

## NTU Students Step into Singhai Marine and "See" the Seafarer



While the industry often fixes its gaze on vessels, technology, and global trade flows, one company reminded them of the critical factor that makes it all work: the people who sail the ships out and bring them back.



Recently, students from Nanyang Technological University's Maritime Management programme visited Singhai Marine Services (Shanghai). Thomas Zhang Yamin, General Manager of Business Unit III, used "crew management" as the anchor to open a human-centric lens on the shipping industry for the students.



Thomas began by outlining Singhai Marine’s operational structure: with Singapore and Shanghai as its dual headquarters, the company is deeply rooted in Asia, operating multiple subsidiaries including an international maritime training centre. This creates a regional service network covering the full chain of crew recruitment, training, and deployment. The layout itself reflects the cross-border nature of seafarer resources — talent flows where it is needed, and the service system must follow.

At its core, Singhai Marine’s business revolves around seafarers. As a leading crew management company, it serves the full spectrum of vessel types, from luxury cruise ships and bulk carriers to container vessels, tankers, and offshore units. But Thomas moved beyond scale, steering the conversation toward deeper management questions:

How to balance volume with quality delivery as generational turnover among seafarers accelerates?

How can traditional training systems evolve rapidly in the face of decarbonisation and digitalisation?

And how to reconcile seafarer loyalty with the diverse demands of shipowners?

Thomas demonstrated Singhai Marine’s approach. From joint programmes with maritime academies to immersive shore-based training at its own centres, from simulator-based instruction to career-long progression support, the company is

planting stable career anchors within a mobile workforce. This forward-looking investment resonated with the students as a management principle: upstream investment in the talent chain yields far greater returns than downstream fixes.



Thomas also candidly addressed structural challenges in the Asian seafarer market: shifting career preferences among younger generations, intensifying regional competition, and ever-tightening international regulations. "A shipowner's asset is the vessel; our asset is people. Decisions about people are far more complex — they cannot be driven by KPIs alone."

For the NTU students, this exchange was more than a shipping lecture. When they projected their classroom frameworks of business management onto the real-world scene of crew management, they began to grasp a deeper truth: to understand shipping, you must understand not only the ship, but the seafarer.