

Flexport's global head of ocean freight focuses on helping companies grow

Nielsen 'very passionate about solving problems for companies and seeing them become successful'

[Noi Mahoney](#)



In her new role, Trine Nielsen will lead Flexport's strategy for the global ocean division and seek to enhance the company's partnerships with ocean carriers worldwide. (Photo: Jim Allen/FreightWaves)

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[Flexport](#) has tapped Trine Nielsen as the global head of ocean freight.

Nielsen most recently oversaw Flexport's Europe, Middle East and Africa ocean team as it navigated global challenges such as the Red Sea disruptions.

In her new role, Nielsen will lead Flexport's strategy for the global ocean division and seek to enhance the company's partnerships with ocean carriers worldwide.

"I'm very passionate about solving problems for companies and seeing them become successful," Trine told FreightWaves in an interview. "I also fundamentally believe that if you make your customers successful, your own company will also be successful. So I have a customer-first mindset."

Flexport is a global solutions provider founded in 2013 by Ryan Petersen and is based in San Francisco.



Trine Nielsen, Flexport's global head of ocean freight.

Nielsen, who is a native of Denmark and based in Copenhagen, has been working in the global logistics industry for almost 20 years. She started her career right after high school at shipping giant Maersk and has also worked at Danish transport and logistics company DSV.

“Maersk had a very nice trainee program, which is a bit unique because in most countries you require a bachelor or a university degree of some sort to enter the big corporate companies, but in Denmark at that time, Maersk had a trainee program that allowed you to join straight after high school,” Nielsen said.

Maersk’s program included trainees taking on three completely different jobs at the company in two years, and then working at different offices around the world.

“You learn everything about logistics, economics, how to read financials, trade principles, and really understand how logistics works, in and out, both theoretically and then combine everything with the practical experience,” Nielsen said. “I managed to get myself into that trainee program, which was super special because they admitted less than 1% of the applicants.”

As part of the program, Nielsen worked in Dubai and Mumbai, and held front-office, back-office and head office positions.

“I had a ton of different leaders and seven jobs in that period, ranging from enterprise resource planning integration, trade management, supply chain development and account management,” Nielsen said. “Then I found this little gem called Twill, which was a Maersk corporate startup. It worked completely separately from Maersk. The only venture capital money that they had was Maersk.”

At Twill, Nielsen was the global head of commercial, and later as global head of the organization as a whole, leading the startup’s growth through a customer-focused approach.

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Nielsen said she was drawn to Flexport because she believes that technology in the freight industry can help smaller and medium-size companies compete with larger corporations.

“I fundamentally think that technology will change the game of everything we do in shipping,” Nielsen said. “I think the industry is ripe for disruption, but the disruption hasn’t happened yet. And you don’t see many industries remaining where the disruption has not really happened. The technology value proposition of Flexport was super important, but also this whole mindset about really being customer-centric, that’s why I think Flexport was a great new professional home for me.”

Flexport recently announced an upgraded booking management tool featuring an allocation management dashboard. The tool consolidates real-time data from shippers, contracts and carriers into a single dashboard for visibility and control over ocean freight bookings.

Nielsen’s appointment will be instrumental in driving further innovation within Flexport’s ocean freight services, officials said.

“With leaders like Trine, we are positioned to drive technological innovation, enhance quality, and streamline processes, reinforcing Flexport’s role as a disrupter in the global ocean freight market,” Sanne Manders, president of international revenue at Flexport, said in a news release.