

Executive Summary

This case study provides insight into the impact of a shipping company winning customer bookings on a shared vessel using customer centric service as the differentiator. MOL Lanka who represents Mitsui O.S.K. Lines Ltd (MOL) of Japan since 2001 in Sri Lanka is a joint venture between MOL and McLaren Holdings Ltd. MOL Lanka had to face tough competition in winning export bookings when MOL joined an alliance called G6. It is explained how MOL Lanka faced the situation of canvassing for export cargo for one vessel competing with another five members who also have space allocations on the same vessel.

The G6 services initially started services to Europe and subsequently extended to USA. The competition was so tough and the shipping lines had only two options where either to be competitive on the pricing or to have an edge over others on the quality of the services provided. MOL Lanka had to resort to providing excellence in service quality as their pricing is comparatively higher.

This case study explains the various stages of the timeline where MOL Lanka had to face difficult situations and how they came out of them successfully by adapting different strategies. MOL Lanka adapts the customer-centric service provision where not only the front end sales & customer service staffs but also all departments focus on customers and always try to assist them whenever required, providing a total solution.

Primary data has been collected from qualitative methods using twelve customer interviews and three internal focus group discussions focusing the dimensions of quality, completeness of the solution and competitiveness of the solution presented in the MOL Lanka service provision. Thematic analysis has been carried out and derived the following results.

MOL Lanka has been highly reliable with its service delivery and provided a high level of assurance with its highly competent employees. With these conditions in place and a higher level of customer focus and a much more comprehensive service has been provided leading to higher customer bookings. This relationship has been moderated by the competitiveness of the shipping industry with the offering of MOL Lanka competitors.

Details of findings, recommendations, and conclusions have been included in this report and shared with MOL Lanka.