Our mission is to be a leading, independent, family-owned ship owner and ship manager.

On the shipowning side, that entails that we are a major participant in our core shipping sectors of container and bulk liquid transportation.

In ship management we strive to maintain our position as a worldwide leader and to consistently provide excellent services with highest regard to safety, security and quality of operation.

We run successful liner operations in specific niches and in partnerships with other medium sized liner companies. We want to show sustainable and profitable growth.

We own real estate for our own use, as a portfolio diversification and to hedge against risks in our other businesses.

We pursue opportunities in other shipping sectors or other business sectors – including raising the necessary equity in the capital markets through our own investment house – when deemed especially profitable or when necessary for the development of our ship management activities.

**History from 1883 until 2013**

The shipping career of the Schulte family began in 1883. In the same year Johann Hermann Schulte, great-grandfather of the present chairman, founded Schulte & Bruns in partnership with his friend Christoph Bruns at Papenburg. The company started out with shipbroking and ship agency, but by the turn of the century had acquired 12 sailing vessels, which were mainly employed in the Baltic timber trade. In 1893 Johann Hermann Schulte moved to Emden and, in the same year, separated from his partner. The first steamship was bought before World War I and a shipyard was founded in 1917. Inflation in 1923 and the subsequent world economic crisis was mastered with Konsul Heinrich Schulte at the helm.

At the outset of World War II the seagoing fleet stood at 16 vessels, the inland waterway fleet comprised vessels with well over 100,000 tdw, and flourishing offices in Rotterdam, Hamburg and Duisburg supervised the numerous shipping related activities of a true conglomerate.

When the smoke had cleared from the ruins of 1945 next to nothing remained. The third generation, Konsul Bernhard Schulte and his brother Hans-Heinrich Schulte, had seen their last three surviving steamers delivered to the Allies as reparations. Amongst the rubble in Emden were the office building, the shipyard and the inland- and fishing fleets.

The first activities were modest indeed. Stowdoring of ex-war-materials, of food imports for the starving population and scrap-trading. But step by step the hereditary fields of shipping were regained. The first seagoing vessels were time-chartered, but in 1949 the first vessel was purchased. Once again, in 1955, the fleet stood at 16 seagoing vessels and all earlier activities had been successfully revitalized.

Schulte & Bruns was one of the leading shipping companies in postwar Germany.

Differences of opinion led to the second separation: Bernhard Schulte split away by taking four ships with him and founded his own ship owning company in Hamburg, which started operations on 1st October 1955.

Whilst the backbone of Schulte & Bruns’ business had traditionally been supplying the German mining- and steel-industry with timber and ores and exporting coal and coke, the new company fortunately had neither the interest nor the means to tackle this highly competitive sector.

Bernhard Schulte instead opted for independence, operating his vessels in the spot-markets. The three smaller vessels were employed mainly in the White Sea timber trade and carried citrus fruit from Spain and Morocco in winter time. Only occasionally were vessels time-chartered out for a season’s Great-Lakes-trading.

The 10,000 tdw »Henriette Schulte«, then one of the workhorses of the oceans by size and design, was trapped all over the globe.
The «Suez-boom» helped to expand the fleet. Thirteen newbuildings were delivered from P. Lindenaus Yard in Kiel and J. L. Meyer, Papenburg between 1937 and 1967, half of which were owned in partnership with old friends.

1963 saw the entry of the 4th generation. Dr. Heinrich Schulte looked after the 14 vessels’ fleet, while his brother Thomas Schulte, having joined in 1967, built up an in-house Chartering Department. The company was now on the road of moderate, steady expansion. Partners’ shares were gradually bought back, and the majority of the fleet was now truly family-controlled. In 1971 the first vessel was flagged out to Liberia to escape the soaring cost obligation towards the respective shipyards and our customers, we have taken delivery of 29 vessels, meeting all our obligations towards the respective shipyards and our customers. Our current order book comprises 16 container vessels ranging from 2,350teu to 4,000teu and 3 ethylene tankers between 6,800cbm and 12,000cbm in capacity, all so-called “eco” designs. We have thereby positioned our company to meet the challenges of the future, with a predominantly modern fleet.

In 2007 we took the major step of combining our hitherto independent shipmanagement subsidiaries into one shipmanagement group under the name of Bernhard Schulte Shipmanagement. BSM currently manages over 700 vessels and is regarded as a quality leader in the shipmanagement industry.

Since the onset of the financial crisis in Autumn 2008, and despite the ongoing severe downturn in most shipping segments, we have taken delivery of 29 vessels, meeting all our obligations towards the respective shipyards and our customers. Our current order book comprises 16 container vessels ranging from 2,350teu to 4,000teu and 3 ethylene tankers between 6,800cbm and 12,000cbm in capacity, all so-called “eco” designs. We have thereby positioned our company to meet the challenges of the future, with a predominantly modern fleet.

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