

CaptainOwned Launches Captain-First Marketplace for Direct Charter Bookings

Florida charter captain creates a direct-booking alternative designed to help independent captains keep control of their customers and revenue.

BRADENTON, FL, UNITED STATES, August 21, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [CaptainOwned](#), a new online marketplace created by a working Florida charter captain, has begun its early rollout with a different approach to connecting travelers with independent charter captains and on-water experiences: help customers discover local operators, then let them book directly with the captain.



Book Direct With The Captain

The idea grew out of founder Capt. Bill Phillips' own experience operating SkyWay Fishing Tours in Florida. After years of listing charters through third-party booking platforms, Phillips became increasingly frustrated with percentage-based commissions that can consume a significant portion of a charter's revenue.

“

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Captain Bill Phillips, founder of CaptainOwned

"I kept asking myself why the captain owns the boat, pays for the fuel, insurance, maintenance and equipment, runs the trip and takes care of the customer, but can still give up a large percentage of that trip just for the booking,"

Phillips said. "I decided to build the kind of platform I wanted to use as a captain."

CaptainOwned is designed around a direct-booking model. Travelers can discover captains, view their profiles, boats and available trips, and then use the booking and contact options provided by the individual captain. CaptainOwned does not add a marketplace booking fee to the customer's trip.

Rather than taking a percentage of each booking, CaptainOwned plans to use a flat monthly membership model for participating operators. The approach allows captains to know their platform cost in advance while retaining the revenue from the trips they operate.

"For my own charter, one four-hour trip can be worth more than an entire year of membership," Phillips said. "I don't need to take a percentage every time another captain succeeds."

CaptainOwned is currently in early access and has already attracted 26 registered captains. The platform is expanding geographically as operators join, with fishing charter destinations across Florida and additional U.S. markets being added in response to captain demand.

The long-term vision extends beyond fishing. CaptainOwned is being developed for captain-operated water experiences including [fishing charters](#), dolphin tours, sunset cruises, sandbar and island trips, and other private on-water experiences.

Phillips believes the captain-first model can also benefit travelers by putting them closer to the person actually providing their experience.

"When someone books directly with a captain, they can ask questions about the boat, the trip, the weather, what they're going to do and what they should bring," Phillips said. "That relationship shouldn't have to disappear just because people increasingly find their trips online."

CaptainOwned is continuing to onboard captains while building its destination network. Travelers will increasingly be able to browse participating operators by destination and experience as listings are completed and new markets come online.

About CaptainOwned

CaptainOwned is an online marketplace connecting travelers with independent charter captains and captain-operated water experiences. Founded by Florida charter captain Bill Phillips, the platform is being built around [direct booking](#), captain-controlled customer relationships, transparent membership pricing and no added CaptainOwned booking fees.

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