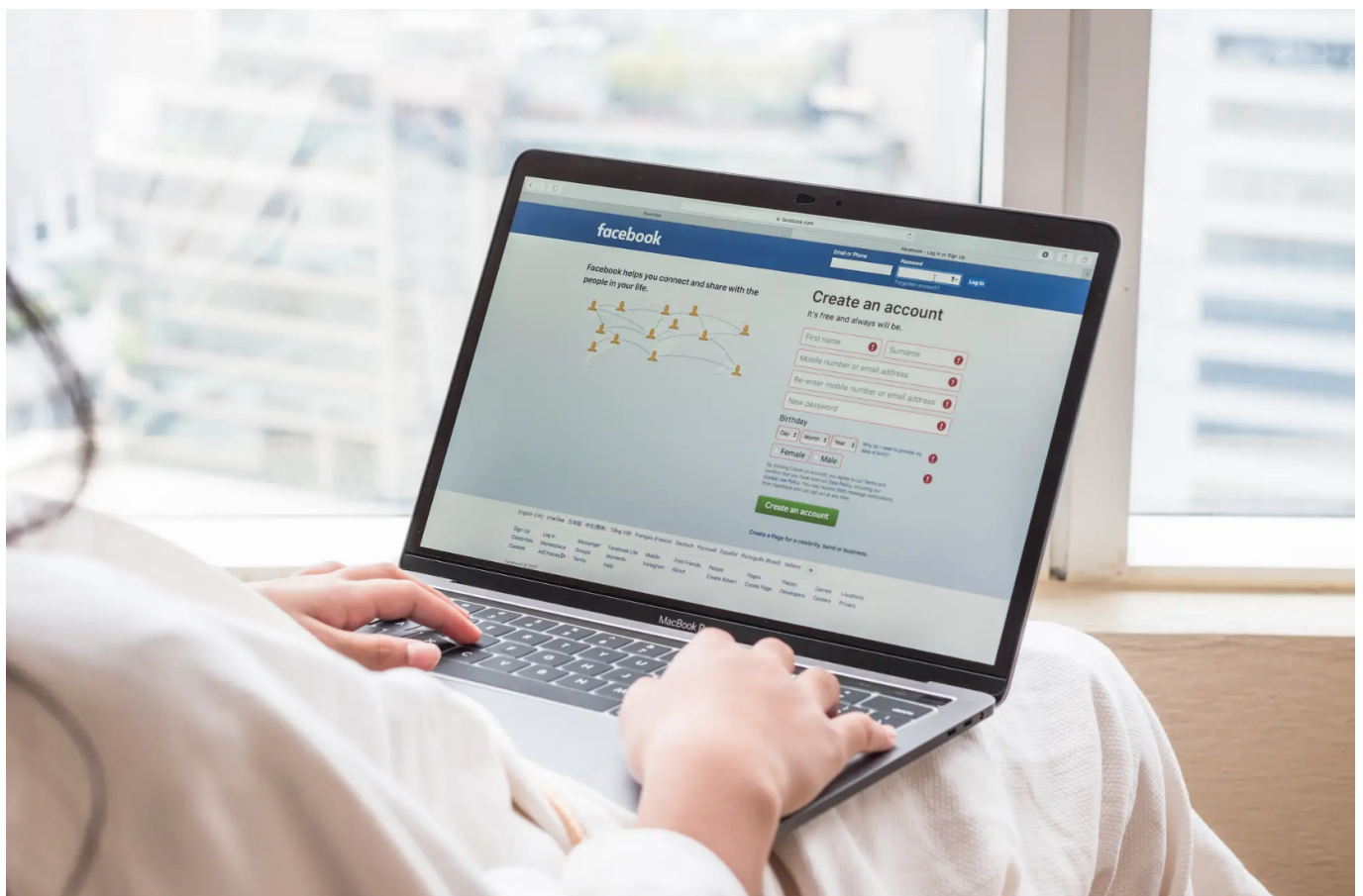


Is This Facebook Group The Answer To Referencing For Yachties?

Many yachties have used this Facebook group to ask for references about certain vessels, is this the answer to the 'referencing dilemma', or is it simply a group for gossip?



Yachties Are Seeking More Genuine Feedback

There are many social groups on social media for yachties to become a part of, these groups are mainly set up for job-seeking, product recommendations, general work advice and for sharing social events.

In recent years there has been a shift in how tolerable certain longstanding behaviour has become in the industry. Issues such as bullying, discrimination, sexual assault and disputes over pay are becoming a bigger part of the conversation throughout the industry, and a recent Facebook group titled '*Yachties: Name, Shame and Fame*' seems to reflect this shift. The group has over 19,000 global members that are based across all of the common yachting locations. The number of users only continues to build.

The group has been used most commonly to ask anonymously about certain vessels, in the last month over 45 users posted enquiries about boats that they have either interviewed with or were considering working aboard. The comments below these posts are not anonymous and vary from encouraging praise to outright dismissal of the said vessel. It seems that this is an attempt to fill the gap in genuine 'reviews' of certain vessels in terms of their work environments, perhaps a more honest idea of what to expect when taking a job onboard a boat that is seldom revealed or even known about when speaking to recruiters.

Exposing Toxic Behaviour?

Aside from these enquiries though, some users have posted claims of a serious nature on the page, including a story of sexual assault from several users about the same individual

within the industry. There is no doubt that these posts are important and necessary to warn others within the industry of dangerous individuals, but there is also the question of the credibility of certain claims. Recently, the group's administrator came up with one solution for this by asking that everybody who posts a claim provide some sort of evidence:

"We now require some form of evidence attached to your post. It can be screenshots of messages, another person corroborating your story, or official documentation. We deny a lot of posts because of no attached info. This page can affect careers and the admin team is serious about making sure each post is valid" – The Group's Administrator.

Sharing experiences and discussing certain boats with fellow yachties is nothing new within the industry – a practice that was inevitably going to find its way onto social media sooner or later. The *Yachties: Name, Shame and Fame* group ultimately seems to point towards the need amongst yacht crew for more honest and nuanced appraisals, either of vessels, or of individuals.

There are of course flaws to this method, social media has always been an environment that seems to breed conflict, but there is no denying that there appears to be a need for yacht crew to express themselves and, at best, this group seems to be an attempt to protect one another from potentially toxic environments.

Community Safeguarding

We know that when yachts undergo the recruitment process to find crew, they request references from past employers, but what about references about a boat? With no dedicated Human

Resource departments onboard yachts, and often no clue of the nature of the people you will be working and living alongside, it is no wonder that more yachties are asking their community members for references.

The group undoubtedly has sparked some interesting debates and discussions amongst yachties, and until more protocols are put in place that ensure a consistent safeguarding of crew, this seems like many yachties answer to gaining true references.

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