

## Maritime tech in 2022

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Kicking off our maritime tech forecast Manish Singh, CEO of Ocean Technologies Group, neatly sums up likely developments in 2022. They'll be influenced by the four Cs, he tells *Splash*.

First, Covid will continue to seriously disrupt movement of personnel, parts and equipment. This will lead to a continued acceleration of innovation and faster adoption of practices such as remote operational support and 3D printing of parts.

Next up, carbon – in response to decarbonisation targets, the early adopters will lead the way on green fuels and green propulsion and technologies.

The third C, connectivity, is one many polled by *Splash* are also keen to discuss. In 2022 shipping will start to see costs and bandwidth closer to terrestrial levels and a continuation of wider adoption across the global fleet.

"The most connected fleets will shape the way IoT is embraced at scale within the maritime sector and I think they will see transformational gains," Singh says.

The final one is collaboration. Expect a lot more collaboration between stakeholders, Singh says, whether it is between states for movement of personnel, or between OEMs, yards, operators and vendors to develop and roll out new technology.

***It's time to accept that tech is an essential piece of that jigsaw, not a nice to have add-on***

The last two years of the pandemic have seen significant developments in the area of shipping technology, relates Dimitris Tzapoulis, COO of the Signal Group.

"Buyers have extended and matured their requirements from technology while suppliers have grown in numbers like never before," he explains.

The way Max Wong, head of IT at Eastern Pacific Shipping, sees it is that the glass is more than half-full.

"In our minds, the two biggest opportunities that shipping companies have are decarbonisation and the enabling capabilities of technology. These are levers that give the opportunity to differentiate and create new value," Wong tells *Splash*.

Rajesh Unni, founder of Synergy Marine Group, stresses that all the buzz of digital needs to actually translate into increased productivity and potential savings, something picked up by shipowners surveyed for this article. Unni is hoping that this year will see a real breakthrough in artificial intelligence adoption, something he feels is long overdue.

"Clearly shipowners see the need for digital transformation, but what they are grappling with today is to find practical ways to transform the business and operating models," Unni says. "The transformation needs to have technology, people and process, and aligning these three to make shipping more sustainable, decarbonise and improve the efficiency, are the key."

Unni's viewpoint is taken up by William Fairclough, managing director of Hong Kong-based shipowner Wah Kwong Maritime Transport Holdings, a man who is constantly being marketed all manner of "groundbreaking" and "innovative" products.

"Would it be too much to ask for a big tech breakthrough that enables shipowners to evaluate whether all the other big tech breakthroughs can actually deliver savings?" Fairclough muses.

Shipowners will specifically ask their tech vendors to demonstrate how their product, software or service will deliver savings to the purchaser, Fairclough reckons.

### Connectivity

With high bandwidth maritime connectivity increasingly in place, the trend in 2022 will be to extract greater value from vessel performance data, argues Tore Morten Olsen, president of maritime at Marlink.

"2022 will be the year when customers and seafarers alike come to see seamless IoT services at sea as an entitlement," says Ben Palmer, the new president at Inmarsat Maritime.

James Collett, managing director of Sperry Marine, says shipping ought to be aware of the importance this year of new Low Earth Orbit satellite networks reaching an initial operating capability disrupting the VSAT space with OneWeb likely to be the first of these to provide a service to maritime users.

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"This type of high bandwidth, low latency connectivity will unlock a new level in the kind of applications that can be used onboard ship and enable a completely new type of collaborative work and knowledge sharing between ship and shore," Collett says.

"Other companies are entering into the fray with alternative affordable satellite solutions including big players like Inmarsat and all this means is that shipping companies will have more options now in terms of communication and cost," says Su Yin Anand, co-founder of maritime tech competition, The Captain's Table.

"Only with such a major leap in data transfer efficiency and cost are we going to be able to fully drive and utilise the necessary human augmentation technologies needed to support more efficient, cleaner, safer and less costly vessel operations," claims Andrew Airey, managing director of Bangkok-headquartered shipmanager Highland Maritime.

### Carbon

Emissions management will be the hottest topic in 2022 for the maritime industry worldwide, reckons Mike Konstantinidis, the CEO of Greek tech firm METIS.

"As a shipowner, I would most likely focus on getting the best environmental rankings for my existing vessels with a decade or more of service ahead of them. Better Energy Efficiency Ship Index (EEXI) and Carbon Intensity Index (CII) rankings, which will come into play in 2023, come less from old design decisions and more from how the vessel is used," says *Splash* columnist Kris Kosmala.

Andy McKeran, maritime performance services director at UK class society Lloyd's Register, stresses the importance of owners getting their fleets ready for EEXI and CII now.

"For a shipowner perspective, they need to ensure that they have a ship that will have a 'License to Trade' after 2026," McKeran says.

The maritime industry has been talking about the importance of data for many years, but the big breakthrough is moving data into insights and actions to unlock efficiency for the existing and future fleets, McKeran argues.

"Compliance to EEXI could spark breakthrough technology development to further improve emissions," suggests Carl Schou, president and CEO of Wilhelmsen Ship Management.

Eero Lehtovaara, head of regulatory and public affairs at ABB Marine & Ports, is not alone among vendors polled by *Splash*, saying his company is very much focused this year in guiding clients to make the right EEXI and CII decisions for their fleets.

"2022 is the year that more operators realise that they will need the software and connectivity to understand and report their emissions profile and that means finding an on-ramp to technology that can help them do that," predicts Neville Smith, a *Splash* columnist and founder of Mariner Communications, neatly tying up the twin main themes of connectivity and carbon. "It's time to accept that tech is an essential piece of that jigsaw, not a nice to have add-on."