

BOLT: *Why every drop is precious*

Anand Sheth, CEO and Director, BOLT, a leading liquid logistics service provider based in **Singapore**, offers an **insider's perspective** into the world of **liquid transportation**.

The business of liquid cargo transportation is a dynamic and intricate ecosystem. The tangible assets of the sector - ISO tank containers, loading and unloading depots, cleaning and varying transport modes - all serve as the backbone for a multitude of industries, including chemicals, food production, energy and pharmaceuticals. Ensuring the safe, efficient, and sustainable movement of these essential liquids is of utmost importance.

Anand Sheth, CEO and Director, BOLT, a leading liquid logistics service provider based in Singapore, offers an insider's perspective into this world of liquid transportation. He knows that the service and utility of the business goes beyond the tangible and into the intangible elements that make the industry work.

One instance of this is the importance Sheth places on the 'peace of mind' his company offers its clients. He considers: "Trust is the cornerstone of success. Customers don't just require safe delivery; they seek absolute 'peace of mind' - the assurance that their valuable product is in the hands of a reliable, meticulous partner. At BOLT, we understand this critical need. We aren't just another logistics company; we are an extension of your team, safeguarding cargo and ensuring its seamless journey.

"Peace of mind' is this unwavering confidence that your cargo reaches its destination - exactly when and where it needs to be. It's the knowledge that state-of-the-art equipment and rigorous safety protocols mitigate any potential risks. This aligns perfectly with the industry's fundamental aspect: →



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the safe and smooth passage of chemical and liquid cargo. Customers seek tank container operators who value and handle cargo like their own. While safety is a given, tank container operators need to explicitly or implicitly reassure consumers about their investment in resources to maximise safety, expertise and service standards. At BOLT, we echo the sentiment that every drop is precious.”

Network reach

According to Sheth, some operators prioritise building a strong foundation to a network in specific regions. It is this focussed approach that BOLT has adopted allowing it to invest heavily in a substantial fleet and highly experienced personnel dedicated to those areas. This underscores that achieving world-class service doesn't necessarily require world-wide presence. The company's core markets are Asia, Indian subcontinent and the Middle East as well as a minor presence in other regions.

The world of ISO tank operators is a diverse one, mirroring the vast array of liquids needing transportation. While the T11 and T14 types are popular workhorses, capable of handling a wide range of non-hazardous and hazardous chemicals, operators also offer a specialised arsenal for specific cargo requirements. For safe gas transportation, T50 tank containers are the go-to option.

When it comes to cryogenic liquids that demand ultra-low temperatures, T75 types take centre stage. But the landscape extends beyond these common types. Some operators provide food-grade tanks designed for maximum hygiene and temperature control, ensuring the integrity of delicate edible liquids. For bulk powders and grains, silo tanks offer a specialised solution for dry cargo transportation. Reefer tanks containers, meanwhile, come equipped with climate-control technology to preserve the quality of temperature-sensitive products. This specialisation allows operators to provide a comprehensive suite of services, ensuring the secure and efficient movement of any liquid or dry cargo a client might require.

However, BOLT's core business revolves around liquid cargo transportation and its expertise focuses on the safe and reliable movement of various liquids within BOLT's

robust T11 and T14 tank container models. However, it recognises the growing demand for gas and cryogenic transportation as well.

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Anand Sheth, CEO and Director, BOLT

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tank types, fostering long-term partnerships with our clients,” notes Sheth.

The company deliberately seeks to maintain a young fleet delivering several key advantages for customers and the environment. These include enhanced efficiency from state-of-the-art tanks constructed with lighter, highly corrosion-resistant materials. This translates to significant fuel savings and reduced operating costs for clients while minimising any environmental footprint.

The ergonomic design of modern tanks with collars instead of beams boast user-friendly designs that optimise loading and unloading processes, ensuring faster

turnaround times and enhanced safety for operators. There is also reduced maintenance and extended lifecycles from innovative materials and the design of the young fleet contributes to a longer lifespan for the tank containers, requiring less frequent maintenance. This translates to cost savings for both BOLT and its clients, while maximising operational efficiency. There is also greater real-time cargo security from advanced tracking and monitoring systems that provide real-time data on environmental conditions within the tank containers. This allows for adjustments to ensure the integrity and safety of cargo throughout its journey.

By prioritising a young fleet, BOLT seeks to set a new standard for the industry

BOLT is headquartered in Singapore. Sheth explains that this is for a number of reasons and reflects on the ideal nature of the location.

He notes: “Over the years, Singapore has emerged as a strategic location offering significant advantages to the liquid logistics industry.” He points to the city state's ➔

“unmatched connectivity: “Singapore is world-class in port infrastructure and strategic location for Southeast Asia, a region with booming economies, make it a premier global logistics hub. This is further solidified by the World Bank’s Logistics Performance Index 2020 ranking Singapore number one for strategic location. BOLT leverages this by seamlessly integrating with international shipping networks, offering efficient door-to-door services for bulk liquid cargo movement through Singapore’s ports. Singapore also boasts excellent connectivity by air and sea. It has one of the busiest ports globally and a world-class airport, again earning the top spot for connectivity according to the World Bank’s Logistics Performance Index 2020.

There is “enhanced efficiency” from Singapore’s highly advanced transportation infrastructure, including a well-developed road network and streamlined customs processes. This contributes to faster turnaround times for clients. Additionally, Singapore’s well-equipped maintenance and repair facilities minimise downtime of fleet while maximising operational efficiency.

There is “top-tier talent in Singapore is a magnet for skilled personnel, experienced in logistics management. This talent pool is further strengthened by Singapore’s reputation as a centre for excellence in logistics, attracting a global workforce.

The city state also has a well-known pro-business environment.

Sheth notes: “Singapore is known for its business-friendly policies and government support for trade. The World Bank Doing Business Report 2020 ranked Singapore number two for ease of doing business. This supportive environment allows tank container operators to operate efficiently and focus on delivering exceptional service to clients.

“The benefits of a strategic location in Singapore ultimately translate into cost-effectiveness, enhanced security, and a highly qualified workforce for our clients.”

Economical transportation

BOLT offers “economical transportation” for a wide range of bulk liquid cargo, notes Sheth, which include non-hazardous traffic including glycerin, vegetable oils, and white mineral oil. These are some of the most typical cargoes. Hazardous cargo can include products such as valeryl chloride and octanoyl chloride. However, it’s important to note that BOLT has specific protocols for handling these types of cargo.

BOLT can transport certain corrosive materials like methylene dichloride, chloroacetyl chloride, and benzosulphuric acid but does not handle highly corrosive chemicals such as hydrochloric acid and sulphuric acid.

Skilled workforce

Sheth is of the opinion that the liquid logistics industry thrives on a skilled workforce that can handle the intricacies of transporting various liquids and gases. This includes skilled personnel like tank cleaning professionals who ensure contamination-free containers, depot technicians who meticulously inspect and maintain ISO tank containers and safety specialists who enforce protocols and procedures to prevent accidents. Unskilled labour is also essential for functions like loading and unloading operations, tank container washing assistance, and basic maintenance tasks.

He notes: “To address the growing complexities of the industry and compete in a global market, service providers tank operators are taking proactive steps to improve workforce retention and upskilling. This includes

offering competitive salaries and benefits packages to attract and retain skilled workers. Additionally, investing in training programs is crucial. These programmes can equip unskilled personnel with the necessary skills to progress into more specialised roles, while also providing ongoing training for existing staff on the latest safety regulations, handling procedures for emerging cargo types and the use of new technologies being implemented in the industry. By fostering a culture of continuous learning and development, global tank container operators can ensure their workforce possesses the expertise necessary to navigate the evolving landscape of liquid logistics.

“At BOLT, we understand that our team is the engine that drives our success. We prioritise direct employment for all BOLT staff. This approach fosters a cohesive team culture, allowing us to build long-term relationships with our employees and invest in their professional development.

“Direct employment offers stability and security for our team members, allowing them to focus on their careers at BOLT. With an average age of 37, our team represents a strong balance of experience and fresh perspectives. Our workforce is truly diverse, spanning across eight countries and representing nine nationalities. This diversity of backgrounds fosters a culture of innovation and allows us to better understand the needs of our clients around the world.”

BOLT is committed to fostering a highly skilled and knowledgeable workforce, achieved through a robust training programme designed to equip its team with the expertise they need to excel. Its dedicated Learning and Development Department focuses on soft skills development, while BOLT collaborates with industry experts to provide specialised training programmes in areas like tank container training by ITCO, IMDG Certification and Sanction Compliance, and



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risk mitigation. This comprehensive approach ensures its team is prepared to handle any challenge and deliver exceptional service to clients.

BOLT derives these values from its parent company Saksham Group, which is a three decade-old conglomerate providing seamless and integrated EXIM logistics services across over 85 countries and 275 port cities.

BOLT also utilises a customised in-house Enterprise Resource Planning software system. This streamlines communication, optimises operations and allows the company to provide real-time tracking and transparency throughout the entire transportation process.

Artificial intelligence

Sheth is weighing up the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to play a significant role in the company’s vision for the future. However, they are still in the early stages of gathering data to train AI systems that can optimise operations to help BOLT predict equipment needs, plan →

