



How your Mission and Vision can create Value
by
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Creating a 'Compass' to Guide Developers Up Front Pays Huge Dividends

Moricon Consultants specialises in the creation of hospitality and site-services for luxury developments in their pre-opening and development phase. Founder and MD Sebastian Moritz gained his (unusual) expertise in luxury and lifestyle property service delivery in the pre-opening and management of, amongst others, One Hyde Park London, The Hazelton Hotel in Toronto, Ten Trinity Square and Belgravia Gate. Moricon currently advises Lodha Group UK on their projects at Lincoln Square and No. 1 Grosvenor Square, as well as CTC Group in Cyprus on two major residential projects on the island.

The creation of the often neglected Mission and Vision statement for a development is a hugely underestimated tool that should be an essential part of the pre-opening tool-kit for any project. It helps everyone involved to focus on what's really important: streamlined efficiency, happy residents and – crucially – lower costs for both Residents and Developers alike.

And all this because of a Mission and Vision Statement?

In his role as Opening Director for Residences at One Hyde Park London, Sebastian Moritz quickly realised that a chasm exists between a Developer on the one side and an Operator on the other. It was clear that finding a common compass to navigate all of the numerous pre-opening activities through two different work-and-believe systems was going to be a challenge, so he sought to convince both parties that the creation of a Mission and Vision statement for the project would mitigate a lot of the ambiguity that inevitably arises, even at a mature stages in the project.

The creation of immediate (tactical) and long-term (strategic) goals are, by no means something you can do in the cafeteria with the help of Google; among other things it involves a very frank exchange of opinions and views, preferably moderated by an informed but neutral (i.e. external) party.

Equipped with your compass in hand, you then start drawing and designing, letting the direction guide both the architect as well as the designer (and ultimately the service team) to create the desired hospitality offering and service level. This process secures the development, enabling it to evolve from 'an idea' into 'a residential home' and then into the ongoing provision of a residential experience that is completely interwoven and connected – and you can rest assured that the residents and your service colleagues will know the difference!

Once you have a Mission and Vision as well as a commitment from all participants to uphold and support it (which is essential), your development has a strategic advantage over the competition: you know exactly what you want, why you want it, how to get it and lastly, how to hold on to it.

At One Hyde Park, Sebastian also used this process to align the hiring process, creating a targeted pre-opening operating equipment schedule and a range of world-class services and experiences that, despite its complexity, made the development easier to complete.

Wasted time and protracted decision making can account for a vast amount of unproductive hours – but this compass should help with keeping wastage at a low level. Indeed the dividends mentioned in the title are disguised and come in many forms: for example you may decide to alter the design to facilitate better hospitality service delivery, thus avoiding costly added works and potential delays in the later phases of your project. Similarly, you may have created a very accurate service charge platform at the start of your project from which to approach the market.

The trick is to align your value system (both short and long-term) with your operational processes and, at each critical junction, question their compatibility and support; you will be surprised how a bit of homework at the start helps to streamline your processes afterwards.

At One Hyde Park the approach was very successful; after seven years of operations the vast majority of colleagues that were hired are still working there and continue to create memorable experiences for the residents. Moreover, the project sold out soon after practical completion and is still a global bench-mark project for the super-prime residential market.

Case Study: Restaurant Review

A recent consultancy illustrated how some elements of the proposed lay-out would be impractical and inefficient, thereby directly impacting upon the desired value proposition as well as the commercial aspects.

Moricon was commissioned by the developer of a major high-end residential project to study the proposed floorplan layout for the impressive signature restaurant, specifically to compare these against the overall agreed mission and vision for the project, but also from operational and commercial aspects.

The review findings highlighted how the envisioned use of the allocated space on the elevated second floor (i.e. not ground floor and basement, such as is more common) of the building in its proposed layout would in practice present some operational challenges; in turn, this would not fulfil the agreed Mission and Vision Statement and therefore the developer's ambition of creating an exclusive, comfortable and well-organised environment for HNW diners. Specifically:

- A prime, large floor area had been apportioned to the restaurant facilities in the building design, but it was clear that, for the intended number of covers, the plans did not factor in sufficient allocation for easily accessible beverage, cold and dry storage facilities, each of which needed to be accessed at the end of long corridors.
- The restaurant is located on the 3rd floor, but the production kitchen is on the 1st floor, so food comes up via a dumb-waiter lift, which also services the pool deck and bar on the 2nd floor. This capacity is much too limited.
- Due to the large number of covers allowed for, the restaurant would be heavily staff reliant, requiring a large team of workers; as such, the flow of these various personnel through the area was an important consideration. Additionally, it would be essential to include adequate changing areas for the large staff team.

- With a fine-dining establishment the food waste is considerable – alternative waste disposal methods might therefore be more suitable than just bins, e.g. a bioenzyme waste maceration unit
- Undertaking a professional review at an early stage in the design process meant that the architect was then able to adapt the layouts to reflect these essential practical operational aspects, thereby ensuring a much more efficient layout and operation, indeed one that would deliver to the agreed mission and vision – and ultimately save the developer money by avoiding potentially costly changes during later stages.

Conclusion:

It pays dividends to have your corporate compass aligned – your mission and vision will guide you, your employees and your contractor and supplier teams from the very beginning. It takes a lot of discipline and effort to get this on the way, but over a 3 or 4 year program you will reap the benefits in many ways:

- Streamlined approach across all communication platforms.
- Ongoing evaluation of design and building progress.
- Less cost due to disciplined approach to procurement and less change.
- Cohesive marketing from the very beginning.



Sebastian has more than 25 years of luxury hotel experience in senior management roles, with a variety of international hotel companies, including Fairmont Hotels and Resorts, Intercontinental, The Hazelton Hotel Toronto and Shangri-La Hotels.

His residential experience covers management roles at One Hyde Park Residences (Mandarin Oriental Group), Ten Trinity Residences (now Four Seasons Hotels) and Belgravia Gate, before founding MORICON Consultants. He currently consults Lodha Group UK on their three London projects – Lincoln Square, No. 1 Grosvenor Square and Kensington Odeon with a combined sales value of £ 1.6B.

He was educated in Switzerland and holds an MBA from Henley Management College. Sebastian has Member status at IRPM and Assoc. RICS and currently studies for B2R Accreditation. <http://www.moricon.net/about/>