

# Space solutions

## Local self-storage firm addresses challenges and opportunities posed by rapid urbanization

SURGING land costs and the resulting trend of 'residential downsizing' has been a boon for the island's premier self-storage company, MY STORAGE Self Storage; with its ideally located Patong facility seeing an accelerated demand for its services.

Speaking to the Gazette recently, owners Sukanda Chiaranussati and Robert Akerblom talked about residential market trends as well as their firm's growth and future plans.

"Residential property development is moving towards smaller, urban type apartment and houses, which creates a greater need for residents to store personal belongings outside their homes," says Robert Akerblom, the co-owner of My Storage.

Indeed, with the rise in urbanization, the number of residential 'shoebox units' on the market is swelling, which means that the potential client-base for self-storage space will also be growing.

"Islanders want their living spaces to reflect who they are but don't always have the space to accommodate all their acquisitions. At the same time, they have more interests, hobbies and collectibles," notes Robert, a Swedish national.

Robert's wife and partner, Sukanda Chiaranussati, elaborates: "We've got people storing all types of belongings such as golf sets, diving gear, yachting instruments

and equipment, bicycles and motorbikes, collectibles and furniture, among others... One customer uses her unit as a library, complete with chairs and book shelf."

Popular in the United States for decades, self storage is the perfect solution for residents seeking a safe extension of their space-challenged homes.

"They [clients] don't have that extra spare room, so they fill boxes with belongings, bring it to us and use it [storage units] as an extra wardrobe; some visit the facility a number of times per day," notes Sukanda.



MY STORAGE Self Storage has 264 units for rent and also has moving services.

"We're finding that our customers want to live in the city or beach-side, but the trade-off is that they have to give up the extra space they would have had living in less attractive areas," adds Robert.

MY STORAGE Self Storage opened shop right next to Jungceylon Shopping Center, Patong in 2010. Currently offer-

ing 264 units for rent in a three-story building, with an additional 700 units planned, the facility has high-tech security systems, on-site management and is open seven days a week.

MY STORAGE is Phuket's first and only professionally purpose-built self-storage facility for individuals and businesses. Their services include left luggage, packing and moving supplies, personal and corporate storage, archiving, moving and shipping.

Robert comments about the company's inspiration and market niche: "Self storage in the west is an integrated way of how people organize their lives. The rise in popularity is fueled by a number of social phenomena such as urbanization and an increasing number of SME business launches.

"Managed self storage facilities with clean, well-lit, secure units and competitive rental rates will gradually replace previous alternatives such as vintage warehouses, traditional shop houses and shed lock-ups.

"There are always occasions when you do not have enough space in your house, office, or your business premise to store different types of goods and material. You always wish you could move some, which is not going to be needed for quite some times, and store it safely some other place. The majority of our customers specifically point out that security is very important to them."

Asked what separates MY STORAGE from other similar self-storage offerings on the island, Mrs Sukanda said, "We really try our best to identify what really matters to Phuket-based



AT YOUR SERVICE: MY STORAGE Self Storage owners Sukanda Chiaranussati and Robert Akerblom at their Patong facility.



HOME AWAY FROM HOME: Self storage clients include residents who need an extension of their storage closet, and businesses in transition.

Thai nationals, as well as foreigners... There are no barriers for potential customers to enter a weekly or monthly rental agreement with us, and we believe this is one of the factors driving customers in our direction."

"We know we've built a good product," adds Sukanda, who has worked in the Phuket property sector for eight years. "It's a far cry from the traditional warehouse spaces normally found in these parts

of the world; MY STORAGE is a premium product in all aspects."

"Our customers have other options, but we're confident in our product and we will continue to offer the widest choices for storage units, being the safest and most reliable apart from offering the best services from our great location," she adds.

Its not just the residential base that are reaping the benefits of self-storage, Robert notes: "Startup businesses use our storage units as they are good cost-savers and flexible alternatives to traditional warehouses.

"They can rent smaller units, which match their inventory size. As they grow, their space can grow. Since we offer flexible lease terms with the minimum storage term being just one week, small businesses can also use us as a short-term solution [for] overflow space.

Businesses are also changing their storage habits, he points out. "From a self-storage standpoint, it used to be that SMEs would use storage mainly for documents and items they no longer wanted. They would also use storage as a temporary space when they were in the middle of moving. Today, we're seeing a wider range of SMEs with a wider range of needs."

"With the rising cost of commercial real estate, it makes sense to store things with us, even if you are just starting a business - we offer flexible and affordable solutions catered to your needs," he concludes.

- Phuket Gazette

SALE

**ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS**  
Classic & Contemporary Interiors

**Phuket Showroom Building C1-C2 Premium Outlet-Gallery Zone**  
888, 888/1 M.2 T. Kohkaew, Muang Phuket 83000 Thailand  
Tel: +66 (0) 76 350465 Fax: + 66 (0) 76 350465 Email: abfabsales@gmail.com  
[www.abfabphuket.com](http://www.abfabphuket.com) Opening hours: Mon-Sat 10 am-5:30 pm Closed: Sunday

### COMPANY FACTS

1. Strategically located at Jungceylon Shopping Center Patong
2. High-tech security systems; onsite management.
3. Clean well lit hallways and open seven days a week.
4. Convenient reservation; walk in or by telephone.
5. Payment: online, credit, debit, ransfer, wire transfer or cash.
6. Moving and packing services
6. High quality moving and packaging supplies for sale
7. Choices: 28 different unit sizes to choose from.
8. Building has a large elevator for accessing units on upper floors.
9. Gray paint in hallways and units are easy to clean.
10. Music piped through the facility.
11. Packages and deliveries are accepted on-site.
12. Courier service can shuttle boxes to/from home or business.
13. Disposal service for unwanted, stored items.