

Harnessing technology for modern security problems

FormTeam won the Enterprise 50 award last year for revolutionising the security business with tech-empowered security solutions

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THE security business has traditionally been very reliant on manpower. But for FormTeam Consultancy, quantity is not always quality. Instead, the company focuses on using technology to offer security solutions.

FormTeam was set up in 2008 by its founders and directors, Tom Ho and Frankie Pang. Both came from very diverse backgrounds – Mr Ho was a former policeman specialising in investigations and security while Mr Pang had more than 30 years of experience in motor assessor surveying.

For its success in revolutionising the security business with tech-empowered security solutions, FormTeam won the Enterprise 50 award last year.

Mr Ho and Mr Pang believe that one cannot connect the dots without self-reflection; one cannot understand one's business without situational awareness. One needs clear visibility of business strategies in order to facilitate business decision making.

Technology has enabled businesses to have prompt access to in-

formation and data to facilitate the streamlining of business processes. As such, traditional business processes and heavy reliance on paperwork are slowly being phased out. FormTeam harnesses the power of technology to offer its clients creative and future-proof solutions.

The company's general manager, Derek Chew, said: "We keep ourselves updated with the industry by anticipating market trends. Even if the market is stagnant, there will always be new opportunities to introduce new services and review our processes to see how we can further improve."

Today, FormTeam Consultancy has expanded to include five other affiliate companies with different expertise and specialities. They are FormTeam Accident Services Taskforce (FAST), Heuristic Pro, Advance FT Technologies, FormTeam Adjusters and FormTeam Marine.

Intelligence in security

Mr Ho and Mr Pang say the most successful businesses are continually evolving to meet changing market demand.

When the shortage of security officers in Singapore became a growing concern, FormTeam evolved and expanded its service offerings by leveraging on technology to act as a one-



Founders and directors of FormTeam Consultancy Frankie Pang (left) and Tom Ho with the Enterprise 50 trophy at the ceremony in November 2018. PHOTO: FORMTEAM CONSULTANCY

stop solutions hub for its customers.

In line with FormTeam's push for technology, a new arm – Advance FT Technologies – was formed in October 2017. It specialises in developing mobile applications and smart solutions to meet clients' needs, especially in the security industry.

Rather than providing security based on headcount, FormTeam has

gone a step ahead to provide security consultancy and unmanned solutions by integrating security operations with its security system and smartphone application solutions.

At the same time, it built a smart workforce with strong situational awareness which embraces technology to enhance their capabilities.

The company also markets and dis-

tributes a partner's products and services such as a surveillance robot known as O-R3, which can perform 360-degree around-the-clock surveillance of premises, leaving no areas unchecked. O-R3 is equipped with advanced anomaly-detection features which includes perimeter breach detection, unattended objects detection, facial and licence plate detection, as well as thermal and night vision capabilities.

An edge over its competitors

FormTeam has been actively streamlining its operations using technology. It has adopted the iRep Security Management System developed by Gabkotech Innovations three years ago.

FormTeam's investment in this cutting-edge system transforms the traditionally manpower-reliant security service into one that leverages on remote surveillance.

Tucked in a compact office space in Ubi is a 24-hour control room with at least one trained FormTeam security personnel watching over all of its clients' premises.

Using Video Content Analytics (VCA), which enables proactive monitoring and self-triggered alerts of any security breaches in pre-marked areas, FormTeam enables simultaneous monitoring of the entire premises, reducing the need to station ground officers for surveillance. It also minimises the risk of human error and oversight, thus potentially reducing instances of undetected crimes.

Another innovation is the use of a visitor management system – an optical scanner that captures visitor information, which assists security officers in keeping track of visitor access and detecting unauthorised access to property.

While technology aims to improve business efficiency and reduce manpower needs, Mr Chew acknowledges that it is not possible to do away with ground officers completely.

"The introduction of technological solutions does not mean that security officers are no longer needed. Rather, it improves the productivity of the security officers, tackling the shortage of manpower," he said.

Pushing boundaries

When asked about FormTeam's expansion plans, Mr Chew emphasised that "it is important to always push our boundaries". FormTeam forms strategic partnerships with reputable cor-

porations in foreign markets to leverage on their expertise and brand equity to introduce its products abroad.

Before entering a new market, FormTeam representatives would conduct on-site research and look out for opportunities and potential partners. "It is important for the partner to be familiar with the business environment. We will initiate overseas ventures only if we see the potential for us to break into the market," Mr Chew said.

To date, FormTeam has strategic partnerships across 11 countries, with a focus on the South-east Asian market. In 2017, AMFD Consultancy was incorporated in Malaysia as FormTeam's wholly-owned subsidiary to focus on public liability and maritime surveying.

In the Philippines, FormTeam leveraged on its overseas partnerships to participate in a tender for body-worn cameras for the Philippines police force. It also has plans to complement the Indonesian government's initiative to build a smarter workforce, by forming a joint venture with an Indonesian company to offer technology-enabled security solutions.

While FormTeam is aware of the challenges it faces, it looks beyond the short-term costs and disadvantages to strive for the long-term benefits that technology can bring to security operations. It has a highly determined and dedicated workforce that is passionate in delivering its mission.

It aims to make continual improvements by adopting new technologies and embarking on training and skills development for its employees.

