

DEC 2025

A Practical Guide to AI for Professional Yacht Surveyors

How to Save Time, Improve Accuracy & Deliver Higher-Value Reports Using AI Tools



Contents

- 03.** Introduction: Why AI Matters in Modern Yacht Surveying
- 04.** Understanding AI in a Surveying Context
- 05.** The Role of AI in Reporting and Documentation
- 06.** Improving Technical Wording, Findings and Explanations with AI
- 07.** AI and Visual Documentation: Organising and Enhancing Images
- 08.** Using AI for Research, Technical Understanding and Data Retrieval
- 09.** General AI Tools (ChatGPT, Claude, etc.) vs Domain-Trained AI
- 10.** How evalo™ Fits Into a Surveyor's Workflow
- 11.** The Future of Surveying: Enhancing, Not Replacing, Expertise

Rick Kirton works at the crossroads of marine expertise and emerging technology. As the founder of evalo™, he collaborates closely with yacht surveyors and maritime professionals to design AI tools that respect the craft of surveying while removing unnecessary friction from the reporting process. He writes about digital transformation in the marine industry, always with an eye on what actually helps professionals in the field.



Introduction: Why AI Matters in Modern Yacht Surveying

Yacht surveying has always relied on skill, experience and the ability to translate real-world observations into clear, defensible reports. But the job has changed. Clients expect faster turnaround times, insurers expect detailed justification, and modern vessels come packed with more technology, more systems and more documentation than ever before.

“AI doesn’t replace the surveyor, it supports your expertise, helping you communicate findings more clearly, organise your work efficiently, and focus your time on what matters most: the inspection itself.”

Surveyors are spending more time behind a laptop than they’d like, often wrestling with wording, formatting, image management and research. All tasks that take energy away from the inspection itself. AI is beginning to change that. Not by replacing the surveyor, and not by making the process automated, but by quietly handling the tasks that slow you down.

This guide shows how AI can support your existing workflow, how it fits naturally into each stage of the job, and why the right tools can genuinely improve the quality of your reporting. It also explains why general-purpose systems are useful only to a point, and why survey-specific AI tools, like evalo™, have become so valuable to professionals who want accuracy, speed and confidence in the final report.

Understanding AI in a Surveying Context

Before diving into practical use cases, it helps to set realistic expectations about what AI can and cannot do.

AI is extremely good at:

- ✓ Rewriting information for clarity
- ✓ Extracting structure from messy notes
- ✓ Interpreting plain-language descriptions
- ✓ Organising images and text
- ✓ Recognising patterns in language
- ✓ Speeding up drafting and editing
- ✓ Generating summaries and recommendations based on your observations

AI is not a surveyor. It cannot:

- ✗ Inspect a hull
- ✗ Diagnose a crack
- ✗ Decide whether a moisture reading is meaningful
- ✗ Judge the severity of corrosion
- ✗ Substitute for hands-on assessment
- ✗ Sign off on professional decisions

Think of AI as a tool in the same category as digital calipers or thermal cameras. It helps, it accelerates, it enhances, but the value still lies in your experience.

The Role of AI in Reporting and Documentation

Ask any surveyor what part of the job takes the longest, and the answer is nearly always the same: the report.

Drafting observations, refining descriptions, structuring sections, sorting photographs, formatting findings and tidying language can easily take longer than the survey itself. AI is particularly effective here because most reporting tasks are repetitive and involve working through large blocks of text that need to be organised and polished.

AI can help you:

- ✓ Rewrite observations so they're clearer and more concise
- ✓ Maintain consistency across different reports
- ✓ Tidy up grammar and flow without changing your voice
- ✓ Convert rough notes into structured paragraphs
- ✓ Generate client-friendly explanations of technical issues

For many surveyors, the reporting stage becomes significantly faster once AI becomes part of their routine. The work is still yours, the AI simply helps you communicate it more efficiently.

Engine & Propulsion System

Section Description:

- Bukh DV20 fitted. no service information, hours unknown
- Engine beds FRP moulded type, look OK
- No info on last service

Enhance with AI

AI-Generated Professional Text

Review and edit the AI-generated text below. You can make any changes before adding it to your survey.

The vessel is currently fitted with a Bukh DV 20 marine diesel engine. No service records or documentation regarding its maintenance history were provided for review at the time of the survey.

The operating hours for this engine are presently unknown. The engine beds are of a fiberglass reinforced plastic (FRP) molded type and appeared to be in good condition upon visual inspection.

There was no information available concerning the date or scope of the engine's last service.

Discard Use This Text

Improving Technical Wording, Findings and Explanations with AI

When reporting on technical issues, precision matters. A small phrasing change can shift meaning. A mislabelled component can undermine credibility. This is where general AI tools begin to hit their limits.

Tools like ChatGPT and Claude are excellent editors, but they lack the deep marine knowledge needed to reliably handle technical findings. They may phrase something beautifully, but they can also get terminology wrong, and they won't always tell you when they're unsure.

Specialised solutions like evalo™ fill that gap.

Because evalo™ is trained on thousands of real survey reports, it:

- Understands how surveyors phrase findings
- Knows typical issues associated with different systems
- Recognises industry-standard terminology
- Follows the structure surveyors actually use
- Avoids vague or overly generic language
- Keeps context intact across complex sections

You stay in full control of your findings, but evalo™ helps articulate them with clarity, precision and consistency. It feels less like using “AI” and more like working with a junior surveyor who has already read every report you've ever written.

AI and Visual Documentation: Organising and Enhancing Images

Every survey generates dozens or even hundreds of photos. Sorting them, labelling them and working them into a report often takes far longer than expected. AI can streamline this part of the process by helping you organise images according to systems and components, improving clarity and ensuring the right photos accompany the right observations.

Some surveyors also use AI to enhance their own visual notes. This might mean adjusting lighting on a poorly lit photo, highlighting an area of concern, or generating a simple illustration to show how a component should look when functioning correctly. These small improvements make a significant difference when explaining defects to clients who may not understand the technical details.

AI won't replace your photography or your judgment, but it can remove friction from the administrative side of visual documentation and help produce clearer, more professional results.



Using AI for Research, Technical Understanding and Data Retrieval

Surveyors often need quick access to accurate technical information. This may involve researching manufacturer specifications, checking how a particular component is typically installed, reviewing guidance on a material, or simply refreshing your understanding of a system you haven't worked with recently.

AI can accelerate this research by summarising documents, explaining concepts and helping you navigate complex technical material more easily. When you need to understand a construction method, compare defect patterns, or interpret maintenance guidance, AI can condense the essentials into a format that supports quick, informed decision-making.

However, there is an important distinction between general-purpose AI and tools designed specifically for marine surveying. Systems like ChatGPT or Claude are excellent for surface-level research, but they rely on broad training data that doesn't always align with marine standards or real-world vessel practices. They can occasionally provide outdated or overly generic information, or even present assumptions as facts.

This is where a specialised tool such as evalo™ becomes far more dependable. Because it is trained on real survey reports, marine terminology and patterns drawn from the field, it understands the context behind your questions. It can reference the kinds of issues that commonly appear on similar vessels, highlight details that might be relevant to your observation and provide insight based on practical experience rather than general internet knowledge.

AI Assessment

Your Yanmar 4JH57 engine requires a specific raw water pump impeller to ensure proper cooling. The original equipment manufacturer part is Yanmar number 129670-42531. This component is critical, as its failure will result in engine overheating.

Recommendations

1. Source Yanmar part 129670-42531 or the direct aftermarket equivalent, Johnson Pump 09-812B, from a reputable marine parts dealer.
2. Procure two impellers: one for the current service and one to keep onboard as a critical spare.
3. When purchasing, acquire the corresponding pump cover gasket to ensure a proper seal upon reassembly.

General AI Tools (ChatGPT, Claude, etc) vs Domain-Trained AI

There's nothing wrong with using general AI platforms. In fact, they're a great way to get started. They're helpful for rewriting text, simplifying explanations, organising thoughts, brainstorming ideas and improving readability

But they struggle with technical accuracy, structured survey findings, context-specific terminology, marine construction details, identifying missing sections, distinguishing between similar components

If you rely too heavily on general tools for technical writing, mistakes can slip through, and those mistakes reflect on your professionalism.

evalo™ was built because surveyors needed a tool that understood the language, structure and reality of marine surveying coming from three core qualities:

Deep domain training

evalo™ learns from thousands of real surveys, giving it a natural understanding of terminology, vessel systems, typical defects and reporting styles.

Designed around a surveyor's workflow

Everything in evalo™ reflects how surveyors actually work — from drafting findings to structuring sections to organising images and notes.

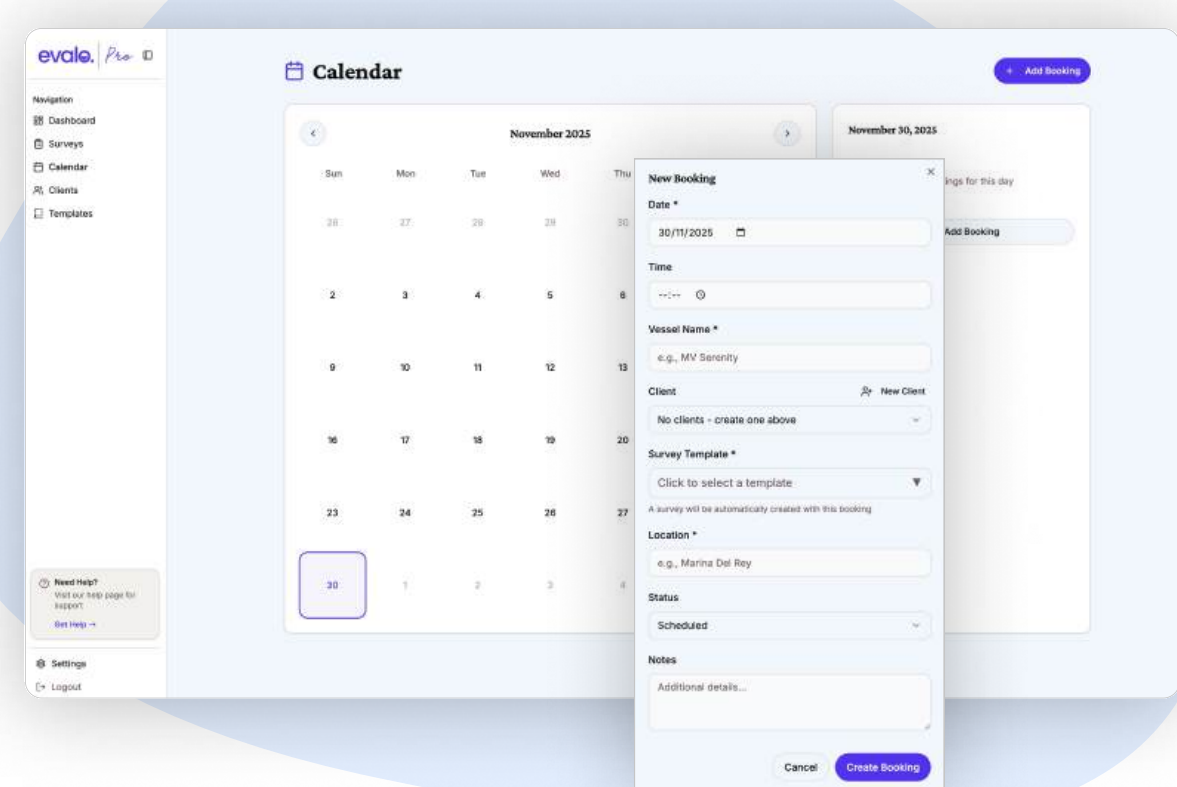
Accuracy and consistency

Because evalo™ understands marine context, it produces findings that are precise, relevant and aligned with industry expectations.

The aim isn't to replace the surveyor. It's to support your expertise with a tool that already understands your world — without needing to be taught every time.

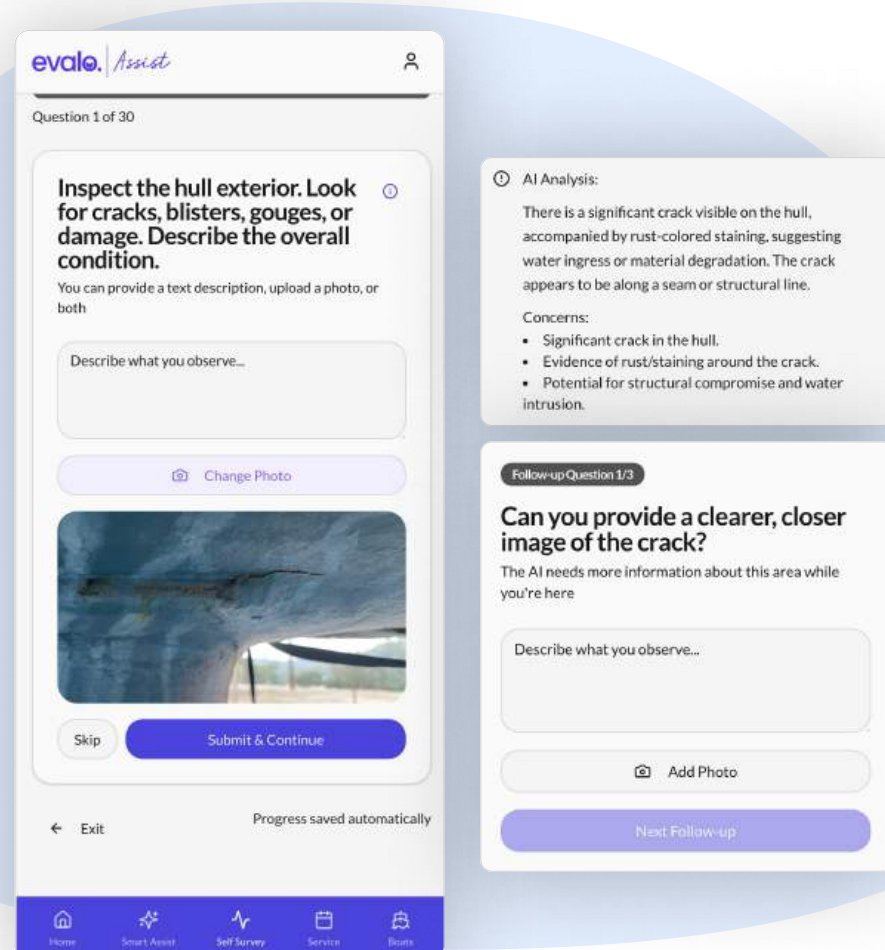
How evalo™ Fits Into a Surveyor's Workflow

Integrating AI doesn't require reinventing your process. It slots naturally into the workflow you already use. Heres how evalo™ can help you at every stage of the survey process:



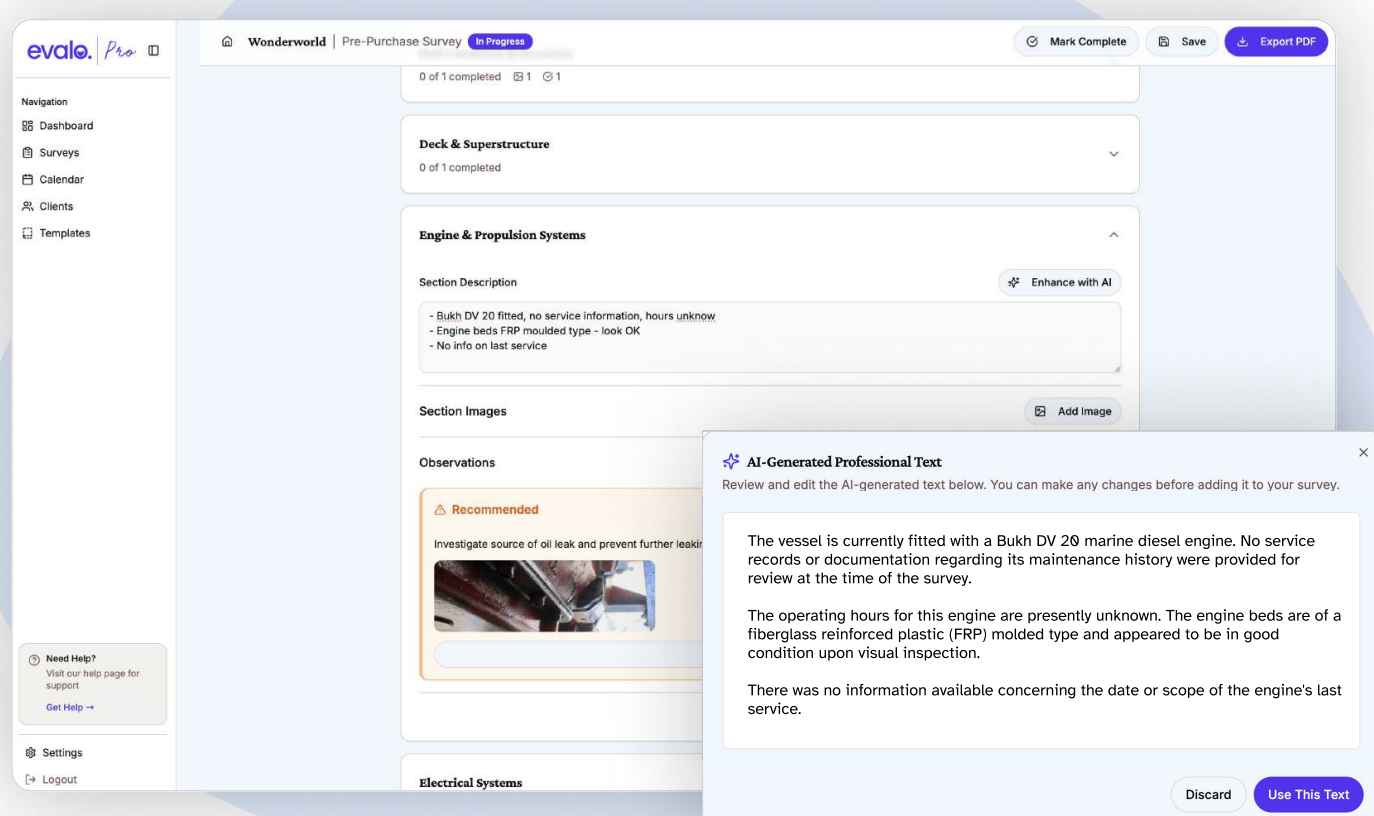
Before the survey:

- Client Management
- Calendar & Booking System
- Customisable survey templates



During the survey:

- Cross device data capture
- Instant captioning of images
- Real-time feedback on observations
- Instant, real time valuations



After the survey:

- AI assistance turns rough notes into survey ready copy.
- AI generated summaries based on findings
- Professional PDF Export

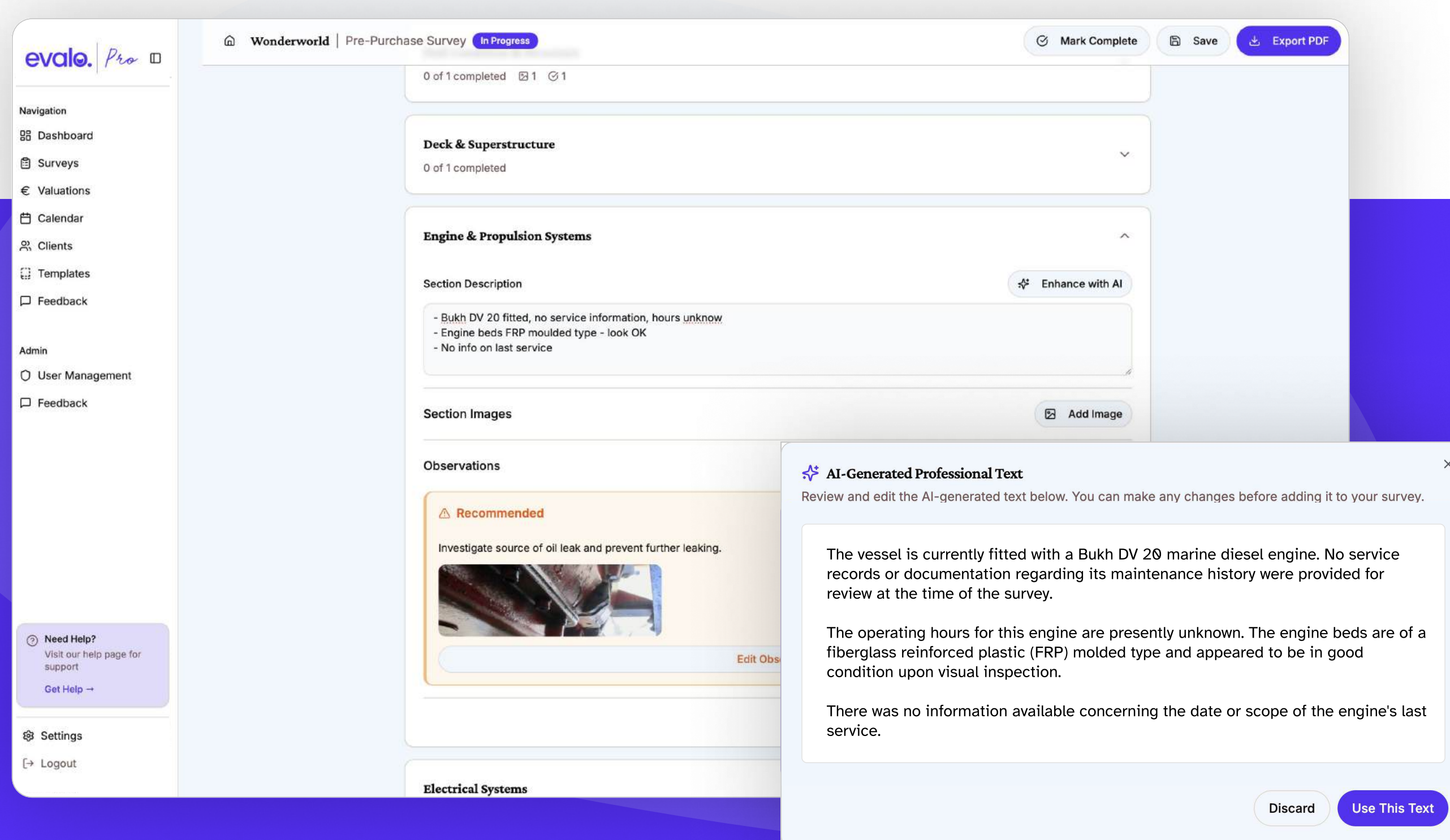
Surveyors often describe the effect as “removing the friction.” The work is still yours. It just flows much faster.

The Future of Surveying: Enhancing, Not Replacing, Expertise

AI isn't a threat to surveyors. It's an opportunity.

The inspection still requires expertise, experience and a trained eye. But the reporting, structuring, documenting and communicating can all be made faster, clearer and more consistent with the right tools.

Surveyors who embrace AI early will not only work more efficiently but will set a higher standard for clarity and professionalism across the industry. evalo™ exists to support that shift, giving surveyors a tool built for their world, their workflow and the realities of marine surveying.



Elevate your surveys with professional grade tools.

Schedule a demo at www.evalo.tech