



Belinda Kuan
官晓霓

Signature Homes General Manager
Signature Homes 总经理

20

Belinda Kuan: Establishing TOWNPLACE, a brand catering for millennials' living needs

官晓霓：迎合新世代对“家”的需求
创立“TOWNPLACE本舍”品牌

"Millennials place great value on lifestyle and living experiences. They put apartment layout and flexible leasing terms before the amount of living space." According to Signature Homes General Manager Belinda Kuan, the living preferences of millennials are quite different, so last year the Group created a new brand, called TOWNPLACE, to provide unconventional residential leasing services tailored for them.

Establishing a new brand to capture opportunities from millennials

Statistics show that there are about 80 million globally mobile individuals, and counting. "Hong Kong is an international city, which attracts talent from around the world. Market demand is enormous," said Belinda. She also said that over time, millennials have given new momentum to the residential leasing market. As a result, late last year, the Group created TOWNPLACE, a new residential leasing brand, with a focus on millennial customers.

Belinda revealed that during the early stage of brand development, the team carried out research on the home preferences of millennials. "We found that millennials prioritize convenient location for travelling to work. They also follow lifestyle trends and look for a good living

experience, so they seek versatility in the surrounding facilities. The TOWNPLACE brand comprises two properties, TOWNPLACE KENNEDY TOWN and TOWNPLACE SOHO, respectively located in Kennedy Town and Soho, Central. Both locations are popular among millennials because they enjoy close proximity to MTR stations, commercial districts, traditional shops and Western-style stores, blending East and West and satisfying the needs of millennial tenants," she said.

Flexible and personalized

TOWNPLACE provides different layouts for tenants' choice, ranging from studios to four-bedroom apartments. According to Belinda, as the majority of millennials live by themselves or with a partner, the two properties feature primarily exquisite one-bedroom apartments

with a flexible and practical layout. Equipped with multi-functional furniture and ample concealed storage space, the apartments keep pace with the minimalistic furnishing trend while meeting residents' practical needs. "To promote TOWNPLACE SOHO, we further enhanced leasing flexibility by providing tenants with three housing options – serviced apartments, furnished apartments, and unfurnished apartments for tenants who wish to move in with their own furniture. Also, we offer two chic furniture brands with different styles for them to choose from," said Belinda. In addition, TOWNPLACE offers flexible leasing terms from one month to two years, so that tenants can decide on the appropriate lease term based on the length of their stay in Hong Kong.

A Duo Social Space tailored to the millennial community

The popularity of the sharing concept has been growing in recent years, giving rise to millennials' interest in making like-minded friends in shared space. One of the unique qualities of TOWNPLACE is that residents of TOWNPLACE KENNEDY TOWN and TOWNPLACE SOHO can share the two locations' facilities. "The two properties have different amenities, so residents of both can enjoy an even more diverse service experience, which is quite rare in the market," said Belinda.

To facilitate interaction between residents of the two projects, TOWNPLACE's Community Managers organize various activities so that residents can get to know one another and broaden their social circle. "We understand that young people tend to make new friends using social media. So our tenants can join MY TOWN, an interactive community in TOWNPLACE's exclusive mobile app, to meet like-minded 'TOWNERS' to expand their group," she said.

Tech-savvy living experience

Since the young generation often no longer work only in a static office, TOWNPLACE KENNEDY TOWN and TOWNPLACE SOHO are equipped with a high-speed business grade wireless WiFi network to meet tenants' working needs. TOWNPLACE has introduced smart home management to provide tenants with a holistic, convenient way of living. "Along with MY TOWN, a social platform, residents can make use of TOWNPLACE's exclusive mobile app to control household appliances, as an electronic door lock, to receive mailbox alerts, to book property facilities, etc. Residents can also contact our team or Community Managers for assistance anytime via the app," said Belinda.

Residents' trusted friends

The team members are the first friends of many residents during their early days of living and working in Hong Kong. TOWNPLACE starts from the details to establish a close and friendly relationship with tenants. TOWNPLACE frontline staff are dressed in casual attire rather than formal suits, and address residents by their first names. She said with a smile that some colleagues occasionally explore Hong Kong with tenants after work. "They are truly



The young and dynamic TOWNPLACE team provides tenants with friendly, thoughtful service
“TOWNPLACE本舍” 团队年轻并充满干劲·为租客提供亲切贴心的服务

passionate about what they do and they see our residents as good friends," she said.

Belinda said that the team adheres to the Group's pledge to put customers first and provides assistance to meet tenants' needs wherever possible. She recalled that during a typhoon, a tenant who was out of town contacted the team to ask them to move his belongings from the balcony indoors. "At first, we were worried about whether it was appropriate for us to enter the apartment without the tenant's presence. But the tenant told us his door lock password with no hesitation and was very grateful for our help. We are truly trusted by our tenants," she said.

Belinda was delighted to say that the end of a lease term is not necessarily a farewell between the team and the tenants. "Even after our tenants have left Hong Kong, we send them birthday and festive greetings," said Belinda. She revealed that quite a number of former tenants put the Group's properties at top of mind because of trust. When they come to work in Hong Kong again, or when their friends plan to travel to Hong Kong and ask them to recommend a place to stay, they always choose the Group's properties, which helps strengthen and broaden the team's customer network.

Valuing continuous improvement and individual contributions

Belinda is fearless in the face of the residential leasing markets' fierce competition. She listens to customer feedback with an open mind and

often learns from competitors. She said, "We observe what other local and overseas industry players are doing to keep pace with the times. We constantly enhance our products and services to maintain our competitive edge in the market." Belinda has her own management philosophy for building an efficient and cohesive team. "As a team head, I'm responsible for leading the team and making final decisions. However, I regard my teammates not as my subordinates, but as my partners. I encourage my colleagues to contribute their suggestions and ideas about work as much as possible, regardless of their grade or experience with the team," said Belinda. Despite having richer work experience than her subordinates, Belinda said that she has a lot to learn from her young colleagues. "They are much more competent than I am in skills such as social media tactics," she said.

Belinda's secrets to working well with her millennial colleagues is to appreciate, encourage and compliment them from the heart to establish a friendly relationship with the team. According to Belinda, as long as her colleagues can get recognition as part of the team, they will find satisfaction and passion for their work and stay with the company for a longer time. A stable team can of course continuously provide customers with excellent service. "I hope that every team member can receive great development opportunities to improve not only the team but also themselves," she said.

“新世代注重生活方式和生活体验。他们未必需要很大的居住空间，但是很重视公寓的户型设计和租期的灵活性。” Signature Homes 总经理官晓霓表示，因应新世代对“家”的要求变化，集团于去年创立了新住宅租赁品牌“TOWNPLACE本舍”，为他们提供贴合需要的全新租赁服务。

创立新品牌 迎接新世代机遇

据统计，全球约有8,000万流动性人口，而且数目还在持续增加。“作为国际都会，香港自然能吸引世界各地的人才前来发展，所以市场需求十分巨大。”官晓霓表示，随着时代发展，新世代逐渐成为住宅租赁市场的新动力。集团去年底创立的全新住宅租赁品牌“TOWNPLACE本舍”，服务对象正是针对这群新世代客户。

官晓霓表示，在建立这个品牌初期，团队曾作研究调查，了解新世代对“家

居”的要求。“我们发现新世代最看重的是地点，即上班是否便利；其次是他们追求生活方式和生活体验，因此十分重视周边配套是否具有多样性。‘TOWNPLACE本舍’现有的两个项目TOWNPLACE KENNEDY TOWN及TOWNPLACE SOHO，分别位处坚尼地城和中环苏豪，皆是深受新世代喜爱的地点，同样临近港铁站和商业区，而且中西文化交融，附近既有传统商店，也有西式小铺，以满足新世代住客的要求。”

满足灵活自主的需求

“TOWNPLACE本舍”设有由开放式到四房的不同户型，供租客选择。官晓霓称，考虑到新世代客群大多数是独居或二人家庭，故两个项目主要提供一房单位，面积精巧但灵活实用。单位配备多功能家具，并设有不少隐蔽式收纳空间，既迎合简约家居布置的潮流，也满足住客的实际需要。“我们在推

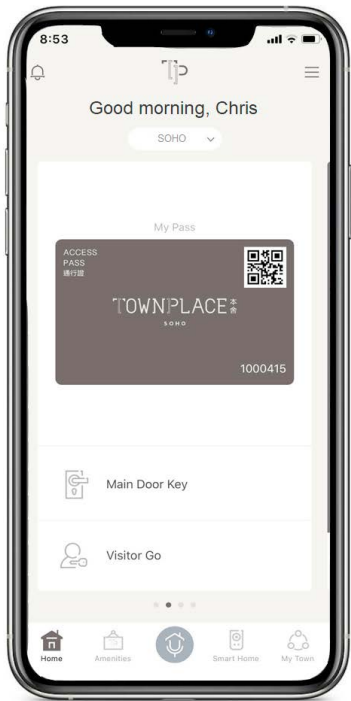
广TOWNPLACE SOHO时，尝试进一步提升租赁的灵活性，为住客提供三个选择：除了服务式住宅外，他们还可以选择自置家具，或连家具租住服务。我们更为租客提供两个不同品牌的家具组合，让他们选择喜欢的家居风格。”此外，“TOWNPLACE本舍”提供灵活的租期，短至一个月，长至两年皆可，住客可根据居港时间长短，选择合适的租期。

共享休闲空间 创造专属社群

近年共享概念普及，新世代喜欢在共享空间中交朋结友，寻找志同道合的伙伴。“TOWNPLACE本舍”的独特之处，是TOWNPLACE KENNEDY TOWN及TOWNPLACE SOHO的住客可以共享项目的设施。“由于两者的设施不尽相同，变相让住客可享受更多元化的服务，这点在市场上比较少有。”



“ Millennials follow lifestyle trends and look for a good living experience. They put a flexible lifestyle before the amount of living space. 新世代追求生活方式和生活体验，对他们来说，灵活性比空间大小更重要。 ”



Residents can enjoy a convenient smart living experience with TOWNPLACE's exclusive mobile app 通过“TOWNPLACE本舍”专属手机应用程序，住客能尽享智能家居管理的种种便捷

为促进两个项目的住客交流，“TOWNPLACE本舍”团队还设有 Community Manager，通过举办不同活动，让住客能互相认识，建立更丰富的社交圈子。“此外，我们明白年轻人习惯利用社交媒体认识新朋友，所以住客更可以通过专属手机应用程序，加入‘TOWNPLACE本舍’互动社区——MY TOWN，让他们可以结识志趣相投的‘TOWNER’，拓宽社交圈子。”

缔造智能家居生活

考虑到年轻一代的工作模式不再局限于写字楼，TOWNPLACE KENNEDY TOWN及TOWNPLACE SOHO配备了商用的高速无线WiFi，以满足住客的不同需要。此外，“TOWNPLACE本舍”还积极引入智能家居管理，为住客带来全方位的便捷生活。“住客专属手机app除设有上述MY TOWN社交平台功能外，他们还可利用这个app操控家电设备、当作电子门锁、接收信箱收件提示，以及预订项目设施等。当然，住客如需要协助，随时可以通过它联络我们的同事或Community Manager。”

成为住客信任的朋友

团队成员往往成为不少客人在港工作和生活初期的第一批朋友。“TOWNPLACE本舍”从细节开始，已有意与住客营造朋友般的关系：前线同事会直接称呼住客的名字，工作时会穿著休闲服，而非西装或套装，务求令双方感觉更加亲切。她笑言同事在下班后，会不时相约住客出游，认识香港。“一方面是基于对工作的热诚，同时也是因为他们已把住客当成朋友。”

官晓霓表示，本着集团“以客为先”的精神，对于住客的要求，只要是能力范围以内，同事都会尽量提供协助。她回忆有次遇上台风，一位正在远行的住客联络他们，希望有同事能替他帮阳台的东西搬回室内。“起初我们也担心若在住客不在场下进入其单位，是否会有不妥。但那位住客却想也不想，便把大门密码告知我们，还很感激同事的帮助，可见租客真的很信任我们。”

官晓霓笑称即使租约完结，与住客的情谊也不会因此终止：“就算他们离开香港，每逢生日或重要节庆，我们也会向对方送上祝福。”她坦言很多旧租客因为对其团队的信任，无论是日后再次来港工作，还是向准备到港

的朋友推荐，都是以集团旗下的物业为首选，这也有助团队巩固和扩大客户网络。

重视与时俱进 肯定同事贡献

面对竞争激烈的住宅租赁市场，官晓霓认为心态上要无惧竞争，并且虚心聆听顾客的意见，并多向同行学习，互相交流：“我们会向本地同行，甚至远赴海外观摩取经，努力与时俱进，提升产品和服务品质，以保持市场上的优势。”此外，要建立一支高效和凝聚力强的团队，官晓霓自有一套管理之道：“作为上司，我当然要负责领导和决策的工作；可是我不会说同事是我的下属，而会视他们为队友。所以我鼓励每位同事，如在工作上有何意见或想法，就要尽量提出，不用顾虑自己在团队的职级或年资。”尽管工作上的经历比下属丰富，但官晓霓笑言有不少事情都要向年轻同事学习：“例如使用社交媒体，他们绝对比我专业呢！”

从心出发的欣赏、多鼓励赞赏，跟同事建立朋友般的关系，都是官晓霓与新世代同事相处的秘诀。她表示，同事在团队里得到认同，找到满足感，对工作自然更有热诚，也乐意留下来工作；团队的稳定性高，自然能够为客户持续提供优质服务。“我希望每个同事都会得到很好的发展机会，令团队进步之余，个人也有所成长。”



Belinda encourages her team and appreciates their efforts to maintain good ties with team members 多鼓励、多欣赏，是官晓霓与同事的相处之道