

Providing Users with Meticulous Service

Interview with the management of Veson Nautical (US)

11 October 2022 - As previously reported on 7 October 2022, US company and voyage management solutions provider Veson Nautical has held its annual user conference “ONCOURSE Connect 2022” in Tokyo.

CEO John Veson, President and COO Sean Riley, and Veson Nautical Japan Country Manager Tokio Mitsuda agreed to an interview with us when they attended the conference.

A media roundtable discussion was also held during the user conference, which was attended by representatives from shipping companies and trade journals.

John Veson and Sean Riley emphasised the importance of providing service that is in harmony with Japanese market requirements. They spoke of their enthusiasm for service improvement as “providing our current users with meticulous service will help us attract new users in the future.”

The following excerpt contains notable questions that were answered by John Veson and Sean Riley during the interview and roundtable discussion. Tokio Mitsuda provided additional details as well.

Please share with us the adoption rate of the voyage management system “Veson IMOS Platform (VIP)” in Japan, as well as the user-facing services provided.

“We have more than 18,000 users from 300 maritime organisations across more than 60 countries. Many of the major Japanese shipping companies have already implemented our services or are currently implementing it. We strongly believe that we can see more results in the future.

We’d prefer not to touch on the exact number of ships managed by our solution, though we will eventually support many voyage management systems or freight management systems to support Japanese maritime transport through our services.

We currently provide services which promote adopting our products by our users through Japanese language support in our technical support ticket system and E-Learning solution “Veson University” to learn our platform.

Providing our clients with meticulous service will help us attract new users in the future.”

How would you position the Japanese market?

“Since opening our Tokyo office back in 2019, the Japanese market has always been critically important to us. We are very familiar with the market as well.

Our company strives to become the number one platform in the Japanese maritime software market. Our service operation in Tokyo office was started with two staff, though our headcount has become eight through business expansion as of today.

All employees in the Tokyo office are bilingual in Japanese and English, which makes it possible for us to provide attentive and meticulous service for our Japanese clients.

Furthermore, we also have 2 Japanese staff to support Japanese clients in Singapore where some of the Japanese shipping companies have expanded their operations to.”

How would you view the current state of digital transformation (DX) in the Japanese maritime industry?

“The industry seems to be taking a highly proactive approach to it. The movement has been accelerating since our office opening in 2019 and we’re aware that our platform can now be better positioned in today’s landscape.”

Please tell us more about value proposition of VIP to owner/operators and tonnage charterers.

“As the standard platform, VIP empowers users to consolidate their data derived from contract management, risk management, and accounting. The consolidated data can be visualised in real time, which allows users to accelerate their decision-making process when working on issues such as safety and sustainability.”

Please enlighten us about your post-go-live service for Japanese clients.

“Once our clients have implemented our products into their workflow, we provide them with meticulous service to support stable business operations and system operations. Japan and Singapore offices normally work closely together to support Japanese clients, though we also have a global technical support structure across the regions.

We provide our clients with not only account management to support the needs of additional modules, but also ticket management system to keep the logs of all inquiries from our clients, which can be used for problem-solving process in the future. We have been dramatically improving ticket system to support inquiries in Japanese, though we continuously keep our improvement to look for better service for Japanese clients.”

Please tell us more about VIP capability for coastal shipping business and providing local language support in Japanese.

“VIP is a standard platform designed for global tramp business. As such, we need to investigate the feasibility of VIP capability for coastal shipping business requirements. We received some inquiries about VIP capability for the business from some VIP clients who face system deterioration for coastal shipping business.

As coastal shipping takes a place in Japanese waters, we anticipate the ease of internet access will make favourable conditions to allow us to capture data on a larger scale. This is intriguing for us. We recognise that the need for Japanese support is much more crucial than tramp business.”

The importance of ship-to-shore data communication has increased over time. How do you plan to support the communication?

“We have been developing APIs as part of data solution an integration solution to allows our users integrate with external systems and get the data easily. APIs enable data collection and integration between ship and shore, which would be able to connect to electric vessels easily. As a solution,

APIs bring greater extensibility to VIP. We'll proactively plan for more integration with new technology and services in the future."

Please tell us more about the current state of financial integration for Japanese clients who have implemented VIP.

"We recognize a VIP use case where it is essential for Japanese clients to implement a standard platform which is capable of dual currency to support accounting processes in both US dollar and Japanese yen and we have been promoting dual currency support.

Moving forward, we will continue to improve user-friendliness to support more complex contract management through paying attention to user feedback."

Veson acquired Q88 after Oceanbolt. How is the system integration with both solutions coming along?

"We acquired Oceanbolt last year and Q88 this year respectively. We have been preparing an integration for the data controlled under the systems of both companies to VIP. This integration will promote making our integrated services of both companies be easily available. We hope to accelerate this momentum."

Please leave a message for your clients and potential users in Japan.

"Firstly, we want to express our gratitude for our clients who have been using our services. We recognise the uniqueness of Japanese market requirements, and we are well aware of the need to provide our services in harmony with those unique characteristics.

We will continue to work closely with our diverse network of partners and provide our services to meet the needs of Japanese users."

[Translated from original Japanese article]