

## **Atlantic Ocean**

***First unassisted crossing by a quadriplegic yachtsman***



***“The Everest of sailing challenges***

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**Corporate Partnership Proposal**

## Executive Summary

Crossing the Atlantic Ocean is a project conceived by paralysed yachtsman Geoff Holt. In December 2009, Geoff will set sail in a 60ft, purpose-built, wheelchair-accessible catamaran on a voyage across the Atlantic Ocean. The 2,700 mile journey will take him up to a month to complete, across some of the most hostile waters in the world. In completing his Challenge, Geoff will become the first quadriplegic to make the journey, unassisted in every aspect of the sailing<sup>1</sup>.

*Geoff completing his Personal Everest. 5<sup>th</sup> Sept. 07*

Having sailed the Atlantic Ocean three times before an accident in 1984 which left Geoff confined to a wheelchair, this will be an emotional voyage for Geoff as he attempts the journey for the first time as a disabled yachtsman.



It will be a matter of complex logistics for the shore-based support team and a feat of personal endurance and sailing skills for Geoff.

Already an accomplished and well-known sailor with previous world-firsts and sailing records to his name, Geoff is perhaps the only disabled sailor in the World capable of putting together, and completing, such an ambitious and high profile event.

With the backing of some of the biggest names in yachting, Atlantic Ocean – The Return, offers a Commercial Partner a truly unique opportunity to be involved in one of the great sailing achievements of our time. The exposure opportunities through the media during the build-up to the event, and over the 28 days of the event itself, will be enormous. Interest has already been shown by a film production company and other national media. The project will be fully risk-assessed at every stage and safety will be a priority for all involved.

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<sup>1</sup> Geoff's personal and medical care will be provided by a qualified care assistant.

Heading up a marketing department for an international firm and his voluntary work chairing the UK's national sailing charity, means Geoff fully understands the requirements of modern day corporate partnership arrangements. As Title Holder you will benefit from a two-way arrangement, not only enjoying maximum media exposure but working with Geoff and his team on your Core Value and your staff programmes, thereby giving added value to your sponsorship.

An official departure with a delivery crew from the UK to the Canary Islands will take place at the Southampton Boat Show in September 2009 - the Princess Royal will also visit the boat and meet our sponsors at the Southampton Show. The boat will set sail from the Canary Islands to the Caribbean in December 2009, arriving January 2010. Involvement at this early stage will maximise exposure in the build-up to the event next year.

Geoff has teamed up with the Ellen Macarthur Trust to help raise money for the Trust but, more importantly, to raise awareness of their work and to inspire other disabled people to take up sailing.



## Title Holder Opportunities

### Already a proven commodity....!!

On September 5<sup>th</sup> 2007, in a challenge entitled Personal Everest, Geoff became the first disabled person to sail single-handed around Great Britain; a voyage which took him and the seven members of his support crew a total of 109 days to complete, sailing 1,500 miles and visiting 51 different destinations during one of the worst summers on record. The event publicity which ensued in the media (TV, radio, national and local printed media), was officially audited by a private agency which estimated 4.2 million people could have either seen, heard or read about his event with an estimated value in excess of £1 million pounds worth of exposure<sup>2</sup>. Full details of that record breaking voyage can be found at [www.personaleverest.com](http://www.personaleverest.com)



Atlantic Ocean – the Return, has all the ingredients of a great story just as Personal Everest did in 2007, except this time the story will be much bigger and will build upon the success of Personal Everest.

The two most important elements remain;

- **Sailing** – one of the most healthy, glamorous, colourful, exciting and truly integrated participant sports available with approximately 6 million people taking part in some form of boating activity each year<sup>3</sup>
- **Challenging/Overcoming Adversity** – a genuine and truly amazing example of one man's triumph over the challenges faced by disabled people. An inspiration to others and an example of courage, determination and achievement

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<sup>2</sup> Potential sponsors or interested parties are welcome to view the collection of press cuttings and videos from that event.

<sup>3</sup> Source: British Marine Federation

At a minimum, a Title Holder will benefit from the following;

- Complete branding of both of the boat's hulls in your corporate livery
- Complete branding of the fore-sail in your corporate livery
- Complete branding of all crew and support crew clothing
- Two berths are available to a sponsor for the delivery of the yacht from Southampton to the Canaries in September 2009
- Exposure at the 2009 London International Boat Show: 160,000 visitors<sup>4</sup>
- Exposure at the 2009 Southampton International Boat Show: 150,000 visitors<sup>5</sup>
- Plus the extensive media exposure outlined above

### **Working with you**

Atlantic Ocean – The Return, is more than just a vehicle to provide you with extensive media exposure. We understand that Directors and shareholders are looking for much more out of their commercial partnership arrangements and we are confident that we can offer a number of ways that will help you in your CSR and your HR programmes.

Personal Everest fits neatly with the Core Values of most large businesses and in particular, it will demonstrate the highest standards of;

- Professionalism
- Teamwork
- Commitment
- Communication
- Innovation
- Courage
- Empowerment



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<sup>4</sup> Official figures released by National Boat Shows

<sup>5</sup> Official figures released by National Boat Shows

## HR Opportunities

Your staff are your greatest resource but different companies have different recognition and reward programmes for their people. Geoff has had many years experience of putting together commercial partnership deals and working with companies to build-in tailored staff involvement programmes. The sort of ideas that could be agreed upon with a Title Holder for this event include;

- Geoff to deliver motivational talks, to both staff and clients
- Staff to act as shore-based volunteers
- Staff motivational events
- Competitions for staff to sail on the yacht



## The Perfect Green Credentials

Atlantic Ocean – The Return, offers commercial partners the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to the environment. Sailing on the sea, powered only by the wind, the Project is a perfect example of using only “green” energy.

## Penetration through technology

Atlantic Ocean – The Return, provides an opportunity to develop an innovative website. Currently hosted at [www.personaleverest.com](http://www.personaleverest.com), it is possible to develop the site to your specification thereby providing a platform for your brand, products or services on a truly global scale. Furthermore, there are possibilities to develop an intranet site which will involve employees and compliment your HR programmes. During the Personal Everest event, the website was receiving up to 30,000 hits a day<sup>6</sup>.

## Key points to consider

Atlantic Ocean – The Return, offers a partner organisation.....

- Exclusive Title and partnership with the project
- Is a good value for money “off the shelf” marketing opportunity
- Extensive media reach
- Ongoing PR opportunities
- The opportunity to use as a strategic marketing tool
- Flexible enough for your specific corporate requirements
- Project involvement for staff and clients
- Demonstrating, through association, your commitment to corporate citizenship
- The opportunity to be involved in a “good story” that will be remembered long after the finishing line has been crossed



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<sup>6</sup> Source: [www.personaleverest.com/stats](http://www.personaleverest.com/stats)

## The Boat

*Impossible Dream* is a wheelchair accessible yacht owned by the charity *Sporting Activities for the Disabled*. She is a custom-built design with push-button technology allowing Geoff to navigate and sail the boat using his sailing skills and experience, without relying on his physical ability.

The boat is used as a charter vessel for disabled people to experience the enjoyment of sailing, and she is currently lying in the Mediterranean. She will return to the UK in the Spring of 2009 for a refit, ready for her delivery passage to the Canary Islands in September 2009.



*Geoff Holt at the helm of Impossible Dream*

## Timetable

Boat return from Med.	May 2009	Royal Southern YC
Delivery Departure (HRH)	September 2009	Southampton Boat Show
Start of Challenge	December 2009	Canary Islands
Arrival in Caribbean	January 2010	Antigua (or island to suit)
Arrival back in UK	January 2010	Royal Southern YC

In addition to these dates, further media opportunities will be created by the announcement of a Title Partnership deal and other sponsor-related events to be agreed.

## Geoff Holt

Growing up on the River Hamble, Geoff's relationship with the sea began at an early age. He left school at 16 to join a charter yacht in the Mediterranean. Over the next few years, he had sailed in excess of 30,000 miles at sea, including 3 trans-Atlantic crossings and several solo voyages. By the age of 18 he had become one of the youngest charter skippers in the Caribbean until his career was cut short in 1984 by a life changing accident which left him paralysed from the chest down and confined to a wheelchair.

Within a few years, Geoff had become involved with disabled sailing and in 1995 he became the inaugural chairman of RYA Sailability, a role he held for 6 years and continued as a Trustee for a total of 10 years. In that time, RYA Sailability raised in excess of £2million pounds and established over 200 clubs and groups which currently give sailing opportunities to more than 20,000 disabled people each year. As one of the UK's leading figures in disabled sailing, his other roles have included the UK's delegate on the International Federation of Disabled Sailing (IFDS), Chairman of the RYA's Paralympic Steering Group which selected the Gold medal winning team in the 1996 Atlanta Paralympics and is founder and Chairman of the Disabled Classes Association which represents all competitive disabled sailors in the UK. Geoff is the current disabled sailing representative on the prestigious Royal Yachting Association (RYA) Council.



*Geoff sailing in the World Disabled Sailing Championships*

As a sailor, Geoff campaigned his Challenger trimaran dinghy and won several regattas including the 1993 UK Open Championship. He twice campaigned his Hobie Cat representing Great Britain in Australia and America taking the bronze medal on both occasions. In 1992, he became the first disabled sailor to sail single-handed the 70 mile trip around the Isle of Wight in just under 14 hours and raised £10,000 for Sailability. He repeated the attempt in 1997 shaving more than 6 hours off his time; the record he set now stands at 7 hours, 55 minutes. Despite attempts, no-one has bettered his time and he remains the only disabled sailor to have made the singled-handed journey twice. In November 2004 he was awarded the prestigious RYA Award for "services to yachting".

In 2007, Geoff became the first disabled person to sail single-handed around Great Britain. As a result, he was shortlisted for the YJA Yachtsman of the Year Award. He won the BBC TV South,



Sports Personality of the Year Award 2007 amongst many other Awards and commendations, including the Paul Harris Fellowship Award by Rotary International.

Parallel to his sailing achievement, Geoff spent 12 years heading up a marketing department for an international firm of chartered accountants. He holds a degree in Fine Arts Valuation and is a qualified auctioneer and valuer.

Geoff has written an auto-biography entitled *Walking on Water* which was launched in September 2008 and was immediately nominated for a Maritime Foundation Literary Award. He is in much demand as an inspirational and motivational speaker<sup>7</sup>.

*Geoff receiving his RYA Award from HRH, The Princess Royal*

### On-Water Support

Safety will always be a paramount consideration. Although Geoff is a vastly experienced yachtsman, as a quadriplegic, his only restrictions to sailing the yacht independently are those concerning his personal care. Without help, Geoff can not get himself into bed, dressed or even into the shower. But, once up and in his wheelchair, he can use his navigational and boat handling skills to sail the yacht, using its high-tech equipment, with complete confidence and competence.

Geoff's care will be provided by a highly trained, personal assistant with specialist skills in caring for those with a high-level disability, like Geoff. The carer will be given some basic training in boat handling, but will have no input, either physically or verbally, into the sailing of the vessel. It is proposed to have a third person, a documentary cameraman, on board to document the journey and Geoff's independence.

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<sup>7</sup> See [www.geoffholt.co.uk](http://www.geoffholt.co.uk) for details

## **Marketing & PR**

In addition to working closely with a sponsor's PR and marketing team, the Project will appoint its own Press Officer and PR agency to capitalise on all media opportunities. This will build-upon, and exceed the coverage attained through Personal Everest in 2007. The yacht will be fitted with the latest video and satellite technology which will be able to feedback daily VNR's (Video News Releases) for continued media interest.

## **Safety Statement**

Sailing is not without risk. However, with issues identified and precautions taken, it is neither a reckless nor dangerous sport. There are tens of thousands of sailors with disabilities throughout the world who sail regularly without incident. Whether sailing for fun on inland reservoirs, racing across oceans or competing at the highest level, disabled sailors today can do so with the same levels of safety and competency as their able-bodied counterparts. If special needs are identified, they can be easily compensated.

Our entire team are committed to the highest levels of safety and event sponsors can be reassured that all elements of the Challenge will be fully risk-assessed by qualified assessors.



**And finally.....!**

Hopefully this proposal has whetted your appetite and you are now at the stage where you would like to meet with Geoff to talk through some sponsorship options.

We would encourage you to visit our website [www.geoffholt.com](http://www.geoffholt.com) where you will be able to see some video footage of Geoff during his last Challenge in 2007 and other useful information.

Thank you for taking the time and trouble to read this document and we look forward to hearing from you.



Geoff Holt