ABOUT THE COMPANY

“Today, buying a house is no longer a concept of merely buying a shelter; it should be a place where you can really live. We at Sunway are committed to building a better life for the community to live, learn, work, play, be safe and be healthy,” stated Sarena Cheah, Managing Director.

Sunway Property (Sunway Integrated Properties Sdn Bhd) is one of the anchors of the Sunway Group, the largest Malaysian-based property construction conglomerate with a strong regional presence. As Sunway Berhad’s award-winning property arm, Sunway Property boasts an extensive portfolio in residential and non-residential development, hospitality, retail, leisure, healthcare and commercial assets developments. It has vast experience in managing and developing innovative quality residential and non-residential properties.

Consistent with Sunway’s Sustainability Mission “To deliver sustainable value creation for our stakeholders and to our community”, Sunway Property prides itself in being a Master Community Developer of integrated townships, where its relationship with the community is not merely as a developer.

Through a unique “Build, Own, Operate” business model, Sunway has succeeded in bringing to fruition the “integrated community” concept via its award-winning flagship township, Sunway Resort City. The 800-acre township stands today as the only township in Malaysia with seven components, namely residential, commercial, leisure, hospitality, retail, education and healthcare. Many of these components are owned and operated by Sunway, making the Group a “co-investor” in the township together with the buyers of the Group’s residential and commercial assets.
Committed to the Lifestyles of Health & Sustainability (LOHAS) philosophy, Sunway continues to cater to the needs for a healthy and well balanced lifestyle; it seeks to ensure delivery of quality products incorporated with many environmental friendly features. Many of its recent residential offerings, especially in the Klang Valley, have received Singapore’s Building and Construction Authority (BCA) Green Mark award and Malaysia’s Green Building Index’ certification.

Sunway Property operates from its headquarters in Menara Sunway, located in Bandar Sunway. Sunway Property has demonstrated a refined adoption of a business excellence framework. This article shares some of the key influential factors in Sunway Property’s success story. It focuses on the company’s excellent business practices for customer relationship management, people management and leadership that consistently focus on the concept of business sustainability.

THE SUCCESS STORY

Sunway Property has successfully developed one of the country’s unforgettable gems, Sunway Resort City (SRC), Malaysia’s first fully integrated and green township. Over the years, a unique symbiotic relationship between Sunway Property as the co-investor and the buyer have been successfully replicated in Sunway Property’s other integrated townships, namely Sunway City Ipoh and Sunway Iskandar.

In 2013, Sunway Property further expanded its portfolio by purchasing 691 acres of land in Medini Iskandar and 1,109 acres in Pendas located in the southern Peninsular Malaysia in the state of Johor. The development of its largest sustainable township in Sunway Iskandar will embody a world-class architecture and nature’s design.

Sunway Property’s capabilities extend beyond just integrated developments. Its exclusive residential offerings include the statuesque Kiara Hills, multi-award winning Sunway Palazzio, luxury high rise condominium Sunway Vivaldi and residential enclaves in Sunway SPK Damansara, Sunway Montana and Sunway Eastwood.
Sunway Property continues to concentrate on replicating its success in Malaysia to overseas, particularly in some of the world’s fastest growing economies, by consolidating its years of expertise in building quality residential and commercial properties. Armed with a wealth of experience and a proven track record, Sunway Property is well on its way to attracting more discerning property buyers with its overseas projects. Investments out of Malaysia include China, India, Cambodia, Vietnam and Singapore.

In Singapore, it has also established a strong track record in the high rise housing segment through its joint ventures with Hoi Hup Realty. As of 31 December 2014, Sunway Property has delivered over 3,000 condominium units through developments like City View @ Boon Keng, The Peak @ Toa Payoh, Vacanza @ East, Miltonia Residences, The Arc @ Tampines Lake Vista And Sea Esta.

Sunway Property’s admirable performances are evidently demonstrated through the key results of its business excellence framework. To date, the company has delivered over 40,000 properties with a gross development value (GDV) of RM20 billion, a testament to its vast experience in developing innovative and quality residential and commercial properties. Revenue and profit before tax continue to increase at 12% and 11% respectively for the past 3 years.

Meanwhile, total staff turnover in 2014 was 9.5%, well below the industry rate. An employee engagement survey was conducted to capture staff responses to the engagement activities for 2014 and to gain new ideas and gauge interest for future activities. The results indicated 92% of the staff valued and requested to continue having more activities.

The training evaluation program summary indicated that the overall program effectiveness was recorded at 88%, above the internal target of achieving 85% effectiveness. Sunway Property recorded an improvement trend in labour productivity ratios for the past five years and was among the most productive compared to its major competitors.
Sunway Property has won an array of local and international accolades. In 2014 alone, the company won a total of 20 awards under various categories that denote its excellent performance. Amongst the awards were #1 The Edge Property Excellence Awards, Fiabci Malaysia Property Award, Fiabci Prix d’Excellence Awards, Frost & Sullivan - Builder of the Year Award, iProperty Awards, Southeast Asia Property Awards Malaysia (SEAPA), BCI Award and Putra Brand Awards. The company also had zero non-compliance records for its quality (ISO 9001) and environment (ISO 14001) management system for two consecutive years (2013 - 2014).

In 2014, Sunway was honoured with the top spot by the distinguished panel of judges of The Edge Top Property Developers Awards (TPDA).

After a decade of being among the best, Sunway was finally crowned the best. It scored particularly high under the qualitative attributes, topping all other developers, and scored highest in terms of innovation and creativity, image and expertise. Under quantitative attributes, Sunway Property scored highly for its financial performance, especially in terms of turnover and profit before tax.
“OUR PURCHASER, OUR BRAND AMBASSADOR”

One of the key influential success factors at Sunway Property is its excellent practice of going an extra mile in nurturing the relationships with the customers. This excellent practice is consistent with the company’s approach to “build resilient businesses that lead in their respective markets through focus on our customers, innovation and operational excellent.”

“It is our full responsibility to know our purchaser well, from the basic needs to the delights of their new home,” said Sarena. Sunway Property obtains direct feedback from purchasers for further improvements. Customers’ requirements are identified using a well-defined approach. Customer satisfaction is captured through a survey at four stages. The first one is captured upon signing of the Sale and Purchase Agreement. It evaluates the impression of the sales gallery, sales staff, project and referral recommendation.

The second one is upon handing over the property. It evaluates the services rendered upon handover of vacant possession. Areas of evaluation include personnel, property cleanliness, quality, design and the overall handover experience. The third one is upon completion of rectification works on the purchaser’s unit. It captures the buyers’ evaluation on the rate of response time and professionalism of the Customer Care Officer.

Right: Movie outings with management and purchasers.
As a continuous effort to provide quality to its valued customers, another survey is conducted upon one year after vacant possession or 50% occupancy, whichever is earlier. It evaluates the design, security, facility services and personnel. Customer feedback on Sunway Property business partners in meeting the purchaser’s property needs are also solicited for further analysis. Some selected partners are the real estate agency, interior design consultant, lawyer and banker. These surveys are conducted in the effort to make the process as a pleasant and memorable experience for the purchaser.

Sunway Property believes continuous engagement with the purchasers contributes to long term relationships with Sunway, where every purchaser is the brand ambassador. Various customer engagement activities are conducted such as Chinese New Year and Hari Raya celebrations, World Environmental Day, Dumpling & Mid-Autumn festival celebrations, appreciation lunches and movie outings with management and purchasers. Sunway Property takes the initiative to gather all purchasers from different projects at community event get-togethers.

Above: Going the extra miles to ensure closer ties with its ‘brand ambassadors’ through get-together program such as movie outings
Other than such get-together activities, customer engagement is accomplished through SMS messages with birthday wishes and property value updates from time to time. Sunway Property has established multiple channels to enhanced customer engagement. The Customer Care Form (CCF) system is an effective customer complaint mechanism where buyers can submit defects and can accept rectifications of defects online.

Meanwhile, the MySunwayProperty internet portal enables purchasers to view all the details of their property construction stage photographs, defects rectification, billing and much more. It is also being used for priority invitations to activities like complimentary events or free movie screenings. Other channels aimed at reinforcing customer engagement are through dedicated customer service toll-free numbers and the expression box at Sunway Property Developments.

As for the management system, CRM plus is a one-stop centre established with the aim to move towards excellence in customer services. Sunway Property uses CRM Plus to consolidate purchaser and prospect information into one system, with single access and a view to all customers’ information and a centralized location to access all customer related systems.
Continuous improvement on the quality performance of employees delighting customers is another reason delivering an exceptional customer service is the way to go at Sunway Property. Initiatives like Cross Project Service Learning, where projects were audited on the services, physical and documents, allow sharing of best practices and areas for improvement among employees.

Effective training sessions on product and market knowledge are conducted for new and existing staff. Meanwhile, the Excellence Service Manual offers vivid guidelines for employees aimed to create memorable touch points with the customers through the delivery of quality products and services.

HARNESSING THE STRENGTH OF PEOPLE

Managing the people is another important business excellence initiative at Sunway Property. The company will make sure that employees are motivated and happy working with the company by paying attention to their well-being.

“We cannot serve the customer well if employees are not happy. We need to take care of the employees’ needs first and then the employees will take care of the customers,” replied Sarena when asked about her view on the people attribute of Sunway Property’s excellent performance. The company harnesses the strength of its people to further excite customers and garner greater customer loyalty and repeat purchases.

Sunway Property adopts and follows a clear employee development framework that serves as a guide to ensure a holistic approach is taken to employee development. Two main categories are the behavioural and functional competencies. Behavioural competencies are based on the Sunway Leadership Criteria, while functional competencies are more specific to the job nature, such as management, finance and marketing.
Employee engagement is an important business excellence indicator in the people management aspect. At Sunway Property, employee engagement drivers are identified from six main angles: People, Work, Total Rewards, Company Practices, Opportunities and Quality of Life. Various unique and consistent activities are conducted at Sunway Property aimed to enhance strong employee engagement. Activities like “Let’s Bowl” and “Gila Gila Durian” were conducted to foster close relationships and to promote engagement between staff.

Activities like “Debate Battle” were meant to create closer relationships among matrix team members and develop staff communication and public speaking skills. Meanwhile, the “Like Boss, Like Staff Photo Contest” created a fun place to work environment and created better engagement between staff and managers. Other regular activities intended to create platforms for management and staffs to get together are through the Annual Dinner, Team Building, and Rest and Relax Lunches with management.

Some of the employees’ engagement activities are targeted to help them in improving their work. For instance, through the “Adventure Race” activity, team members learn to get out of their comfort zone and learn how to achieve an objective through team effort. Through the “Pride of Association” activity, employees are given the chance to visit Sunway’s Property’s show houses.
These visits provide an opportunity to showcase the value propositions of properties developed by Sunway Property. At the end of these visits, employees should have the sense of quality, innovation and functionality that are featured and embedded in products developed by Sunway Property and correspondingly feel proud of being associated with such products.

The performance management system at Sunway Property is based on six key principles for managing excellence. These six principles are total performance, balance score card perspectives, alignment of company and individual objectives, joint responsibility and shared accountability, continuous feedback and coaching, and performance differentiation and distribution.

Apart from the systematic performance management system, Sunway Property rewards employees through activities like “Recognition Express” to appreciate the staff and reinforce a job well done and behaviours that demonstrate the company core values and leadership criteria. Meanwhile, “Excellence Awards” encourages behaviour that contributes to the achievement of the company’s strategic objectives. It provides the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to the employees that lead to better talent retention.

Managing for Excellence - Performance Management System
As a Master Community Developer, Sunway Property is committed to building sustainable communities where future generations can continue to thrive. As such, delivering sustainable value creation is the heart and soul of everything that the company does. Excellent practices to execute this mission are evident through four main approaches. These are building resilient businesses through focusing on customers, innovation and operational excellence; commitment to responsible business practices, especially in employee welfare and development; being environmentally sensitive and proactively managing the footprint; and partnership with the communities and making a positive impact.

“Sustainable is a starting point in everything that we do. There are certain things we invested up front where we cannot see the value today, but we look at the longer term. We look at three levels of value which are at the product, concept and service levels,” said Sarena.

“The value has got to be there for the person in terms of living or even when they sell the property. The product has to be necessarily good and the surrounding it creates. That is why we ensure to invest a lot in highways and roads because you don’t see the value today, but it makes a lot of sense for people to live properly,” she added. Sunway Property’s holistic concept has created sustainable value creation in terms of economics vitality for the residents and their surroundings when the values of the properties go up.

Sustainable value creation in terms of social justice is evident through giving back to societies. Sunway Property, whose core tenets including enriching lives, community and entrepreneurship, approaches corporate social responsibility (CSR) through championing three key areas of focus: education, healthcare and C.A.R.E. projects, an acronym for Community Aid, Reach-out and Enrichment.

An estimation of half a million ringgit is set aside and used for CSR related matters annually. Staff members at all levels are involved in reaching out to the communities. Responsible business practices are closely observed in terms of business ethics and code of conduct, health and safety, and employee engagement and development.
Sustainable environmental health is preserved as green initiatives and is another Sunway Property sustainability core focus area. “Our product conforms to the Green Building Index. From the design, we consider how it can minimize energy consumption and be more energy saving by using natural ventilation or opting for solar energy. Of course the more we do, the higher the cost. That’s a balancing act. Actually if we do it well, the maintenance cost for residents will go lower over time,” explained Sarena.

“We at Sunway also harvest in the social habits. We can design an environmentally sustainable design building, but when we go to the toilet, we leave the water running. So where are the green initiatives? As a group, we try to promote recycling. Recently, we had World Environmental Day, where we actually reminded people of simple acts like how to not waste water and how to throw out your waste properly,” she added with fortitude.

**CHARTING THE PATH FOR THE FUTURE**

When asked about the way forward for the company, Sarena remarked on the challenges and opportunities. “With every challenge, there are opportunities. Business growth definitely is going to be the challenge because we have to keep selling. Sentiment and affordability will be issues because of the overall confidence in the global and Malaysian economies. So to continue growing, we must make sure the products meet the new level of expectations. However, this gives us the opportunity to learn and review ourselves for the next 5 years. What have brought us to where we are today may not necessarily bring us into the next 5 to 20 years. Because things are changing, customers are changing and the ways we sell are changing,” she highlights.

Charting the path for the future, Sunway Property continues to build a strong brand with an unblemished track record. The company will provide buyers more assurance of its fine workmanship, excellent customer care service and on-time delivery. Driven by a strong management team with sharp business acumen and unwavering belief in sustainable business practices, Sunway Property looks forward to transforming its existing land bank into new award winning developments and building properties that buyers will aspire to stay, work and play in.