



# DELIVERING PROMISES

Sansiri's motto in offering a complete home and lifestyle experience: 'We construct lives, not just buildings,' is more than just a PR line

by Percy Roxas

**T**he right man at the right place at the right time -- that's one of the easiest ways to describe Apichart Chutrakul, chief executive officer (CEO) of Sansiri Public Company Limited. A University of San Diego, USA (Master's degree in business administration) graduate, Apichart's expertise on real estate business, finance, and banking has helped propel Sansiri into one of Thailand's top three property developers today.

As a leading developer for local, expat, and foreign investors, Sansiri -- established in 1984 and is now Thailand's only fully integrated property developer -- sets itself apart from others by providing a suite of services and products ranging from property development to property services with professional consultancy such as extensive real estate brokerage services, project sales management, total real estate management, and first-class concierge services.

Apichart basically oversees the different operations of the company -- from product development to marketing, from customer service to sales -- and is primarily responsible for its financial performance. It is a job he says he enjoys to the hilt, although it comes with big responsibility.

Because of the high investment required in a real estate business, every aspect of what Apichart is tasked with needs to be carried out with extreme caution. He must take into account the fluidity of the operations, accounting and financial discipline in line with transparency and good governance in management. Apichart also puts emphasis on the mechanics of marketing and branding closely for Sansiri, so as to be certain that the company can effectively respond to the customer's needs, creating brand loyalty among a group

of customers in the long run.

Aside from the aforementioned routine duties, Apichart is also director of Plus Property Co., Ltd, one of Sansiri's biggest subsidiary companies, which runs a property management business with an aim to control the provision of excellent customer service to Sansiri customers in general.

As Sansiri CEO, Apichart has gone through the "ups and downs" of the times in Thailand, but he says perseverance is always the key. "When you are down, you put your head down and start working harder," he says. "But of course we have had some help with how to get things right. We are also lucky that we know lots of good banks; and of course, we pay back every dollar we borrow. We're like a model citizen in terms of finance."

Apichart's foray into the real estate business and property development was partly "incidental" and partly "destiny." After graduating in Finance, he joined a finance company for a year, but then a senior member of the family asked him to do something with the family land. That was 30 years ago. That beginning set him firmly off to the path he is in with Sansiri today.

In 2014, Sansiri reported total revenues of THB 29,527 million (USD 908.23 million) and net profits of THB 3,393 million (USD 104.35 million), representing an earnings per share of THB 0.21. As of March 2015, Sansiri has launched over 280 projects: over 74,000 single houses, townhouses and condominium units in 16 provinces and one international property in London, and more are currently in the pipeline.

"We have to deliver the many promises we have given to many different facets of society, Apichart says. "I am fortunate to be surrounded by so many good people who are

leaders in their respective fields, and more attuned to the specific tasks than I am. Sansiri is not 'leadership by one person; it is leadership by many people.'

"Now I am overseeing what they are doing, do what I can to help them meet our goals, and help everybody stay focused on the same goals. It is more to inspire our people, to help them do things the right way and make them achieve great success in their roles."

And he means success not only business-wise but also in terms of social responsibility. Besides the company vision that encompasses quality and innovation in delivering high levels of satisfaction to customers, Sansiri also is intent on keeping sustainable relationships with business partners and the communities around its projects.

In particular, one company CSR program that is very close to Apichart's heart is "Social Change." Conducted in partnership with UNICEF, "Social Change," aims to help, support, and improve children's lives sustainably. Sansiri is also an official partner for UNICEF to ensure the realization of the rights of children.

Apichart says that he is quite satisfied with where Sansiri is now ("We're doing pretty well, he says) although he says there is always room for improvement.

"In line with Sansiri's tagline: 'We construct lives, not just buildings,' we will continue to offer a complete home and lifestyle experience. We will continue to strive to provide the perfect living and lifestyle experience for all tenants and clients," he says.

To all prospective foreign buyers of a Sansiri property, Apichart has this to say, "Take a look at us. We are a very international company, and we have unrivalled products and services for you." **LE**