

Case

Building SGL Asia’s growth engine

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Isabelle Lau, Vice President Vertical Development Asia, Regional Sales Team Asia and Nicolas Moeller, COO Asia

Asia, the world’s largest logistics market by volume, holds vast growth potential. Seizing this opportunity requires more than just expansion—it demands an ambitious strategy, strong leadership, and an agile culture. Nicolas Moeller, COO of Asia, is leading the efforts to strengthen SGL’s regional sales organisation and enhance its capabilities to support the company’s global growth ambitions. Alongside him is Isabelle Lau, Vice President of Verticals for Asia, a key figure in this initiative. Leveraging her expertise in structuring and optimising sales processes, they collaborate closely to ensure the growth strategy is effectively executed.

To capitalise on the potential, SGL Asia has established a specialised regional sales team dedicated to driving growth and strengthening customer relationships in close collaboration with the existing field sales organisation across Asia. Through mindset shifts and strategic investments in leadership and sales capabilities, SGL Asia is evolving its organisation to enhance customer value and its competitive edge.

Laying the foundation for growth

Expanding the commercial organisation has been a key focus in Asia in recent years, leveraging well-functioning teams to optimise customers’ supply chains. To accelerate development, management reinforced the sales organisation in 2024 by hiring senior commercial leaders with industry expertise and strong, long-term relationships with key customers, supporting the company’s ambitious regional expansion. Nicolas Moeller, COO of Asia, emphasises the importance of shaping the regional sales team around SGL’s entrepreneurial and solution-driven customer approach:



**We value initiative and creativity; therefore, cultural fit is essential, as is the capability to work independently and collaboratively. Today, we have a cooperative environment where motivated people come together with a shared ambition to drive real growth for our customers.**

The impact has been significant: 2024 brought many success stories of local sales teams actively engaging with customers and leveraging cross-regional expertise and synergy to create tailored solutions and deliver even greater value to customers.

Turning strategy into results

Isabelle Lau, Vice President of Verticals for Asia, is key in turning strategy into tangible results and value for customers. By equipping teams with the proper tools, structured sales processes, industry training, and a solution-driven mindset, she assists the sales teams in driving growth and creating a strong foundation for long-term success. Isabelle explains:



**We have an initial roadmap in place. We are establishing a structured, scalable and solution-oriented customer approach while streamlining the sales process to enhance efficiency across industries and regions.**

Structured processes and frameworks are implemented to accelerate commercial development in selected industries, empowering the sales teams to effectively fulfil their roles and goals. In addition, SGL has implemented a centralised framework integrating industry insights, regulatory updates, and trade lane developments to strengthen commercial capabilities. This ensures sales teams remain informed and agile, delivering industry-specific solutions tailored to market conditions.

Collaboration fuels success

In 2024, SGL Asia experienced rapid expansion, adding 400 employees due to significant organic volume growth. The company’s heightened focus on sales and its commercial growth ambitions put pressure on operational teams, stretching their capacity. Balancing these pressures was no easy task. However, strong collaboration across functions ensured success. The teams quickly adapted to the changes and addressed increased expectations directly. This agile approach to challenges has resulted in tangible business opportunities, especially bringing in multinational customers and expanding the company’s capabilities and reach in Asia.

One notable example is winning the global Adidas account in 2024, which led to receiving the Best Key Account Management Award in Asia from the Adidas Logistics Team. SGL’s structured approach to supply chain optimisation earned this recognition. *‘Servicing global customers is not a one-person job’*, Nicolas remarks, acknowledging the network of product and solution experts from various regions collaborating to win the global customer.

Another standout success is in Pharma & Healthcare logistics, where SGL has rapidly scaled operations. *‘In less than three months, we expanded our pharma and healthcare capabilities to over 12 countries in Asia-Pacific. Customers appreciate that we don’t offer one-size-fits-all solutions, but tailored solutions fit to their needs’*, Isabelle explains.

These collaborative team efforts have strengthened SGL’s market presence and customer relationships while staying flexible in a competitive market.

Empowering teams to drive change

A core element of SGL’s success is strong leadership that fosters collaboration and initiative. Nicolas and Isabelle emphasise the importance of clear communication, leading by example, and empowering teams. *‘Shifting mindsets takes time, but success hinges on everyone embracing the vision.’* Nicolas says. Leading by example has proven to be a highly effective strategy. *‘If you want people to change how they do certain things, you must practice what you preach.’*

Isabelle reinforces this: *‘We focus on breaking down silos and bringing teams together to work collaboratively. It’s essential for driving growth.’* She continues by describing the key differentiator to success in the SGL culture.



**The vibe in the company is unlike any I’ve experienced in the industry. The SGL management listens actively, and thanks to a mostly flat hierarchy, we can easily communicate and connect with the senior leadership team. This allows for quick decision-making and progress to benefit our customers.’** She explains how SGL empowers its employees: **‘Everybody’s voice matters. Combining top-down guidance with bottom-up insights ensures that strategy alignment and practical progress go hand in hand. This approach allows teams to take ownership of their roles and goals, ultimately enabling us to serve our customers more efficiently.**

This leadership model has been instrumental in cultivating the right mindset and driving progress.

On a positive trajectory for 2025

SGL Asia has gained significant momentum in recent years, driven by its dedicated sales teams and a clear, long-term strategy. The organisation is poised for growth, reinforcing SGL’s position as a forward-thinking global logistics provider in a constantly changing market.

Headquarter

Jernholmen 49, 2650 Hvidovre  
Denmark  
Tel +45 32 48 00 00  
Fax +45 32 48 01 01

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