AL MOUJ SUCCESS STORY

Introduction

Al Mouj Muscat is a world-class seafront community situated along the gorgeous coast of Muscat, Oman. The freehold properties offer an exceptional lifestyle experience, featuring lush green spaces, vibrant dining and retail services, inland waterways and the only PGA approved golf course in Oman. Al Mouj Muscat enjoys a variety of lavish, universally recognized hotels, such as the Kempinski and Shaza Hotels. The multi-use development, which includes a 400-berth marina, a shopping center and over 70 retail outlets including Spinneys, Starbucks and Shakespeare is a reflection of authentic Omani architecture and houses 1500 apartments and villas residences with expansion continuing to grow organically since construction began in 2006.

Al Mouj Muscat has been using **Urbanise's strata software** since 2013 to successfully manage their portfolio of apartments, villas and retail outlets.

Their management team use Urbanise's strata management system for all the accounting, service charge invoicing, utility invoicing and communication for the community. They have also invited the thousands of Al Mouj Muscat owners and tenants to their community portal system "MyCommunity" where owners can pay their service charges online, communicate with the Al Mouj team, raise maintenance requests, view important documents and feel a part of this vibrant community.

Reaping The Benefits

Four years after implementing the Urbanise strata software, Al Mouj Muscat is still extremely pleased with their choice of software having experienced an increase in productivity over the years linked to streamlined operations and improved efficiencies.

Al Mouj Muscat sends out over 8,ooo service charge invoices and over 12,000 utility invoices every year. Using the Urbanise strata system, the whole process of budgeting for service charges and sending out thousands of invoices can literally take minutes, saving community managers time and improving their overall efficiency. Owners can then go onto their web portal, see a live statement of account, view their PDF invoice and then pay via a secure credit card gateway. This means transactions are automatically reconciled in the accounting system which significantly reduces processing time.

The MyCommunity portal in particular and its online payment system has proven to be an invaluable investment for Al Mouj Muscat, as many of their tenants and investors live overseas. The community management team currently receive over 50 maintenance requests via their call centre or online every month. The MyCommunity portal enables residents to not only raise these requests online, but also track their progress all the way through to completion. This level of "self-service" and transparency for residents is now expected in world-class communities such as Al Mouj Muscat. MyCommunity has also become an irreplaceable tool to the community managers as they can send SMS messages and broadcast information about events and other matters happening in the community.

Success Lies In The Right Fit

Alan Rowlands from the Community Management team at Al Mouj Muscat has witnessed other companies using 'property management' software systems that are not properly suited. This has detrimental effects, as often it does not offer the appropriate functionalities or terminology. Property managers using poorly suited software have to create new systems and processes that circumnavigate these problems. An example of this can be seen when some companies are forced to do their invoicing or budgeting on excel, as they are not appropriately supported by their own software.

When a software system does not provide the necessary level of services that a specifically designed community and strata management tool such as Urbanise's offer, then inevitably, additional costs will occur. For instance, some companies go to a variety of extremes and find themselves trying to adapt programs such as Oracle and SAP for their community management needs, resulting in huge financial cost, time and intense in-house development.

For Alan Rowlands the obvious advantage of Urbanise's strata systems is that 'they are both specifically designed for community management activities, covering data management, financial reporting and invoicing. Additionally, the communication requirements and challenges that community managers' face are solved with a custom built web portal that allows total engagement with the residents. Another unique advantage is around the clock support with a regional support team that helps clients with questions and queries, ensuring optimal support'.

Conclusion:

The choice of strata software, for a prominent community with over 2,000 residential properties, a shopping mall and 70+ retails outlets, is very important and has significant repercussion. The right software can substantially help community managers streamline their operations, alleviate their workload, improve their processes and just as importantly help them engage and communicate with their residents.

Using the Urbanise strata system has helped Al Mouj Muscat increase their productivity and efficiency, both in terms of intelligent financial and accounting property management but also in terms of interconnectivity and engagement with tenants and community managers. This has resulted in a fluid operation and an overall increase in satisfaction for the resident and tenants of Al Mouj Muscat. Al Mouj Muscat are now also evaluating some of Urbanise's other technology solutions including their e-Services, Assets and iOT platform.

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al mouj muscat