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— Ho Hon Sang

Mah Sing: Survival in disruptive world depends on IoT, big data

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KUALA LUMPUR — Property developer Mah Sing Group Bhd became the first property company in Malaysia to ride on digital offerings in its bid to capture a bigger market share.

The company undertook various measures to enhance its digital presence in the market, thus beating the disruptions that came with the digital push in the property sale segment.

Some of these measures include the use of internet of things (IoT) and big data.

“The survival of property companies depends on how they can tap into big data and IoT to increase their efficiency and reduce costs.

“I foresee in the future, there will be a lesser need to employ more security guards to take care of a facility if more IT-based data can be used to streamline the security operations,” said Mah Sing group chief executive officer Datuk Ho Hon Sang.

Ho spoke to *Malay Mail* in an exclusive interview on the merits of the company going digital in its sales and presentation.

“The property sector had its fair share of disruptions and this has left property developers with no choice but to embrace ‘proptech’.

“We have to ride the digital revolution as 70% of our customers are below the age of 40. They are IT savvy and we have to reach them with means that they are comfortable with,” he said.

The company was the first property developer in the country to provide a live rendering auditorium of its property project.

This took place for its Meridin East project in Johor Baru where the customers were given a visual simulation of the 1,313 acres project. The simulation included showing the effects of the sun in the morning, afternoon and the evening.

The first person view live rendering presentation added a new dimension to the real estate market as future homeowners can now see what their homes and surroundings will look like once completed.

Mah Sing also recently participated in a recent virtual property exhibition where potential customers were given a 360 degree view of its D’Sara Sentral project in Sg Buloh.

“Our endeavour into proptech has yielded the

results that we desire as a significant amount of our sales are digital sales,” added Ho.

The company has also started to assimilate the usage of mobile applications into its products for the convenience of its buyers. Its recently previewed projects — M Vertica in Cheras and M Centura in Sentul — will be using a community mobile application as part of its security feature.

The application will ease the communications between security personnel and homeowners. Homeowners will be able to get instant updates on their mobile devices if they have a visitor and they will be able to grant permission even though they are not physically at home, something which the traditional intercom system is unable to do.

However, Ho said that the days of the showroom or sales gallery are not over as property is a big ticket item, and potential customers want to have the look and feel of the property before making a decision or signing on the dotted line.

He cited the example of property purchasing trend in China where the better looking sales galleries brought in greater business. However, IT could be used to respond to the initial queries of potential customers.

The property developer was recently awarded the Social Media Excellence Award for harnessing social media tools such as Facebook and Instagram in its business.

Mah Sing is further assimilating technology for its marketing events such as the ongoing Arts and Lights exhibition — which is Malaysia’s first interactive pop-up art and technology experience with creative installations — as well as interactive props and colourful rooms which creates unique photography opportunity. The event has had overwhelming response with more than 28,000 registrants to date.



Ho says proptech is important for Mah Sing as the majority of the developer’s customers are below 40. — Picture by Shafwan Zaidon