



Universal's Jurassic World: The Exhibition



Ron Tan, Executive Chairman & Group Chief Executive Officer of Cityneon Holdings

## Cityneon: Bringing heroes to life with visionary leadership

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Cityneon makes success look like child's play. In just a few years, the company has transformed itself from a project management company to a full-service ideas agency catering to some of the biggest companies across the globe. But the transformation has been anything but easy: behind the triumph is a hardworking team dedicated to creating immersive exhibitions like no other. "We are a very small company competing in international space," says Ron Tan, Executive Chairman and Group CEO of Cityneon Holdings. "We started with a three-person team in the office, and today we have 400 employees globally. We owe it to the leadership of the strong management team, and dedicated staffs in the various offices across the globe," he adds.

### Humble beginnings

Cityneon has been in the design and build business for over six decades. Whilst the company has enjoyed several milestones through the years, it also experienced lacklustre growth for the better part of its earlier existence. "The company was experiencing stagnant growth for main parts of its earlier years but started to experience exponential growth in latter years after the acquisition of Victory Hill Exhibitions (VHE), and the implementation of a new management team in place," Tan notes. Through VHE, Cityneon initially bagged

short-term contracts with industry leaders such as Disney and Marvel. After proving its mettle in creating immersive exhibitions, Cityneon soon established partnerships with top studios including Disney, Marvel, Hasbro, Universal and Lionsgate. "The journey was an amazing and thrilling one. We have now travelled to 26 different cities in different parts of the world – with multiple partners globally," Tan says.

In less than five years, the company's market capitalisation has grown more than 15-fold from below S\$20m to over S\$320 million today. Its net profit jumped 163.6% to S\$17.4m. Gross profit increased 83.6% to S\$63.8m in FY 2017, and gross profit margin rose to 54.7% from 36.0%. Revenue in FY2017 increased 20.7% to S\$116.7m, of which the IPR segment saw a 187.3% increase to S\$50.7m in sales compared to the previous year.

### Exemplary management

"This is our 62nd year of existence. Not many companies can survive that long and survive that strong. The question was never about making the wrong decisions, as a leader, we need to make decisions – right or wrong. The challenge is what do we do with

those decisions thereafter. That is probably the test of a real leader," Tan says.

Cityneon owes its success not only to Tan but also to its full-fledged management team with deep experiences in different industries. "We are probably also one of the most multi-racial, multi-cultural, multi-experience team of executives you can witness in a small company like ours," Tan says. "This calls for a multi-faceted leadership style to cater to different cultures and different needs at different times."

At present, Cityneon's business encompasses four independent yet integrated divisions – Events and Exhibitions, Thematic Attractions, Interior Architecture and IP Experiences.

"We will open our successful Jurassic World: The Exhibition in Seoul, Korea in 2019. This will be the first time that the exhibition will be in Asia. We are excited to bring our immersive experience closer to home. The first half of 2019 will also witness the opening of The Hunger Games: The Exhibition at MGM in Las Vegas. We also continue to focus on the 2020 World Expo projects with the design and build of various countries' pavilions," Tan shares.

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