

interview

Meeting innovators in the global cruise industry



interview

International Cruise Ship Industry

**INTERNATIONAL
CRUISE SHIP
INDUSTRY**

Focusing on Innovation in the global cruise industry
www.cruise-ship-industry.com

Wayne Bowers, Magicman's Head of Marine Services

As the cruise industry gears up to a resumption of operations, following more than a year of inactivity, we spoke with Wayne Bowers, Head of Marine Services at UK-based repair specialist Magicman about some of the work involved.

The company was founded around 25 years ago to specialise in on board repairs and restoration to almost any surface found on a cruise ship. A 24/7 service is offered, including riding crews for ships in operation and docking crews for vessels alongside repair quays or in drydock.

Q: How did the company start?

A: The company was formed 25 years ago by Mark Henderson. Prior to forming Magicman, Mark had served in the UK's Royal Navy for 15 years as a marine engineer and shipwright.

Many of the processes and techniques used today by Magicman can be traced back to the tried and tested methods he developed whilst serving in the Royal Navy.

Q: Being located not too far from Portsmouth and Southampton, were the cruise ships and ferries calling at the ports a prime target originally?

A: No not at all. Our decision to integrate Magicman into the cruise industry was born out of our long term strategic growth plans for the business. However, having a personal passion for cruise ships and living in Southampton certainly helped.

Q: Today, is Magicman contracted by the cruise and ferry operators, the refurbishers or the shipyards or a mixture?

A: Magicman has sought to build long term relationships with all operators in the cruise industry. We work closely with cruise operators, ferry operators, refurbishment and fit out companies around the globe.

Our reputation in the industry was rewarded recently when we were voted as winners of the CSI sustainability product of the year award 2020.

We understand how important trust, confidence, transparency and quality of service are to new and existing clients alike. As part of our value exchange with clients, we leave no stone unturned in seeking to exceed expectations.

Q: Has the company many long term contracts with cruise and ferry operators to exclusively undertake repairs, replacements, etc, or is most of the work ad hoc?

A: Magicman has developed long term relationships with many cruise brands. By understanding what is important to our clients, we have worked with them to schedule ride on squads for Magicman technicians or drydock teams well in advance.

We are actively in discussions for work as far ahead as 2022 and 2023. The benefit to cruise operators is that costs are reduced by forward planning.

As a direct result of forward planning with cruise operators, Magicman has now set up storage hubs in the US and Europe. This means less freight costs to cruise operators and supports our rapid response service for urgent unplanned work.

Q: During the current idling of cruise ships and to a lesser extent ferries, have the operators taken the opportunity to undertake repairs and replacements, either while a ship is in port or anchored off the coasts?



A broken sink seen before and after repair

A: Covid-19 has impacted greatly on the cruise industry. Magicman is sensitive to the difficulties and challenges that our colleagues are going through. Our clients know that we stand shoulder to shoulder with them and remain totally committed to helping in anyway that we can.

Throughout Covid-19, we have kept in regular contact with our clients through zoom meetings and the like. Information received during these value exchange sessions has enabled Magicman to introduce temporary new processes specifically tailored to support our client's needs during Covid-19.

Such measures have allowed our clients to continue with some refurbishment during the non-sailing period.

Q: As the ships re-enter service, are you finding that there is more inquiry for Magicman's services.

A: Indeed, we have. The number of new enquiries has increased massively. Whilst this provides hope for everyone associated with the cruise industry it is important to remember that safety is and remains the number one priority.

Magicman continues to work closely with cruise operators to ensure that Covid-19 protocols, including vaccines for technicians, PCR testing prior to

embarkation and disembarkation, daily testing on board, enhanced PPE and restricted contacted with others, are strictly adhered to.

By working safely together, we can hope for a sustained and positive return to cruising.

Q: The company boasts significant in-house expertise. Will you use third party sub-contractors as necessary, say for a specialised job?

A: All of the company's technicians are fully trained and employed by Magicman. Each technician will have completed a residential in-house training course where they are required to pass assessments and skills tests. Completion of the training programme, which includes field based mentoring, usually takes 12 months.

Technicians are usually considered for marine work after two year's successful service. For work outside of hard surface repair, Magicman has a select core of experienced and trusted partners who have entered a 'non-disclosure' working agreement with Magicman. Where our clients request specialised services, we can exceed their expectations.

Q: Magicman advertises turnkey project management. Can you give an example of a

turnkey management project in the cruise and ferry sector?

A: Typically, a turnkey project is where an operator requires a complete service that may encompass a variety of multiple trades.

For example, Magicman recently completed a turnkey refurbishment of a restaurant area on board ship. This involved the removal of fixed items to enable new structures to be installed.

Work, including hard surface repairs, painting & decorating, new metal fabrication works, welding, joinery and the installation of new ceiling panels, were completed on time, within budget and to the client's complete satisfaction.

Other examples would typically include carpet installations, upholstery work and Jacuzzi restorations.

Q: The company also advertises ship surveys. Is this a type of preventative maintenance scheme?

A: Whilst Magicman has a range of solutions for preventive maintenance, our Magicman survey service is aimed at providing cruise and ferry operators with a ship-by-ship condition report of damaged or worn items that may otherwise detract from a passenger's cruise experience.

Magicman's surveys are interactive and allow the recipient of the report to prioritise

damages in either a red, amber or green traffic light approach. This allows budgets to be used as efficiently as possible. The clients can also add their own snag lists to the survey, thereby, creating a consistent database of damages and a permanent record of the date and time of repairs.

The survey is prepared by downloading the deck plans of the ship. Damages are photographed and notes added. This information is captured precisely on the deck plan. When the work is completed, the Magicman technician updates the survey platform with an after photo and completion notes. The survey is then updated electronically for the client to view.

Q: I believe Magicman has a training academy. Is this based at Portslade or is training undertaken remotely, especially today? What training is offered?

A: Magicman's training centre is located at our headquarters in Brighton. Recently, the training centre was relocated to newly acquired premises adjacent to our HQ. The training centre received a £200,000 cash injection and is now a state-of-the-art training centre for Magicman technicians.

Technicians receive full induction training, including the Magicman six-stage repair process, Health & Safety, asbestos awareness, IT systems and operational procedures.



A cruise ship's whirlpool seen before and after restoration

Upon completion of the residential six-week training course, new technicians are assigned a mentor where their development continues for a further 12 months.

Q: In a normal situation would you regularly take on apprentices for training in certain skills?

A: Magicman has an ongoing recruitment plan that supports our long-term growth strategy. New recruits are trained to be able to repair all hard surfaces.

This means that our clients can expect a fast, professional service without having to wait for a specific type of repairer to become available.

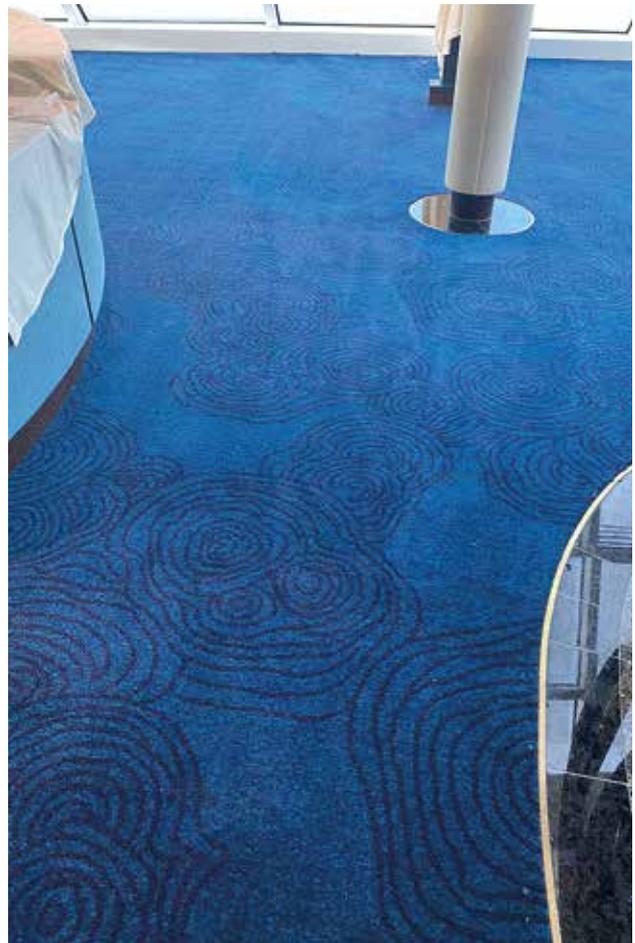
Q: Before the pandemic, was most of the

work undertaken by riding crews? How have you managed since?

A: Magicman considers itself blessed because marine work is just one area of our business. The company also operates in construction, insurance, facilities management, local authority, UK Ministry of Defence and hotels to name just a few.

Prior to the pandemic, Magicman completed over 100 cruise and ferry projects both as ride on crews and drydock work in 2019. In the first quarter of 2020, Magicman had completed about £1 mill worth of marine refurbishment work.

Obviously, we like our colleagues in the marine industry were in a state of shock about what the future may hold. As a business, we immediately implemented our Business Contingency Plan (BCP) part of which placed more focus on UK-based work.



Restoration of a carpet in a restaurant/public area - before and after.