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**Boating boom
blows into Bali**

**Raimon Land gives
King's Cup &
yachting a major boost**

Formula 1, Singapore style



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Raimon Land sponsors five major regattas in Thailand — the Phuket King's Cup, the Top of the Gulf, the Phang Nga Bay, the Samui, and the Phuket Raceweek regattas.

No company has done more to promote yachting in Thailand over the past five years than the property developer Raimon Land. Today, it sponsors five major regattas in the Kingdom (the Phuket King's Cup, the Top of the Gulf, the Phang Nga Bay, the Samui, and the Phuket Raceweek regattas), and those regattas would have a hard time setting sail without Raimon Land's support.

The company's regatta sponsorship started back in 2004 with the launch of its Kata Gardens project in Phuket. Henri Young, Raimon Land's Director of Sales Marketing, recalls: "We had a short period of time to get that project up and running and we thought why not use the King's Cup as a platform to help promote the King's Cup and get Raimon Land's name out on the island as well? In Phuket, it's very important to engage the local population because they are going to end up helping to sell your units.

"On one hand, the King's Cup is a local regatta, but on the other hand it brings in international sailors who are prospective clients. To a certain extent, we target yacht owners as potential property owners, and the whole association with the King's Cup - it's a very prestigious event - has



Raimon Land's sponsorship spurs yachting industry

By Scott Murray

positioned us very well. That regatta also has a great spirit and sportsmanship about it. We've made a lot of good friends through the King's Cup."

"We eventually decided to turn our sponsorship of the event into a hospitality vehicle, whereby we could take our existing customers, stakeholders, shareholders, directors - anyone involved in Raimon Land - down to Phuket, entertain them and show them what Phuket is all about. The King's Cup truly showcases what Phuket is all about: the generosity and warmth of the Thai people, the great boating conditions, and the weather at that time of year.

"Then once we did the King's Cup we were approached by other regattas and it only seemed fitting that we embrace the whole sport. If the marine leisure industry takes off, it's great exposure for the resort destinations of Thailand and what they have to offer, whether it be Pattaya, Phuket, Samui or Phang Nga."

And all these resort

destinations hold different types of regattas. The Phang Nga Bay Regatta, which Raimon Land started sponsoring in 2005, sees close to 50 yachts sailing around different locations in a spectacular locale - there's nothing like it in the world. Henri says it's not really a competitive regatta, but is definitely the most picturesque and fun because you are sail to a different spot each night.

Raimon Land was also a founding sponsor of the Top of the Gulf Regatta four years ago. As it has developed the Northpoint and The Lofts Southshore projects in Pattaya it wanted to help reposition Pattaya as a more up-market destination and yachting has been instrumental in achieving that goal. Pattaya's other perks include its abundance of golf courses and proximity to Bangkok.

Henri says the Top of the Gulf Regatta is also a great way to market the marina facilities at the Ocean Marina Yacht Club. He says the wind there is much more consistent than in any other part of Thailand. "They also have a great fleet of Platus. And it demonstrates that you can live in Bangkok or fly in from Singapore and Hong Kong for the weekend and go yachting."

Raimon



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Land started sponsoring the Samui Regatta in 2006, which Henri said has overcome a chequered history with sponsors and organizer to position itself as a distinctive island regatta.

The other island regatta that the company sponsors is Phuket Race Week. Henri says The Evason is a great host venue and Image Asia has done a tremendous job of organizing this regatta as you get a lot of bang for your baht, with spectacular parties held every night during the event.

This year's Phuket King's Cup – the 22nd annual – will be held from 29 November – 6 December and will feature 2,000 sailors from around the world. Raimon Land has pledged 8 million baht in cash sponsorship a year for the next five years (more if you include the parties, bands, t-shirts, etc., which they also sponsor).

The company also sponsors a Platu series at Ocean City Marina, a series of monthly races whereby through a point system an overall annual winner is declared. These Platus (designed by Bruce Farr) were purpose-built for racing in the Gulf of Thailand. As a result of Raimon Land's sponsorship and the hard work of Kevin Scott a match-race type racing series has been established, which really tests the skills and experience of the sailors involved. Raimon Land also supports the Royal Varuna Yacht Club in Pattaya and the Peter Cummins Classic it holds, which is an annual event.

Henri says Raimon Land is happy to contribute to the Royal Varuna Yacht Club because having a well-run, well-located club with its historic tie-in to the King further adds prestige to the whole Eastern Seaboard.

The whole tie-in with His Majesty has been very instrumental in developing sailing.

So many kids have taken up sailing because if the King (150 participated in the Optimist fleet during the last Top of the Gulf Regatta), and progressed from optimists to lasers and then on to Platus.

2008 has been a tough year for Raimon Land with the political problems and foreign ownership debate in Thailand, but Henri says even though Phuket has peeked off a little this year, Raimon Land has had a couple of great years there and it will bounce back. “The supply and demand just overshot the equilibrium.”

“Launching the high-end Amalfi in Phuket, Raimon Land's first villa project (near Amanpuri), wouldn't have been possible without having first proven we were reputable company by sponsoring events such as the King's Cup. It would be very difficult for a one-time developer to come in and earn the confidence of people ready to spend five million dollars plus on fifteen villas,” says Henri.

Henri who grew up in the Snowy

Mountains of Australia describes himself as a fair-weather sailor, but there's nothing fair-weather about Raimon Land's sponsorship of the King's Cup and other regattas in Thailand.

“In reality, if we didn't do this, there probably wouldn't be anyone else to pick up the slack. And in all honesty, the King's Cup has had a varied success over the years in attracting sponsors and keeping them.

“If you do the math, and look at how many leads we generate and sails we convert you realize we are not getting a great return on our investment in term of direct sales. But we gain a lot from the overall branding and the recognition of our commitment to yachting (ironically, most yachting corporate sponsorship comes from businesspeople in those corporations who are confirmed yachties – not the case with Raimon Land).”



Henri Young on the water.

Raimon Land also sponsors a number of golf and rugby tournaments, as well as a number of cultural and social programmes and it builds homes for underprivileged people, but Henri says what makes the sailing

sponsorship so special is its interactivity. The company can send its staff down to the regattas, get them out on boats, let them go sailing, let them enjoy the parties and generally have a lot of fun. “There's no real downside to it all,” he says. “And hopefully, we will be instrumental in encouraging other major sponsors to come on board and the regatta committees can use us an example of how corporate sponsorship can work.”

Raimon Land

Raimon Land is Thailand's premier luxury condominium developer. The award-winning company counts multi-billion dollar Middle East property developer IFA Hotels & Resorts and Nakheel among its investors, and is listed on the Stock Exchange of Thailand. The company has 12 projects in Thailand, including The River and 185 Rajadamri in Bangkok, Northpoint and The Lofts Southshore in Pattaya and The Heights and Amalfi in Phuket. Raimon Land has won awards at the Thailand Property Show 2007 as Best Developer, Best Property Development Website and Best Urban Condo.

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