

# Welcome To High Tech Fishing



## Welcome To Hightech Fishing!

By: *Kentucky Lake Fishing  
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I remember when I received my first computer and how I was intimidated by

that little machine. My business at the time required that I send emails, reports, etc., electronically and I soon found out that I was either going to master that little machine or be left behind. Well, I mastered that little machine and it wasn't as difficult as I had imagined or anticipated. Ready or not this is the age of **Hightech Fishing!**

Like a lot of folks, I resisted the transition to high definition sonar thinking

that using a paper topographical map and an old time sonar unit would lead me to the "fishing hotspots." One day I found myself glued to the screen of my fishing partner's brand new Lowrance HDS unit and I was astounded at what was in front of me. Not only did I see the bottom contour with rock formations and submerged cover, I saw baitfish and bass too. When my fishing partner threw out a marker buoy and we began catching the largemouth bass I'd seen on the screen, I was sold. That day I realized that in order to become a better fisherman, I needed to embrace the new technology before me and do it as soon as possible. If you can identify with this scenario; have no fear. Choosing the right system and learning to use high definition sonar is a lot easier than you think.

### Why do I need a High Definition Sonar System anyway?

If you want to improve as a fisherman, I can think of nothing else that is as big a difference maker as High Definition Sonar. The advanced digital technology has greater sensitivity, higher definition and clarity, which results in better fish finding in all types of cover. No doubt it has been the single most important tool in improving my fishing and that of Kick'n Bass' clients as well. By using the electronic mapping and StructureScan features; unproductive water can be eliminated. Also with the help of the GPS features, I can mark favorite fishing spots for a return visit. As a result, more time is spent fishing productive water and catching fish and that makes Kick'n Bass clients happy



*The screen shows a ledge at the mouth of a bay with a submerged tree and a saddle with a big rock in the middle, making it a real "sweet spot". At low light, the largemouth bass were positioned tight to the cover on top of the ledge. As the sun came up, the bass went deeper and repositioned around the big rock in the middle of the saddle. The Lowrance HDS 10 was used to pinpoint the location of the school and identified how deep we needed to fish. Without the help of our electronics, we could have spent a lot of time blindly casting with baits to find the fish. Instead, we concentrated on this spot and had fun catching several nice bass.*

customers. (Photo - John Brewer and Paul Copeland from Louisville, KY)

## What's the right system for the type of fishing you do?

When looking for the right system, you should ask yourself the following questions. How much can you seriously invest? What system really meets your needs and do you want to expand your system at a later date? Lowrance has a system to fit every fisherman's pocket book and need. Four models are available starting with the HDS 5 (5-inch screen), HDS 7 (7-inch screen), HDS 8 (8-inch screen) and the "big boy" - the HDS 10 (10-inch screen), which boasts one of the largest screens in the industry.

Other than the HDS 8 & HDS 10, which have soft keys allowing one-touch screen access, the functions on all the models are basically the same with no sacrifice in quality. These units are combo units, meaning they have both a depth sounder as well as a chartplotter/GPS which overlays your position on a map. The chartplotter shows your location at all times. Marking your favorite fishing hole, schools of fish, boat ramp, etc., is as simple as pushing a button and assigning a waypoint. The waypoints (locations) can be saved for future visits. Having the GPS feature is something that we rely on to return to underwater humps, ledges and at times, navigate from one spot to another.

All of the HDS Lake Insight units come preloaded with lake maps in one-foot contours. These are good base maps. Also, all Lowrance HDS units are Navionics compatible. Navionics media cards have pre-programmed maps and are ready to use. In most cases, they show more detail than the Lake Insight maps. Navionics cards are divided by geographical regions. The top-of-the-line Platinum version features 3D View, Panoramic Lake Photos, Top-down Satellite Imagery, and exclusive one-foot contours from Navionics own on-the-water surveys. While some anglers may find the Platinum version to their liking, for everyday fishing, I use the Premium version which has a few less features and cost less.

Expanding your system is easy and multiple HDS units can be networked together to share information. An optional StructureScan system can be added too.

## What is StructureScan?

StructureScan is a high-frequency beam that creates an almost photographic picture and portrays it in high definition. For me, the StructureScan option removes a lot of the guesswork involved in trying to determine what I'm looking at. Underwater objects look just like what they are. A brush pile looks like a brush pile, a tree a tree, a stump like a stump, etc. The higher definition and clarity results in better fish finding in all type of cover too. With the StructureScan module, several high definition views are available.

In the DownScan mode, one can view detailed sonar imaging straight down from the boat. In SideScan mode, views of underwater objects are shown from side to side including shadows. One big advantage of SideScan is it

saves the angler time in contrast to working over the same area with the unit in DownScan mode. Side Scan is for wide area views and the range on the SideScan mode can be adjusted too.

Generally speaking, I'll scan an area 60 feet or less which gives me a real good picture of what I'm looking for. On the larger units like the HDS 8 & 10, you can combine the DownScan and SideScan imaging in split screen mode to view them at the same time, which gives the angler a darn near panoramic view of what's around him. One of the more useful tools is the TrackBack feature which allows you to revisit an area by scrolling the screen backwards to find objects such as brush piles, rock formations, schools of fish, etc. A waypoint can be assigned to the desired location if need be. In the photo, the TrackBack feature was used to pinpoint a school of bass and a waypoint was assigned to mark the location of the school. Several fish were caught from this spot. One advantage of having the TrackBack feature is it saves the angler a lot of time in relocating fishing



***Kick'n Bass Guide Service Clients John Brewer & Paul Copeland from Louisville, KY are shown here during a productive day on Kentucky Lake. Technology put them on the fish.***

hot spots. As a fishing guide, I rely on this feature quite often. Time isn't wasted re-scanning an area; instead I can go right to the spot. This allows my clients to spend more time fishing and less time sitting in the boat. TrackBack is just one of the many angler friendly features from Lowrance.

### Ok, you've chosen your HDS unit and StructureScan, what's next?

Installing an HDS system is not rocket science, but it is best done by qualified personnel. I cannot overemphasize how important it is to have someone that is QUALIFIED to do the install. In my guiding business, I offer a

Sonar Class whereby I update, program and demo client units. This class is done in their boat, on their systems and by the end of the day; my clients have a good comfort level using their electronics. On more than one occasion, botched installations have caused problems that had to be resolved prior to beginning instruction. If you need assistance in choosing an HDS system or finding a Qualified Installer in the Kentucky Lake area, send me an email ([rk@kicknbass.net](mailto:rk@kicknbass.net)) and I'll do my best to help you out. For more information, and if you want to view some really cool high definition screen shots, be sure and check the SONAR CLASS page on the Kick'n Bass' Web site [www.kicknbass.net](http://www.kicknbass.net)

Purchasing a complete system has its advantages ... Pricing! Bundle Pricing is available on most units. Bundle pricing is a combination of an HDS unit, a StructureScan module, most wiring, transducer, etc. at a Factory Discounted Price. Also at times, various rebates are available on selected HDS units, so it's possible that one could save a considerable amount between the bundle pricing and rebates. Check with a Lowrance retailer; they'll be glad to give details to what's included in the bundle pricing and what rebates are available if any.

Lowrance has a reputation for high quality electronics and you can't go wrong with any of the HDS systems. They're designed with the fisherman in mind and they're easy to operate. View underwater objects like you've never done before, assign a waypoint for future reference, find fishing hot spots and become a better angler. Welcome to Hightech Fishing!

If you want to book a fishing trip with Kick'n Bass Guide Service or learn to better use your HDS System by scheduling a Sonar Class, send Randy Kuhens an email: [rk@kicknbass.net](mailto:rk@kicknbass.net) While you're at it, be sure and check the **SONAR CLASS** page on Kick'n Bass' Web site [www.kicknbass.net](http://www.kicknbass.net) See Lowrance HDS Systems at: [www.lowrance.com](http://www.lowrance.com)

Be sure and visit with Kick'n Bass Guide Service at Booth 308 in the Game and Gill section of the Louisville Boat, RV and Sportshow Jan. 27 - 29, 2012.



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