

GIVING LIFE TO BUSINESS

MR WILLIE WONG HUA CHOON
WWG Capital Pte Ltd

Already a veteran entrepreneur by the time he founded WWG Capital Pte Ltd in 1999, Mr Willie Wong's experience included starting his first business venture in 1996. This foray eventually grew to become listed on the MESDAQ of Bursa Malaysia Securities Berhad and successfully migrated to the Main Market in 2008, generating revenue of over S\$80 million. In 2012, he pulled out of every other venture completely to focus himself on WWG Capital Pte Ltd.

Inspired by his extensive experience with investors and analysts alike, his dream of gaining the freedom to invest and venture into diverse industries had slowly grown over the years as a businessman. "My original exposure was in a specialised engineering services domain," he remarks, "So many businesses out there look interesting and exciting, and obviously, only people with domain knowledge, determination, and hard work may succeed."

Today, WWG Capital offers investments to the SMEs and start-ups, aiming to assist promising entrepreneurs in stabilising and improving their businesses. With investments ranging from purely financial to advisory services, the company continually works to diversify its investment profile. To date, they have invested in IT Solutions, Digital Audio Visual Lightings Staging Solutions, Large LED Screen Commercial Ad Space Leasing, Marine and Oil & Gas Engineering Services, Autologous Multi-Lineage Potential Cell (AMPC) Treatment (Stem Cell Treatment), F&B, Hotel & Hospitality, amongst others.

"About 50% of the investments have grown much bigger – and they are still growing – but many have failed as well," Mr Wong says. Despite this, he notes that their overall ROI has been extremely remarkable, and he details investments in companies that have become listed, as well as those that have developed enough to be acquired by larger listed companies.

His personal expertise and acumen has no doubt been a crucial aspect of the company's success. Armed with a willingness to approach things with an open mind, along with the business's flexibility as a small private investment company, his in-depth knowledge and intuition in a myriad of industries has yet to lead them astray. "I am using my experience of setting up and investing in more than 40 SMEs and start-ups – having brought many companies to IPO and multiple M&A exercises that include PLCs – to give the best input to companies that I am currently investing in," he professes.

Looking to expand into the regional market in the future, as well as to groom more companies to IPO, Mr Wong's venture has certainly been a tour-de-force to be reckoned with. Now, WWG Capital Pte Ltd continues to make its mark on the entrepreneurial market, helping to bring noteworthy and promising business concepts to life.



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Up Close & Personal

What made you pursue a business in this field?

I was dealing with many investors and analysts in my earlier portfolio. I was looking forward to making a change and turning into an investor instead. Working in a diversified industry gave me another kind of passion and fun, as well as a huge challenge to test myself in the business arena – there is really no limit on how far I can actually go.

Were there any notable challenges that you had to overcome?

Most of my investments went through very difficult financial and human capital stress periods before they became successful – and that was if they even made it. In this cruel business world, most people change over time; it is about "who needs who". As a small company, it is not possible to have an expensive corporate governance and succession plan in place as well. This was the most challenging part.

What is the main driving force and motivation for you?

Much like the Old Chang Kee story (from a hawker store, the business went global), we have to take advantage of living in this little red dot and aim for overseas and international business expansion – whether by love, choice, or by force.

What advice would you give to aspiring entrepreneurs?

Appreciate every step and everything that you have already achieved (what is in your hands) whilst looking forwards into the future.

How do you measure success in life?

Family, health, sufficient cash to spend, and helping the needy.