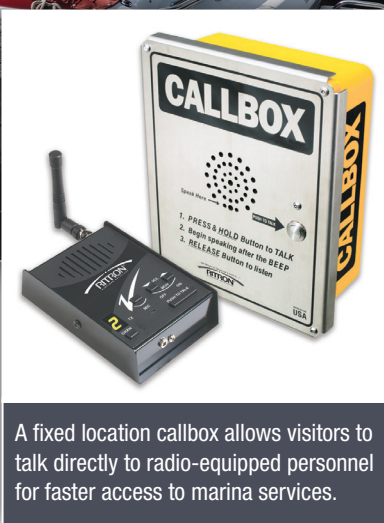




Radio Callbox Speeds Refueling Process for Boaters and Marina Operators.

In need of faster communication during peak summer traffic, a busy marina installs a two-way radio callbox system that fits time and budget constraints.



A fixed location callbox allows visitors to talk directly to radio-equipped personnel for faster access to marina services.

As the third largest of Minnesota's famed 10,000 lakes, Leech Lake encompasses 111,000 acres with over 600 miles of shoreline. The many large and small bays are quite popular for fishermen in search of Walleye and Muskie, while Largemouth Bass, Northern, Sunfish and Crappies are plentiful too. Whether skiing on the deepest parts of Walker Bay or "pontooning" near the thousands of acres of wild rice, for the year-round inhabitants here and vacationers, pleasure boating is a favorite pastime. With so much to see and do, hiring additional summer help to provide boater re-fueling services is difficult and expensive. Thankfully a unique and America made radio callbox system is helping to hold down labor costs and improve customer service at the Shores of Leech Lake Marina.

Typically, customers needing to fuel a boat or Jet Ski would pull up to the dock and search for someone to turn on the fuel pump. Often that meant a long walk into the lodge. Insurance coverage requires that fuel pumps be switched off when not in use — hence the need for a marina employee to assist. With a handful of boats refueling each hour, it is not economically viable to have an additional employee stationed on the dock waiting to offer assistance. Once fueled, the gas has to be paid for with cash or credit card — requiring more time from both the deckhand and customer. All the while, daylight is burning. Searching for a better, faster way to provide service to their customers and satisfy the insurance folks, Mitch Loomis of Shores of Leech Lake Marina hit the internet and contacted Carmel, Indiana based radio manufacturer Ritron, Inc.

Refueling with Push-Button Convenience

Now customers who pull up to Loomis' fuel dock see a high visibility yellow, radio call box. Simple instructions on the face of the callbox instruct customers to press the push-to-talk button allowing instant communication with a marina employee located at the resort front-desk, almost a football-field distance away. Marina personnel use a compact Ritron 2-way base station radio to communicate with customers.

When the customer needs to purchase fuel, the employee switches on the gas pumps, allowing customers to fuel up. Afterwards customers call the lodge again to report how much fuel they purchased — in both gallons and dollars. The employee confirms the name of the boater and the fueling information. The charge is then added to the customers monthly tab.

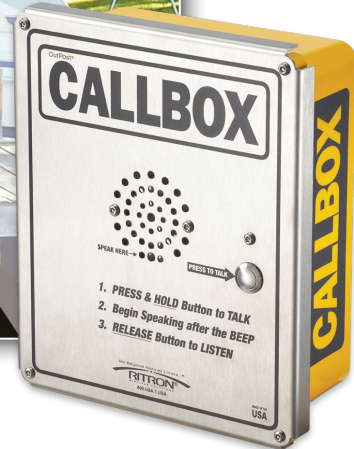
The operator also powers off the pumps at that point, in preparation for the next arrival.

"Customers love the system" says Loomis. "It is intuitive and easy to use. Fast for them and for us. They can fuel up without ever leaving the dock. And we don't need an extra employee manning the gas pumps all day."

Customers who do not have charges still walk the 250 feet from the fuel dock to the Lodge to pay for their gas — and maybe pick up any supplies that they may need.



Boaters and jet skiers can make the most of their day knowing their fuel stop will be quick and efficient with instant communication to radio-equipped dock employees.



While the 250 feet from dock to door at Shores of Leech Lake is not terribly far, the walk at other neighboring resorts is often thousands of feet.

“We’ve had customers tell us that they come to us because of the convenience. They are through wasting time, walking around looking for help to refuel,” recalls Loomis.

Even the pay-at-the-pump technology, which Loomis is hoping to add in the future, will lend itself to the callbox setup.

“In the summer, boaters, especially those on Jet Skis do not often have wallets with them,” said Loomis. But with the callbox and charge system, they can still refuel without a credit card.

Seeing Is Believing —A Product Video Provides Eureka Moment

The Ritron radio callbox is simple to use and serves the needs of Shores of Leech Lake and their customers very well. Unlike some purchases which sound better than they actually are, there were no surprises because Loomis was able to watch a video of the callbox in action from the Ritron website.

“When I saw the video, I thought ‘that’s what we need,’” recalls Loomis.

The Ritron callbox provides real-time, long-distance, 2-way communication between customers at the Shores of Leech Lake dock and employees manning the front desk. With 1 watt of power and an external antenna, communications are crisp and clear, ensuring that each transaction is accurate as well as speedy. Loomis opted to power the callbox from an AC line that was already installed, though many callbox installations are battery only operation. Installation was simple, and took about an hour. The longest portion, Loomis recalled, “was installing the post that the callbox is mounted on.” It integrated seamlessly with the companion Ritron 2-watt base station radio already in service, so no additional purchases were required.

The high-viz yellow, NEMA rated fiberglass enclosure is easy to see and simple instructions on the callbox tell customers how to use it and where to speak. The fact that it is intuitive and so easy to use is very important – that hasn’t always been the case on his dock.

Prior to finding the Ritron callbox online and then ordering from his local 2-way radio dealer, Loomis installed a cheap intercom product that he purchased from a big-box retailer.

The device advertised 2-way intercom communication over an existing AC-power line. The AC-power line intercom required a wooden box that Loomis built to provide some protection.

“There was no visibility with the old system,” recalls Loomis. “People didn’t even know it was there to use, and when they did, the audio quality was horrible.”

An online search led the Shores of Leech Lake Marina to Ritron’s wireless solution and the results are clear. Instant wireless communication benefits both the marina business owner and their customers. Crisp, clear communication insures prompt customer service and the accuracy of each transaction, as well as easy compliance to business insurance requirements. Customers benefit from the convenience and ease-of-use. “We’ve had customers tell us that they are done chasing people down to fuel up” said Loomis. “They come back to us because they like the convenience”.

About Ritron Inc. - Founded in 1977, Ritron, Inc., is a privately held U.S. company specializing in the design and manufacture of RF wireless voice and data communication products. It offers wireless solutions for commercial, industrial, military, OEM and integrator markets. For more information call 800-872-1872 or visit our web site at www.ritron.com.