

Education is key

Mastermind's Eugen Adami tells Maritime CEO about the importance of engaging with the public

Cyprus-based Mastermind Shipmanagement (MSM) was set up by German national Captain Eugen-Henning Adami in 2010, and today owns 14 of the 26 vessels it manages, all multipurpose bulk carriers from handysize down to 4,000 dwt.

Adami himself is well known on the international stage having served as president of the influential Cyprus Shipping Chamber (CSC) from 2009 to 2015. Before that he headed up the German shipping group Hartmann's Cyprus-based operation, Intership, where he was instrumental in designing several classes of bulk carrier that have since proved highly successful for the Chinese and Japanese yards involved. These include 13 of MSM's owned vessels, all built between 2004 and 2012.

"Our vessels' main characteristics are that they are fuel and cargo efficient," explains Adami, which was achieved by using CFD design and extensive tank testing of hull models, subsequently modified to minimise friction. "We were ahead of the EEXI rule, with which all our vessels already comply," he adds, "and that's enormously helpful in helping us survive in difficult shipping markets."

But it's not just environmental

Spot on Mastermind

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ship designs for which Adami is well known. A former tallship sail-training instructor after retiring as a master of merchant vessels, he retains a keen sense of the importance of providing maritime education for seafarers and those aspiring to the profession.

Adami it was, while still a board member of the CSC, who came up with the idea of the 'Adopt-A-Ship' campaign pioneered in Cypriot schools and since copied by several other countries, including most recently Greece. Here schools engage with an individual vessel for a year, put a world map on the wall with key ports and commodity trades, and have a weekly conversation with the ship where they would hear about loading and unloading operations, crew changes, weather reports and so forth.

Today about 70 ships belonging to CSC members are tracked each year by local schools, and Cypriot interests have started an even

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larger sister programme run in the Philippines.

Adami also devised an 'Understanding Shipping' course for Intership employees that has since been modified and is taught by the CSC, while he himself teaches maritime subjects for several hours a week at Frederick University in Limassol.

Finally, MSM has started its own educational portal for seafarers, MarLearn, comprising some 90 different online courses. Initially aimed at the company's own roster of some 1,200 crew, it is now freely available to all, Adami particularly keen for it to be embraced by seafarers in developing countries.

In fact, he believes that educating a new generation of seafarers who are tech savvy and mindful of the environment is essential for the shipping industry if it is not to run into manpower shortages in a few years' time, as the industry begins to recover and expand again, because of the negative impact on recruitment caused by all the bad press about crews being 'stranded at sea' during the pandemic.

"We have to focus on new technology, on automation aboard ships, on greener processes and advocate the positioning of a seafarer as a person who is differently educated and motivated than before, give it a green badge," he says. "We need to completely redo our STCW training, and we should do that before IMO requires it because we simply don't have time." ●