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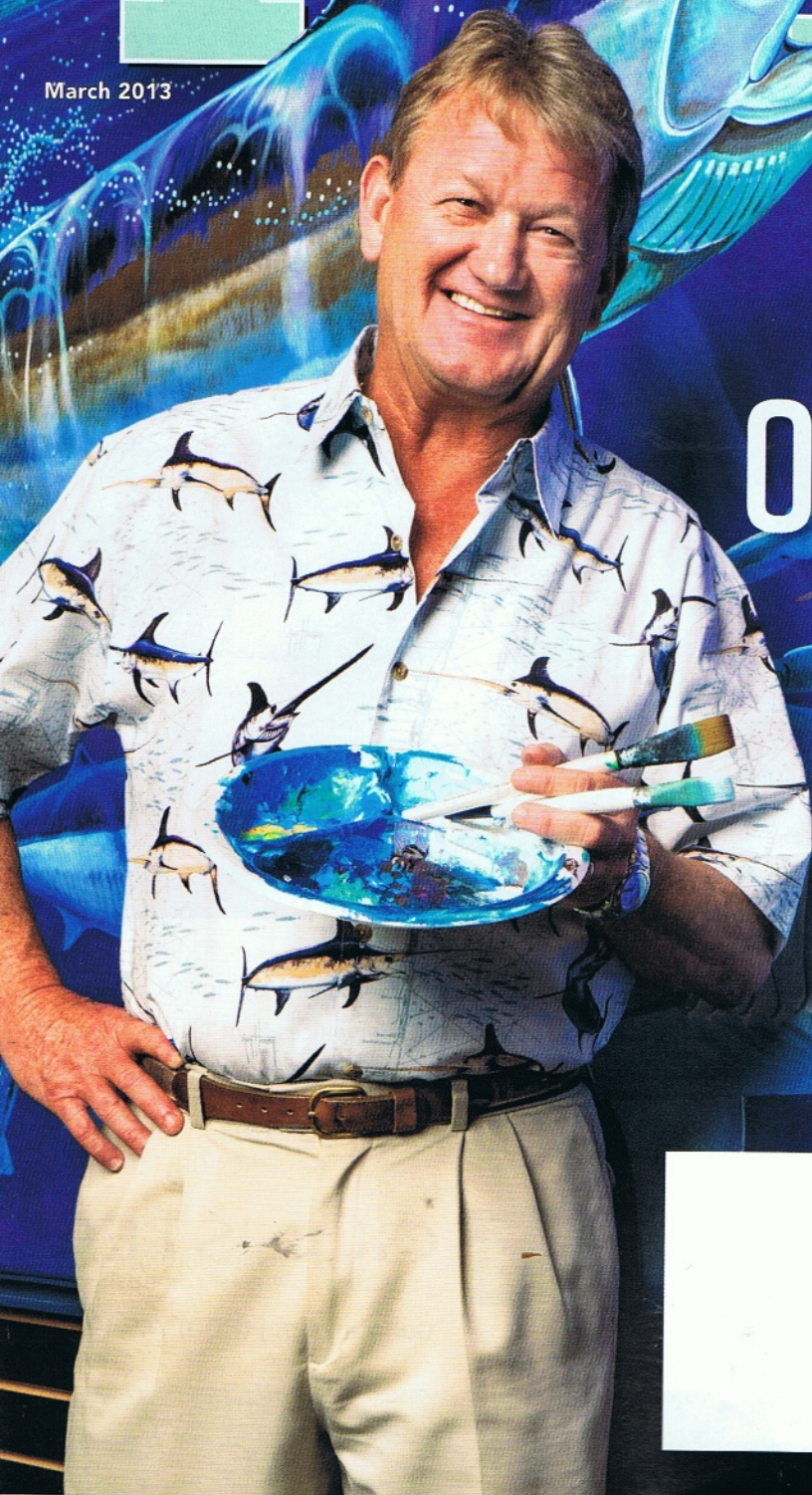
# Trend Florida

March 2013

THE MAGAZINE OF FLORIDA BUSINESS

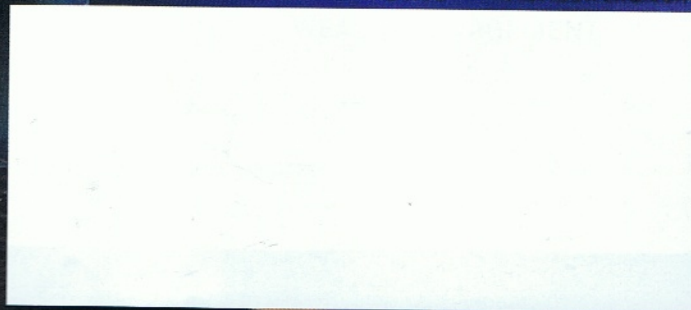
## The Art of the Deal

Guy Harvey wants to push his brand nationally. Can he pull it off? 74



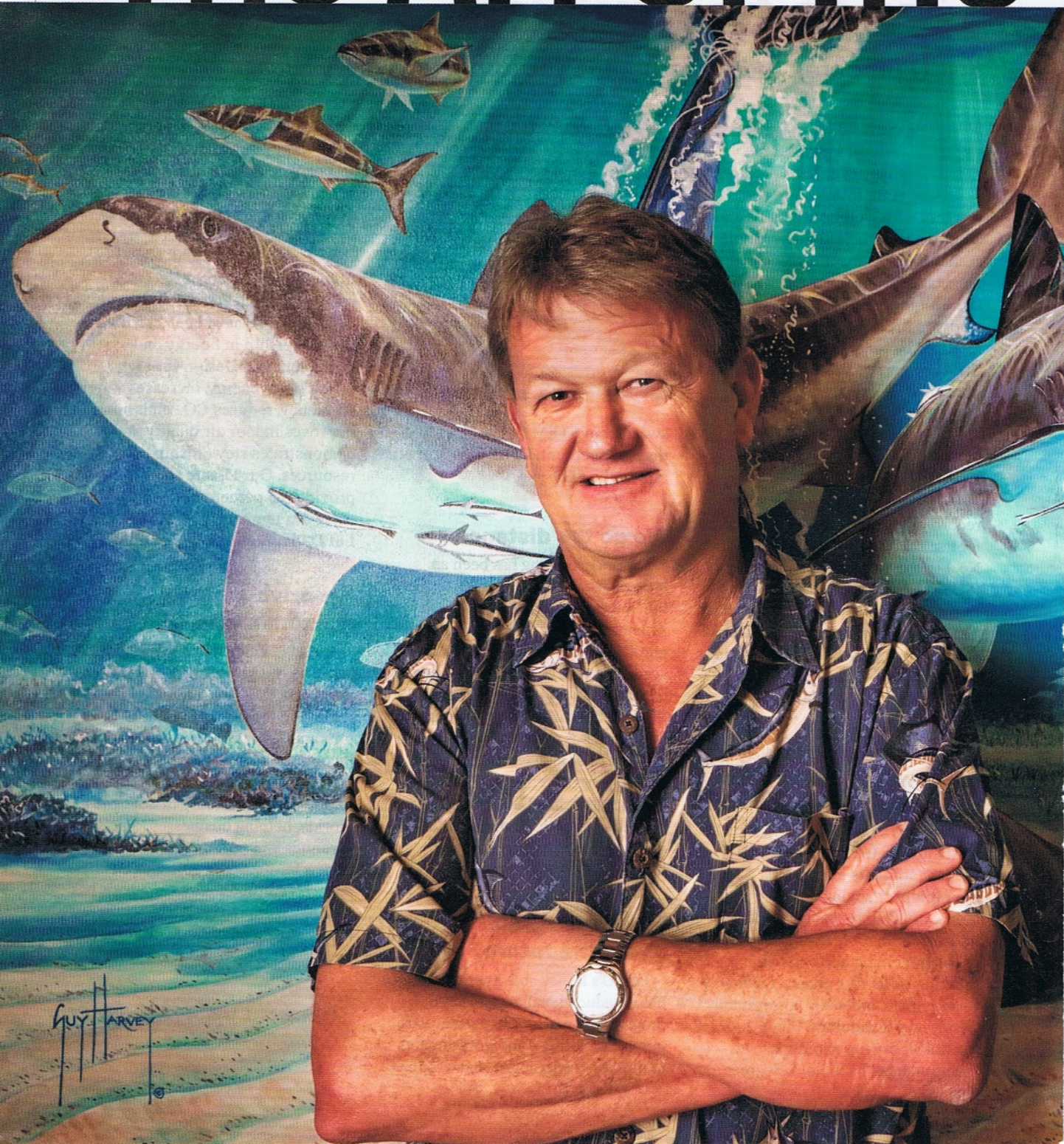
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[ Cover Story: Guy Harvey ]

# The Art of the



# Deal



Guy Harvey's fish paintings have made his T-shirts and name synonymous with fishing and Florida's casual lifestyle. Can he push the brand nationally?

A dark SUV pulls up to a Beall's department store in northeast Tallahassee and deposits Guy Harvey at the front entrance. It's a Sunday afternoon in December and more than 100 people are lined up inside, waiting to have Harvey put his distinctive, long-stemmed signature on the T-shirts and posters they are carrying.

It's a diverse crowd: Suburban moms towing toddlers, tanned 50-something men, college girls in running shorts, a Marine in his dress blues, teenage boys and grandparents hunting for Christmas gifts.

Some have arrived hours early to get a better spot in line. After Harvey settles in for the two-hour signing, one particularly rabid fan approaches.

John Davidson drove 440 miles from Memphis, where he builds airplanes for Lockheed Martin, to Harvey's appearance in Pensacola the day before. Then he motored on another three hours to Tallahassee to grab a second Harvey autograph.

Harvey recognizes Davidson, greets him warmly and Davidson walks away with another autograph to add to his stash of more than 40 Harvey-signed posters and artwork.

A friend convinced Guy Harvey that his work had commercial potential. His first big break came at the 1986 Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show.

# The Harvey Brand

Guy Harvey's name now appears on a magazine, license plates, hotels, lottery tickets, a growing line of clothing, an ecological institute and a foundation.



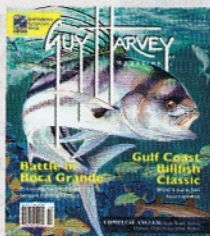
Guy Harvey apparel



Harvey's art studio on Grand Cayman Island is also a retail store for his artwork.



The Guy Harvey Research Institute at Nova Southeastern University helps scientists manage fish populations and their ecosystems.



Guy Harvey magazine



Lottery ticket



The TradeWinds Resort in St. Pete Beach has transformed its Sandpiper Hotel into a Guy Harvey Outpost. Harvey is planning other Outposts on the Galapagos Islands.

Not all of Harvey's devotees are as fervent as Davidson, but they continue to swarm to Harvey's 27-year-old brand, paying premium prices for Harvey-decorated posters, sandals, doormats, dog collars, coffee mugs, cell phone covers, and, of course, his hugely popular fish-emblazoned T-shirts.

The T-shirts, which sell for between \$15 and \$30, bring in the most revenue, Harvey says, but he won't disclose how many shirts he sells or much else

relating to the financials of Guy Harvey Inc., a nine-employee Davie operation that oversees the licensing of his name and artwork. "We don't talk about that," Harvey says.

Steve Stock, Guy Harvey Inc.'s president, is also tight-lipped about the company's finances, but it's clear the apparel business is lucrative. Since 2004, Harvey's sportswear has been manufactured and distributed by the American Fishing Tackle Co. (AFTCO). Bill Shedd, AFT-

CO's president, says his company, which employs 75, maintains a staff of five just "to build designs for Guy Harvey" — adding design flourishes to Harvey's painted images. AFTCO, says Shedd, sells "millions" of Harvey T-shirts each year.

Licensing experts say Harvey likely receives a royalty fee of between 8% and 10% of the wholesale cost of his T-shirts. Assuming a wholesale cost of \$10, Harvey could pocket about \$1 per T-shirt.

## The professor

An 11th-generation Jamaican, Harvey, 57, didn't set out to become an entrepreneur, or even a painter. After getting a degree in marine biology from Aberdeen University in Scotland and a Ph.D. in fisheries management from the University of the West Indies, he took a job teaching marine biology at the latter school in the early 1980s.

Interested in drawing as a child, Harvey began painting fish in his spare time. A friend convinced Harvey his work had commercial potential, and Harvey started selling his paintings at art shows. His first big break came at the 1986 Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show. He sold everything he brought, including watercolors, pen and ink drawings and a set of 12 drawings depicting Ernest Hemingway's "Old Man and the Sea" story that brought him \$1,200. (Today, those paintings are worth \$24,000.)

By 1988, he had quit his job as a professor and was painting full time. He began licensing his work, partnering with a com-

pany called T-Shirts of Florida that put his designs on cotton T-shirts. Harvey says he was "a little bit skeptical, to be honest," but liked that the art reproduced properly on the shirts. "It makes it look exactly like a real painting."

Initially, Harvey's art caught on with anglers, who appreciated his efforts to render fish in vivid detail. Apparel sales took off when Harvey's designs became popular with others, including teenagers and young adults, a notoriously fickle demographic.

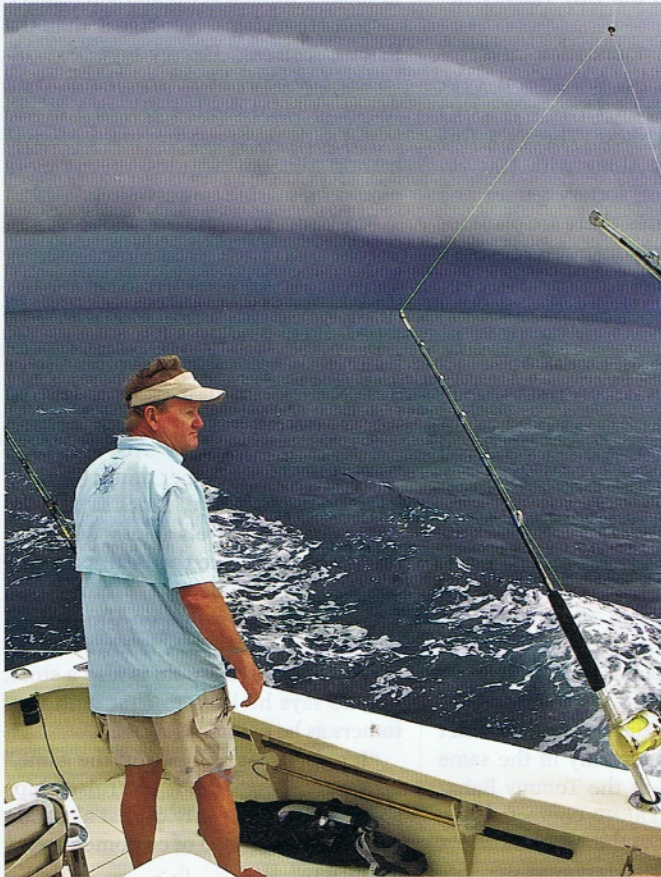
"When we first started, if you went to a Guy Harvey signing it was a couple of older guys who fish together who wanted to buy

a T-shirt," says Shedd, who acknowledges he is a little baffled by Harvey's enduring popularity with young adults.

Harvey paints in a variety of media, including oils, acrylics, watercolors and pen and ink. He paints all the artwork himself, with an assistant helping him adapt the images for use on T-shirts or rugs.

The accuracy of his images is a source of pride: He says he spends time diving and fishing, especially in areas he is unfamiliar with, such as the Pacific Northwest, "to stay on top of the anatomy and the physiology of these animals. I learned scientifically about how to get it right," Harvey says. "I didn't work from photos."

"Nowadays, you see all the copycats. They copy my poses and my imagery, but they are not prepared to do their own research work. I've seen hundreds come and take a shot at my business and my style and they all fail." — Guy Harvey



photograph: George Schellenger

## The Life of Guy

**Growing Up:** Raised on a 1,200-acre farm in Jamaica, Harvey is the son of a cattle farmer and a nurse. His mother's side of the family has lived in Jamaica since the 1600s. His family had a beach cottage, and that's where he first fell in love with the ocean.

**Early Art:** As a child, Harvey liked drawing. At 8, he was sent to England for boarding school, where he sketched fish he remembered from Jamaica and grew particularly attached to Ernest Hemingway's "The Old Man and the Sea." He still has a British accent.

**Education:** A degree in marine biology at Aberdeen University in Scotland; a Ph.D. in fisheries management from the University of the West Indies in Jamaica

**Family:** Wife, Gillian, 51, whom he met at a New Year's Eve party in 1984 and married in 1989. Harvey says she doesn't like to fish. She works as a consular officer for the Jamaican consulate in the Cayman Islands. The couple's two children, Alex and Jessica, have worked in the gallery and store in Grand Cayman during holidays. Jessica has a zoology degree and works for the environmental protection department for the Cayman Islands. Alex is a business major — with a talent for drawing.

Almost three-quarters of Harvey's revenue comes from clothing sales. A new line targets women and country-music fans.

Harvey spends time diving and fishing "to stay on top of the anatomy and the physiology" of his subjects.



## Wider net

Harvey quickly steers business conversation toward marine conservation. He prefers catch-and-release fishing and will only eat sustainable seafood, he says, handing out a wallet-sized pamphlet listing what's acceptable. He says he almost single-handedly convinced Cayman Island restaurants to stop offering grouper because they are overfished.

Fourteen years ago, he founded the Guy Harvey Research Institute at Nova Southeastern University at Dania Beach. The institute focuses on scientific research intended to protect marine life from overfishing and habitat loss. The program receives its funding through the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation, Guy Harvey Inc., licensing fees and grants and donations.

Five years ago, Harvey created the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation, separate from the institute, to have more control over how money is spent. "We put about 80% into research work and 20% into education," he says.

Most of the funding for the foundation comes from sources like Guy Harvey lottery tickets and license plates or directly from the licensees, who pay a percentage of gross sales. Harvey won't reveal that percentage. "It's single digits. It's a lot of money — easily six figures," he says. The foundation's expenditures last year

were \$1.5 million, Stock says, and of that \$500,000 went to the Guy Harvey Research Institute.

Sustaining the foundation and his business, meanwhile, has meant casting an ever-wider net. There was a Guy Harvey television show. There's a *Guy Harvey* magazine. Along with Harvey-branded scratch-off lottery games and Florida license plates, there are plans for two Guy Harvey documentaries that will be available on iTunes.

Most recently, Harvey licensed his name to the TradeWinds Resort in St. Pete Beach, which rebranded one of its resorts as the "Guy Harvey Outpost." He has had some failures — a chain of seven restaurants called the Guy Harvey Island Grill closed last year.

## Bigger than fishing?

Nearly 70% of Harvey's sales come from apparel. Looking for a manufacturer/distributor with national scope, Harvey ended his relationship with T-Shirts of Florida and signed the deal with AFTCO in 2004. Apparel sales increased, but the Harvey brand hasn't broken through nationally in the same way, for example, as the Tommy Bahama apparel line. TREND contacted two analysts who follow the retail industry. Neither had heard of Harvey.

Harvey is keen to change that. Last year, Guy Harvey Inc. began a campaign to broaden his appeal — starting with a line of collegiate T-shirts for southeastern schools that feature the schools' mascots rather than fish. The company also has rolled out a line of shirts with images for the Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard. The shirts don't feature fish.

Another new line targets women, including a pink, breast cancer-awareness month T-shirt. In the last several years, Stock says, there has been a concerted effort to improve Harvey's women's apparel selection, with shirts that offer slogans like "I Fish Like a Girl," and are sold in smaller women's cuts and soft pastels.

"We are trying to get bigger than the fishing business," Harvey says. The collegiate and other lines "are all important for us to build the brand into a meaningful national brand, not just a lifestyle brand." Success, he adds, means more money for marine conservation.

Stock says the company is also targeting country-music fans. The company plans a "Rock the Ocean" two-day festival on Fort Lauderdale Beach in April with country singer Kenny Chesney headlining. A key part of the company's marketing is emphasizing that Harvey, unlike the fictional Tommy Bahama, is an actual person — "an artist and a scientist and all these other things (Tommy Bahama) doesn't have," Stock says.

Harvey, who travels at least 30 weeks a year to events like the Beall's appearance in Tallahassee to promote his brand, lives and paints on Grand Cayman Island. Commerce is always close at hand. Harvey's studio is also a store, and he says he likes to chat with customers as he paints.

"It's all fun; it's all part of the game," he says. "We get a lot of cruise ships coming in. The beauty of that situation is you get a boatload of customers every single day." ■