

Introduction to Side Power Thrusters

It's no secret that one of the most stressful parts of boating is maneuvering around crowded marinas and anchorages – which can be a challenge for even the most skilled operator. Add wind, currents, and ever increasing crowds, and the ability to maneuver your vessel with confidence is of paramount importance. Thruster systems allow better control of a vessel when precise positioning is required.

With a well-deserved reputation for outstanding performance, Side-Power thrusters provide reliability, ease of installation, and unrivalled electronic safety features.

Side-Power rates the performance of their thrusters very conservatively – so you can depend on them to perform as advertised. The power output data in our Spec Tables, for example, are what is achieved even if your batteries are nearly dead (10.5V for 12 volt thrusters, and 21.0V for 24 volt thrusters). All Side-Power performance specs are based on measurements of actual installations rather than laboratory bench tests.

At the forefront of thruster development, Side-Power focuses its research on improved efficiency of the drive system, reducing loads, improved safety features, and extending life span. Advances in technology and the understanding of how propellers work have allowed the development of thrusters which require less power input with much greater thrust output than competing models. In fact, Side-Power thrusters are among the most efficient thrusters available, which is why they are rated by thrust output and not by horsepower or kilowatts – actual thrust at the propeller being the only true measure of a thruster's performance. All other specifications - such as horsepower - are just theoretical.

Of particular note is Side-Power's **composite 5-blade propeller** used in their SE Series of thrusters. These are designed to provide the same exceptional thrust of the older 4-blade props, while reducing noise by up to 75% in the laboratory and 20-40% in real world installations. This significant noise reduction has been achieved by spreading the load over more blades, each of which is “skewed” to provide a gradually increasing angle of attack on the water. Additionally, each prop is specifically tuned for the tunnel size it is used in.

Side-Power's introduction of **variable speed control** in some of their larger thrusters, achieves a new level of performance beyond standard “full on/off” thrusters. These “Proportional DC Thrusters” allow you to use the precise amount of thrust you need for the maneuver you are making – for better boat handling and lower energy consumption. At the same time, it eliminates much of the noise associated with “on/off” thrusters.

In addition, features such as a button activated “Hold-In-Place” function – which allows you to keep the boat in position at docks or in locks, and an LCD display showing the status of the thruster, make Side-Power proportional DC thrusters the most advanced available on the market today.

Side-Power produces thrusters with three different propulsion systems –

- Single propeller thrusters are the most energy efficient and compact. They are typically used in narrow bows and smaller boats.
- Twin propellers can provide more thrust in a small tunnel diameter, but sacrifice a small percentage of efficiency. They are used as midrange thrusters.
- Twin, counter-rotating propellers are used in the largest systems where, due to the large size of the vessel, maximal thrust provided is the most important consideration.