to the marine aquarium hobby. The number of hobbyists residing within the greater Los Angeles and Orange County areas is the largest in the world.

MAX is an all-inclusive marine event where visitors will find a colorful array of fish/reef aquariums as well as peripheral goods and equipment. Presenters include manufacturers, retailers, wholesalers, distributors, and even hobby sellers. There are fish, corals, and inverts of every variety available for sale, in addition to aquariums and aquarium-related accessories all under one roof!

### FinZone:

The "MAX FinZone" is an educational exhibit that evolved from our own imagination. We add more to the FinZone each year in order to keep visitors engaged and entertained. Guests both young and "young-at-heart" can experience Captain Jack-the-Pirate giving lessons on how to walk the plank, or be amazed watching Steve-the-Balloon-Guy turn an ordinary balloon into various fun marine characters. Younger visitors can meet our magical MAX mermaids while enjoying arts and crafts, coloring books, and even face painting.

In 2012, MAX introduced a children's contest, an extraordinary family fun activity in which both parents and children can participate. This was when the first "Paper Airplane Throwing" contest was created. Parents helped their children make a paper airplane, color it, number it, and give it a name. Parents and children alike experienced overwhelming excitement as paper airplanes flew over and around the exhibit hall like something out of a comic book. Past contests included a baseball throwing contest and miniature golfing competitions for guests as young as 4 through 13 years of age. Winners and other participants went home with fantastic prizes such as model airplane sets, baseball glove and bat sets, child-size golf clubs, MAX embroidered polo shirts and hats, and much more. We knew we started a tradition and are up for more fun challenges, with many other fun giveaways and terrific prizes.

### Float-Your-Boat Contest:

Last April we introduced our latest and greatest children's activity: The MAX "Float-Your-Boat" Contest. Inspired by the Cub Scout pine wood derby races of yesteryear, we provide a set of materials for parent/child teams to build a foot-long sail boat of their own design. They are then presented the opportunity to race their boats in a specially-constructed 10-foot long lagoon with

"steerable" fans that the kids can actually control themselves! (think water squirt-gun races from the carnival). Witnessing the parent/child interaction during the building stage of Float-your-Boats is an experience beyond words. We provided little more than a pre-shaped foam hull, a rudimentary sail and a few sticks to rig the masts; what we got back can only best be described as scaled-down versions of Spanish Galleons! The level of talent, imagination and artwork involved is absolutely phenomenal! To the victors we awarded 5 different sized power boats as 1st through 5th prizes and then everyone else received a small wind up bathtub boat to reward them for their participation. Everything mentioned is funded solely by MAX organizers.

#### Touch Tank:

Every year, MAX has continued to introduce new and inventive ways to keep its attendees of all ages engaged. For instance, in 2009, MAX introduced its first signature 8-foot touch tank, which contains various marine life for all guests to experience this up-close and personal encounter with marine animals. Guests can experience starfish, hermit crabs, snails, fire shrimp, horseshoe crabs, coral sponges and much more. Imagine the amazement of marine life right in front of our young guests' eyes and just within reach. They can touch and learn all about each of these creatures of the ocean. This is most inspiring of all and one of the main reasons this exhibit is so popular.

Every year, we invite the 4H Club to attend MAX to share an understanding of marine life and its delicate ecosystem with our guests. The 4H Club contributes a tremendous amount of time and effort in helping MAX spread the word about marine life and its surroundings. After all, MAX's young guests are our future ecologists, marine biologists, oceanographers, and more. MAX has a mission -- to educate, to communicate and to concentrate on the next generation. We own and maintain the 8-foot touch tank every year truly believe this is a worthy investment to everyone involved.

#### Theater:

As MAX gained momentum over the years, we were inspired to create yet another activity for our young attendees (mostly for ages 2 to 12). In 2011, we introduced the MAX HD Movie Theater with surround sound, featuring a 12-foot screen. Marine life-related animated movies such as "Finding Nemo," "The Reef," and "The Little Mermaid" lit up the screen every other hour on both days of the expo. Frankly, this was never heard of before in such a niche industry as ours. We wanted to cater to our much younger guests, keeping them entertained as long as possible and allowing hobbyist parents to enjoy the expo a little longer. Remarkably, it was amazing to see that the parent/child ratio was 2:1! Needless to say, the movie theater concept was a huge success and has continued every year.

#### Education:

One of the most popular activities for hobbyists at MAX is the opportunity to listen to informative lectures from our distinguished speakers, including Bob Fenner, Mark Callahan, Tullio Del Aquila, Les Wilson and Ariel Freudenthal. These are among the many recognized and respected speakers that will be at MAX 2015. All of these informative lectures are included in the admission price and are

available to all guests. Past lectures covered everything from “How to build a tank” to “What type of lighting is best for your tank” to “How to move a 400 gallon tank across the country.” We can guarantee that virtually all our guests will go home learning something new and useful!

### Raffle:

This MAX Opportunity Drawing is the most anticipated and exciting annual event of MAX. Every hobbyist comes to MAX with a long wish list, hoping to win one of the wonderful and generous prizes donated by our exhibitors. Prizes worth hundreds and even thousands of dollars go home with lucky winners every year, and we love seeing the big smiles on their faces. MAX has received many generous donations from exhibitors such as Reef Brite, Red Sea, CaribSea, Seachem, and many others. Thanks to these kind donations, MAX is able to continue providing all the contest and prizes that cost so much

### Exhibitor Perks:

We believe in going above-and-beyond for our hard-working exhibitors. These are the crown jewels of our show and so we take care of them as well as they take care of us. We understand how inconvenient it is to interrupt their set-up to leave the building to find food and drink. It is even more difficult when they are not familiar with the area, so every year on set-up day we provide a full catered buffet dinner at no extra charge! During exhibit days, we provide all exhibitors a continental breakfast in the morning along with beverages and appetizers throughout the rest of the day, all compliments of show organizers. . As we secure additional sponsors, we hope to repeat this experience every year at MAX.

We invite our readers to visit us at [www.marineaquariumexpo.com](http://www.marineaquariumexpo.com) for more details on the event schedule, directions, hotel accommodations, speakers' schedules, Opportunity Drawing prizes, and more. Every year since 2008, MAX and its staff along with friends, families, vendors and business partners join forces to create an amazing and unforgettable event. To the industry, MAX is a professional marine/reef consumer trade show, but guests can still appreciate its warmth and affordability. This was by design! MAX provides many benefits for both adults and children but costs very little to attend. An admission ticket for an adult is \$15 per person per day (\$10 for seniors and military with ID), and children 12 and under are admitted free of charge. For the last 9 years, our admission price has remained affordable because everyone deserves a fun weekend at MAX!