

CASE STUDY: CAT® DEALER “PIT CREW” HELPS KEEP TOWBOATS AFLOAT

CUSTOMER	LOCATION	CAT DEALER	PRODUCT	INDUSTRY
Florida Marine Transport	Mandeville, Louisiana	Fabick Cat	3512, 3508, 3516's	Inland Waterway

FLORIDA MARINE TRANSPORTERS' PARTNERSHIP WITH FABICK CAT GOES ABOVE & BEYOND

RD Quebodeaux has spent his life's work on the water, moving from deckhand to boat captain to shore captain to operations manager over the course of four decades. But when asked to describe his company's relationship with Caterpillar and dealer Fabick Cat, the best analogy he can find is one that takes place on dry land.

"It's almost like it's a car race, and they're our pit crew," says Quebodeaux, who now serves as boat maintenance and repair manager for Florida Marine Transporters, one of the largest privately owned, independent inland marine companies in the U.S. "If we've got a bump in the road, they're going to do everything they can to get people out and get me going as quick as they can."

MADE HIM A BELIEVER

Quebodeaux is responsible for the health of Florida Marine Transporters' fleet of 103 inland towboats, more than 90% of which feature Cat® marine engines. When he was first exposed to a mostly Cat fleet nearly two decades ago, he was skeptical — but it didn't take long to experience the difference.

"They had to prove to me they were reliable, and they've done that," Quebodeaux says. "They're user-friendly. They maintain well. The parts availability is great. They've got good, reputable people working on them. I like Cat engines now. I have yellow blood."

Those engines power one of the youngest fleets in the industry. Florida Marine Transporters' towboats are reliable, fuel-efficient, low-emissions and safe — all factors that matter to the company's customers. Employing Cat 3500 series marine engines across the fleet also delivers big advantages.



"Crews can go from one boat to another, and there's common ground on how the boats run and how the engines are maintained," Quebodeaux says. "Oil change frequencies, tune-up frequencies — it's all the same. There are also safety benefits for the crew when they're switching between boats."



"When a port engineer calls with a problem, my first question is how far is that boat from Fabick's shop. I know I'm going to get the best service, that they're going to do the work as quickly as possible and keep me informed."

-RD QUEBODEAUX,
BOAT MAINTENANCE & REPAIR
MANAGER FOR FLORIDA MARINE
TRANSPORTERS

AN ABOVE-AND-BEYOND PARTNERSHIP

The biggest reason for Quebodeaux's conversion to Cat engine believer, however, lies in the support he receives from the Cat Dealer network, particularly from Fabick Cat and their marine manager, Rick Morris.

"In the past, every time we needed something, Rick would go the extra mile to keep my fleet going," Quebodeaux says.

"He bent over backwards to help me, and we got to a point where I couldn't do it without him. From there, we started using Fabick more and more. We're glad to have that partnership."

SERVICE, SPEED & EXPERT SUPPORT

For Quebodeaux, quick turnaround on repairs and access to trained technicians who can provide a solution to any challenge are what set Cat dealer services apart.

"When a port engineer calls with a problem, my first question is how far is that boat from Fabick's shop," Quebodeaux says. "I know I'm going to get the best service, that they're going to do the work as quickly as possible and keep me informed."

Fabick Cat keeps certain parts in inventory specifically for Florida Marine Transporters, so they can be swapped in quickly in an emergency and the towboats can get back to work.

"We are a partner in this," Morris says. "We're committed to this company and to this industry."

It's a partnership that helps keep Florida Marine Transporters doing what it does best — moving cargo safely and efficiently throughout the U.S.'s inland waterways.