

# IN THE WAKE OF

# MIC TO RY

**TO BUILD A NEW SHIP** may take up to 5 years or more, from planning to launch. Shipowners often wish that they had a crystal ball to forecast trade demand years down the road, so that they would have built the right sized vessels at the right time to meet demand in that route.

Whilst many people forecasted that ships would not be full in 2007 due to the many newly built mega container vessels coming onstream, shipping lines were pleasantly surprised to see strong trade growth globally, which even resulted in a shortage of cargo space on certain tradelanes.

Katty Teo, Senior Sales Executive (Corporate Desk) at Pacific International Lines (Pte) Ltd, shares that they have been facing similar challenges since May, despite being in tune with their customers' shipment cycles.

And how did she cope with her customers' requests for cargo space during the crunch? "It was really a concerted effort by all in the company to address the situation. We managed to add adhoc sailings to provide additional cargo space. We even re-routed cargo and realigned our vessel schedules to ensure quick connectivity of our customers' cargo. But most of all, we kept our promise to deliver and that matters most to our customers."



Katty is also an avid wakeboarder. "I liken my trials as a wakeboarder at sea with the challenges in my job. In wakeboarding, I have to be alert and adapt to the erratic sea conditions or sudden wind turbulence. Being able to think on your feet and resolve problems keeps you ahead of any competition," Katty stresses.

The marketing graduate from Central Queensland University worked in an Australian shipping company for two years before settling back in Singapore. The reason why she has remained in her current job for six years is obvious. She succinctly puts it, "The Singapore maritime industry provides the right blend of flexibility and excitement."

Excitement in her job comes from her meetings with clients. "Customers do have challenging requests. But it's a huge sense of satisfaction when you not only meet their demands, you exceed their expectations. Moreover I get to interact with culturally-diverse individuals with different temperaments and expectations, which makes my job even more interesting!" Katty divulges.

She treasures the memorable experience of handling the loading of a 120-foot catamaran onto one of PIL's container ships. It was the first time the company undertook such a project and her team had to consult experienced contractors, operations and port personnel to come up with a suitable proposal. Katty recalls, "We ended up using two gantry cranes to lift the catamaran up onto our vessel. It took more than a month's study and preparation, but just 15 minutes to carry out the lifting."

Sounds like a challenging industry? Katty is quick to affirm. "It certainly is. As a sales executive, I look for the big challenges in my career, just as a wakeboarder looks for the big wave out at sea. In both cases, anything can happen and you will come out stronger!"

## Riding The Waves

Katty is on a constant lookout for the big wave that will enable her to try out wakeboarding tricks. When it comes to tricky moves, Katty prefers to execute them one step at a time, rather than rush haphazardly into flips and somersaults. For example, she took almost a month of conditioning before attempting the 360 (a spin where the rider does a 360 degree rotation while in the air). While she does not shy away from challenges, she always ensures that she feels comfortable and confident before attempting any fancy moves.

Wakeboarding has changed her entire outlook on her career and life. "In shipping, I've learnt that change is the only constant. In the face of new challenges, I do not panic or rush headlong into them. Instead, with proper planning and preparation, I move forward fearlessly, knowing that I can successfully overcome them."