

# From Trading Floors to Restaurant Kitchens: How Shu Fei Zeng Fixed a Broken Supply Chain

NIA BOWERS ([https://www.laweekly.com/guest-author/nia\\_bowers/](https://www.laweekly.com/guest-author/nia_bowers/)) x APRIL 7, 2026 x ( )



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There is a moment in most entrepreneurial origin stories when the founder points to the gap they spotted before anyone else. For Shu Fei Zeng ([https://www.instagram.com/khmarque\\_/](https://www.instagram.com/khmarque_/)), that moment came not from a whiteboard session or a market research report, but from more than two decades of watching, from the inside, exactly how global energy supply chains break down.

Zeng spent the better part of her career at Vitol and Glencore, two names that move more energy around the planet than most national oil companies. She was not in the corner office watching dashboards. She was in the operational weeds, learning how commodity flows work, where the pressure points are, and why deals that look clean on paper can unravel in ways that cost companies far more than money. When the sustainable aviation fuel sector began to take shape, she did not see a green energy boom. She saw a supply chain with a serious integrity problem at its core and decided to fix it.

In 2021, Zeng founded KH Marque, a company built around a deceptively simple idea: collect used cooking oil from small food businesses across Southeast Asia, certify every batch with documented traceability, and sell verified, low-carbon feedstock to the airlines and energy companies that are legally and reputationally obligated to know exactly where their fuel comes from. Within three years, KH Marque had expanded to 11 countries and become Southeast Asia's largest UCO collector. Zeng received a 2026 Global Recognition Award for that work.

### **She Knew Where the Problem Was**

The used cooking oil trade was not particularly transparent before KH Marque. Oil would move from restaurant kitchens through informal collectors, pass through multiple hands with varying levels of documentation, and eventually land in a refinery somewhere with paperwork of questionable accuracy. For years, that was fine. Nobody was asking hard questions. Then the European SAF mandate arrived, airlines started making Net Zero commitments, and suddenly the people buying feedstock needed to prove, across jurisdictions and in detail, that what they were burning had actually come from where the paperwork said it did.

Zeng had been watching this dynamic develop. She understood that the bottleneck to renewable aviation fuel was not a technology or refining problem. It was a trust problem, and trust across commodity markets is built through documentation, consistency, and accountability at every node in the chain. Building that from the ground up, starting with individual restaurant owners who had previously sold their used oil to informal collectors for a few dollars, required a kind of fieldwork that does not appear in job descriptions for trading firms.

She built it anyway. KH Marque formalized collection relationships with thousands of small food businesses across Southeast Asia, educated vendors on the commercial and environmental value of their products, and created the ground-level infrastructure that makes a global supply chain credible rather than merely plausible. S&P Global took note, naming Zeng Chief Trailblazer of the Year at the 2025 S&P Global Energy Awards for her work converting an informal sector into something that global buyers could actually rely on.

### **The Software Nobody Else Built**

At some point, Zeng's team realized that third-party certification alone would not be enough. The regulatory requirements emerging from Europe were specific, and the due diligence standards applied by major aviation buyers were becoming more demanding every quarter. So KH Marque built its own tool: the UCO Tracker. This proprietary software platform provides real-time traceability and carbon-intensity reporting for every batch of feedstock moving through the company's network.

This was not a feature added to a product brochure. It became the operational core of what makes KH Marque commercially defensible, giving buyers the audit trail they need to satisfy regulators across multiple jurisdictions simultaneously. Buyers using KH Marque's feedstock have documented greenhouse gas savings of 88-93% compared to fossil-derived alternatives. This figure earned the company a finalist position at the Reuters Global Sustainability Awards. The TITAN Business Awards gave the work platinum-level recognition, naming Zeng as Innovator of the Year and Sustainability Leader of the Year.

*"Shu Fei Zeng exemplifies exactly what this award stands for, a leader who identified a systemic gap, built a world-class solution, and delivered measurable impact at a global scale,"* said Alex Sterling, a spokesperson for Global Recognition Awards. The recognition landed because the work behind it was specific, documented, and independently verified.

### **What Gets Built When Nobody Is Watching**

There is a version of this story told as a clean arc: an experienced executive spots an opportunity, applies their expertise, and builds a successful company. That version is not wrong, but it leaves out the part where someone has to spend years building trust with small business owners across 11 countries who have no particular reason to formalize a relationship that has worked informally for decades. That work is slow, unglamorous, and not easily summarized in a pitch deck, and it is precisely the part of KH Marque's model that larger incumbents consistently underestimate.

Zeng's record has since been covered across platforms, such as Business Insider and Yahoo Finance, where her ability to maintain operational discipline during rapid international expansion has drawn attention from observers in the energy and sustainability sectors. The company she built has become a reference point for how feedstock supply chains in the biofuel sector should function, not because she lobbied for that status, but because the infrastructure she created was rigorous enough to withstand scrutiny.

What Zeng demonstrated at KH Marque is that commercial sustainability is not a values statement; it is an engineering problem. She identified the structural flaw, built the tools to address it, and scaled the solution across a region where that kind of standardization had never existed. In an industry that constantly talks about the energy transition, she is one of the people actually building it, from the ground up, one verified batch at a time.

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