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IN THE FIRST OF A NEW SERIES OF INTERVIEWS, WE TALK TO IMPA AMBASSADORS JIM COSTALOS AND JUAN SALOMÓN, LONG-TIME AMBASSADORS AND FRIENDS OF THE ASSOCIATION

What are you working on right now?

Jim Costalos: I am busier these days than I have been for years. I am continuing my role with Southern Cross Australia whilst working to build up Everise Shipping in Singapore & China. Since I started in Singapore, we have grown the business by three times, and we are still growing. Australia is the well-established market leader, so things are smooth. This, my IMPA Ambassador duties, and being an ASSA Chair and ISSA executive keep me busy.

Juan Salomón: After a very productive 2018 during which we were able to achieve the ISO 9001 certification, this year's goal is the implementation of these regulations, so we can be more efficient and able to offer a service of excellent quality to our clients.

If you could go back in time and give yourself one tip, what would it be?

JC: I would have moved to Singapore earlier. On the personal side, spend more time with my children and grandchildren, as they grow up too quickly.

JS: I would probably choose to be more patient in the decision-making process; because of my impetuosity, I tend to make hasty decisions.



JUAN SALOMÓN

is the CEO of INS Argentina Srl, one of the leading companies in maritime services within South America. With its head office in Argentina and further branch offices in Brazil

and Venezuela, the company has been in the maritime business for many years, satisfying the needs of owners, agents and port terminals. Over this time, INS Argentina has developed two distinct business units, one that deals with general repairs on vessels under the most recognised classifiers' supervision, and one that supplies provisions, spare parts and consumables to ships and port terminals. Juan, as CEO, undertakes the institutional administration.

If you could have been another person or had another role, who or what would it be?

JC: I really don't think I could do anything else, as I have been in providing since I was ten years old and assisting my dad who was in the business. But if I had a dream, it would be managing a football (soccer) club.

JS: I think I would like to be an explorer seeking adventure all over the world.

What is the biggest challenge in our industry?

JC: The industry is continually changing; bigger players are trying to make it "non-personal" and all automatic. While this works in many industries, ship supply is different. When an owner puts his trust in a ship supplier from the other side of the world with his multimillion-dollar investment, he likes to know whom he is dealing with; trust is the word that covers this. Another major challenge is cost. Thus, strong cost control, better buying and more efficient operations are all vital. And all this has to be ensured without losing the personal touch that makes our industry unique. The industry has seen many mergers and takeovers in recent times, but I am old-fashioned and believe in traditional ship supply, so there always is a limit to the size one should be to enable this to be offered at its highest level.

JS: Without a doubt, the major challenge in our industry is making the change from conventional commerce to e-commerce, so as to be looking for more agility in the transactions. Another big challenge is to find adequate practices to help with preservation of the environment.

Do you have a productivity tip?

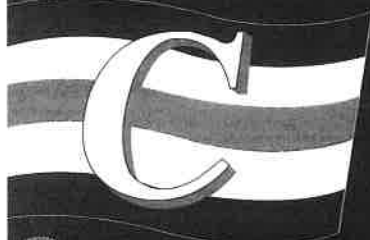
JC: For starters, you need the right people, as they are everything in this industry. Then you need to be providing them with an efficient user-friendly system of communication between ship owners/managers, and suppliers; this will enable efficient



JIM COSTALOS

is the Executive Director of Southern Cross Marine Supplies Pty Ltd, Australia's leading ship supply organisation with branches covering the Australian coast, now serving all Chinese ports and Singapore.

Jim is a ship supplier with 41 years of experience commencing in the family business in 1975 and continuing in the Adelaide Steamship group division Metro-Nautilus from 1986. There, he held various senior management positions until 2003 when senior management of Nautilus and other family groups joined together to form Southern Cross Marine Supplies. Jim is also chairing at the moment the Australian Ship Suppliers Association for seven years and also served as Assistant Chairman for six.



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communication, buying and selling; and, as you know, many companies are now offering a myriad of different options for such systems.

JS: My advice is to always satisfy your clients' needs and, where able to, exceed expectations. For example, when a client enquires about a price, our sales staff must satisfy their need and requirements by all means.

If you were to invest ten million in a new area, what would it be in?

JC: Real Estate, as it's brick and mortar and you can see your investment rather than storing a ship, watching it sail and hoping to be paid within term.

JS: Undoubtedly, I would invest in waste treatment. This way, we could ensure that companies can both have commercial success and be friendly to the environment.

What is your worst feature?

JC: I am a workaholic with little patience who needs to be constantly challenged.

JS: I think it is granting too much confidence to some associates during the commercial decision-making process instead of getting more involved.

And what is your best?

JC: I am proud of what I do, endeavour to perform at the highest level, see things simply (black or white) and can always reach win-win deals.

JS: My best feature, I would say, is the vision that I have about the development of the business; this attribute allows me on many occasions to anticipate a successful achievement.

What did you want to be when you were younger?

JC: I wanted to be a solicitor and I was actually planning to go to university when I graduated from college. But it so happened that at that time, the Government was offering incentives to young people who leave their work place in order to attend university, so I decided to work in the family business for a year prior to going to university; that way,

I could qualify for the incentive. 45 years later, I have never looked back once.

JS: I wanted to become a film director, and, despite the fact that I did not have the possibility to become one, I have always appreciated their work and been fond of the film-making process.

If you could have dinner with anyone (dead or alive), who would that be?

JC: That's a difficult question and the answer to it is so many! One is Pele, because I still see him as the greatest player ever. Another one is the great Winston Churchill, with whom I also share the love for cigars – what an interesting dinner that would be!

JS: I would undoubtedly have dinner with Frank Sinatra, as I am very interested in his personal and professional life.

What are you most proud of getting into?

JC: I am proud to be an IMPA Ambassador and the Chairman of the Australian Ship Suppliers Association. I am the only original member of the start-up Australian Association (1978) remaining in the business. I have been elected by my peers as Chairman for ten years (a national record) and Vice Chair for six years.

JS: I am very proud to have had the opportunity to be part of the IMPA Ambassador programme from the beginning. It has allowed me to promote the associative integration to different market players, such as ship suppliers, ship management and ship agencies.

Finally, what is your advice for anyone entering the maritime industry?

JC: Our industry is unique; it's more of a life style. If you love a challenge, then this industry is right for you, as it poses many; you'll work unusual hours sometimes and have to solve some complex problems. But you get to create friends all over the world and travel a lot, both great perks of this field.

JS: My biggest advice to every individual and company that enter this industry is to always be respectful to existing members and to take loyal competition as a premise in activity development.