

# SETTING ITS SIGHTS HIGH

>>> The Nomad Group Bhd has skillfully created a buzz about virtual offices and serviced offices, and is an example of a good success story.

**S**erviced office and residence provider, The Nomad Group Bhd started off humbly enough in the stockbroking business in the past. However, in 2007, it had decided to switch gears from this area and set its sights on finding its niche in services. Its main focus was and is, to create unique, convenient working and living spaces for professionals and expatriates.

The model of serviced office has been around in Malaysia for the last 20 years but The Nomad has taken this a step further by providing a fully-integrated serviced office, which combines the serviced residence aspect.

Elaborating on this, The Nomad Group Bhd general manager for strategic planning, Gan Vi King says: "At present, there is no integrated player in this particular area. The concept whereby the client can work in a virtual office and also stay in the hotel is extremely efficient and appealing.

"Our two core businesses are serviced offices and serviced residences. Under the umbrella of service residences, we can sub-divide this into two categories namely hotels and service apartments. In Bangsar, we have the Nomad Residences serviced apartments, which we bought in 2007 and manage ourselves. It comprises three blocks of 66 low-rise units. It is low density, quiet and our stay period is short-term at between one to 12 months. It is targeted at businessmen who require short-term hassle free accommodation."

In Kuala Lumpur, the group owns two hotels. It owns The Nomad Sucasa, Jalan Ampang comprising 180 all-suite hotel rooms, which the group manages. In 2009, it purchased Novotel KLCC in Kuala Lumpur. The latter, which comprises around 295 rooms, is situated between Pavilion Kuala Lumpur and the KL Convention Centre. It is managed by Accor. It is also managing Tanjung Bungah Beach Hotel in Penang for property developer Plenitude Bhd.

In the area of serviced offices, it moved into this area in late-2007. It has long-term leases in 10 office buildings in Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam. It has long-term leases in Kuala Lumpur's Menara Hap Seng, Etiqa Twins, the Gardens and Pavilion Kuala Lumpur. Its Singapore serviced offices are in Raffles Place and Suntec City; Wisma Metropolitan II in Jakarta; Interchange 21 in Bangkok; Gemadept Tower in Ho Chi Minh City; and PBCom Tower in Manila.

"For the past three years, we have concentrated on the ASEAN countries and this strategy has paid off. We take long-term leases with landlords in central business districts and we have a presence in six countries in 10 locations," explains Gan.

He notes that its own internal team has expertise in secretarial services as business people that come to Nomad usually will try to minimise their operating costs and capital expenditure. Their typical needs would include filing, documentation and beyond that Nomad will engage its partners to come in to assist the group's clients.

"We do handle cases where a client may come in for advice on setting up their business in Asia and we have basic guidelines to assist them in business advisory services," says Gan.

## PRODUCT PORTFOLIO

The group has 245,900 sq ft of gross office floor area in its portfolio. Its main product is the serviced office suite, which includes ready-to-use office from one to 10 workstations. Its other products are the business lounge, meeting rooms, conferences and a multi-purpose hall for training with tele-conferencing, video conferencing, LCD equipment and an AV system.

Nomad's second major product under the serviced office umbrella is the virtual office. New start-up companies tend to use virtual offices, which eliminate the need



Gan Vi King,  
General Manager  
of The Nomad  
Group Berhad.

for high operational costs and rentals. The Nomad provides such companies with an immediate solution ensuring you are still in business with a corporate image and prestigious address.

Nomad serviced offices are "ready to occupy." It provides a high profile address, small security deposits and flexibility in upgrading, downsizing or vacating the premises at short notice. It has a strict no-hidden-cost policy, pay only for necessary services, ease of administration, detailed billing, cost effective and the best service in terms of professionally-trained Nomad staff to fulfill your business requirements.

Costs for virtual office can be as low as RM50 per month for a basic address and RM300 a month would include booking meeting rooms, using the phone and fax machines, among others.

In terms of being a success story, Nomad has clearly stamped its mark in Malaysia and the ASEAN region. It aims to continue to increase its service office inventory and serviced residence room inventory in the next few years. **BT**