

houses for instance, are usually people of the market who grew in their companies within a 'deal oriented' framework. Surely they do not lack experience, nor record of deals, but this is not always what the clients should ask for. We fail to believe that a shipowner cares if a broker is making money or not. We believe that shipowners care their broker to give them unbiased opinions and correct information. Moreover, European offices usually employ a large number of employees, a factor which might indeed affect their policies, since this dictates significantly higher annual expenses and consequently sets higher income targets (commissions) that are required to be reached for these companies to remain in operation and survive. It's a paradox for us or maybe weird, when ship-owners are struggling, shipbrokers to distribute huge profit, isn't it?" Finally Mr. Alexandropoulos refers to his company's future plans

Panos Pantos: Professionalism will always prevail in shipbroking



Mr. Panos Pantos, managing director of Lion Shipbrokers

We live challenging time in all sectors of shipping and therefore shipbrokers have to orient their attention to those matters that are performing better in order to survive. This view belongs to Mr. Panos Pantos, managing director of Lion Shipbrokers. Mr. Pantos comments the latest developments in the shipbroking activities and refers to the market expectations. Mr. Pantos agrees that the new generation of shipbrokers take advantage of innovative maritime software and technology. "Nowadays information flow (cargoes, open positions, ships for sale & purchase enquiries) are so fast that you need an advanced maritime software

in order to keep up. To tackle this, we use the latest SDSA maritime software tools and our ships' database (IHS/Fairplay) is up to date with the world fleet. We are also subscribers to numerous shipping newspapers, bulletins & magazines in order to be informed continuously & efficiently. New brokers must be trained accordingly in order to be able to keep up with the fast-moving shipping industry". Mr. Pantos describes the range of his company's shipbroking services. "Lion Shipbrokers are offering the following the shipping services:

- Sale & Purchase
- Newbuildings
- Demolition
- Dry Cargo & Container Chartering
- Research & Market Intelligence
- Valuations
- Pre-Purchase Surveys in Greek ports (www.lionmarine.gr)
- Technical Consultancy

S+P: With our technical expertise and our commercial attitude we are consulting and helping our client, taking them from a to z of each deal. (preparation and signing / entering into contracts regarding new buildings and used tonnage).

Demo: We work with the most reputable Cash Buyers in the market in order to provide a care-free service to Shipowners for that last phase of a ships' life. Our contacts network spans from Turkey to Sub Continent (India, Bangladesh, Pakistan) and China.

Chartering: Lion Chartering is working direct with reputable charterers, operators and shipowners. In bulk carriers we specialize

and challenges "The challenges and future plans of our company are to excel ourselves in it by advising our clients to do the rights moves and be successful and profitable.

It requires, "what we know and like best to do", ie a professional unbiased position which, among other characteristics, requires hard work, focus, passion and loyalty.

We have been following same strategy since our establishment and so far has proven to work, considering that despite the difficult markets that we had faced (especially during 2009-2012), we managed via a policy consistent to high quality services, complying with the various and different needs of our clients, to develop and grow our business, employing nowadays 8 brokers and being one of the most well known and respected independent SnP offices, in the world".

in coasters & handysize tonnage, while in containerships we focus on 500 to 2000 TEUS feeders.

Valuations/Market Analysis: We provide ship or fleet evaluations on demand for Shipowners, Banks and other Institutions. We offer «bespoke» market reports, presentations and market analysis.

Pre-Purchase surveys & Technical consultancy: We provide marine/technical consulting services & pre-purchase inspections/ surveys in the port of Piraeus and other Greek ports at very competitive rates. Our company's Technical Consultant has a vast experience of 30 years as marine superintendent engineer and technical Manager in Greek Shipping Companies".

Regarding dry bulk freight rates Mr. Pantos believes that there are plenty of attractive opportunities out there. "The dry cargo chartering market is floating at historical low levels and no one can predict if the recovery is round the corner. However there are plenty of realistic deals out there looking for optimistic buyers that can support their new assets from their pocket until the freight rates can cover the daily operational expenses".

Mr. Pantos refers to the various geostrategic changes around the world that have affected shipping. "Northern Ice melt: The Arctic is warming twice as fast as the rest of the planet and the retreating ice offers access to precious minerals and new shipping routes (the Northern Sea route and the North-West passage) so ships can travel faster through this shortcut. The Arctic also has oil and gas, probably lots. Exploration licenses are now being issued across the region, in the United States, Canada, Greenland, Norway and Russia. Therefore we expect the shipping tanker market to boom in the arctic.

Suez Canal closure: like in the Suez Crisis Oct 1956-April 1957 during the war of the 6 day Arab Israeli war or by strike of the Egyptian Canal workers. Then ships will have to go around Cape Good hope in South Africa, increasing substantially their costs)

Straits of Hormuz closure: where 28% of world oil is passing through these straits and Iran threatens to close them. If this happens oil prices will soar.

Straits of Bab Al-Mandab (very important shipping route that has become dangerous due to Somali pirates & expensive due to armed guards escort & ships' antipiracy measures)

Panama Canal widening - New panama canal opening in 2015 has created a new class of supersized cargo ships - known as Post Panamax ships, which will slowly drive old panamax-beam tonnage obsolete. Also a widened Canal will improve the economics of shipping to the U.S. East Coast from Asia and the economics of shipping from eastern Latin America to Asia".

Finally, Mr. Pantos referred to the challenges and future plans of his company. "We live in interesting times, which are very challenging for all sectors of the shipping industry. Although our company was mostly oriented in the dry-cargo (both chartering & sale + purchase), we have now shifted our attention to the containers and tankers, which are both markets that are performing better than dry-bulk at the moment. Regardless what the future will bring, hard work and professionalism will always prevail in ship broking".