

Green guideline for hotels

Tool highlights benefits and procedures of being energy efficient

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A NEW guideline to help hotels and resorts become more energy efficient and achieve Green Building Index (GBI) accreditation has been launched.

The GBI Hotel and Resort Tools can be downloaded for free and is aimed at helping hotels and resorts learn more about the benefits associated with greening their properties and how to go about it.

This is the latest in a series of guidelines launched by GBI, including for new residential areas and even township construction.

Malaysian Institute of Architects (PAM) president Chan Seong Aun said the idea of making buildings more green was widely accepted now.

"We have almost 100million sq ft of gross floor area of GBI certified buildings in Malaysia, and it is becoming common practice," he said.

He added that accreditation for hotels and resorts would be based on the same criteria as other buildings, though the weightage of each

might vary.

GBI Accreditation Panel chairman Von Kok Leong said the cost of making a building green was not as much as most people think.

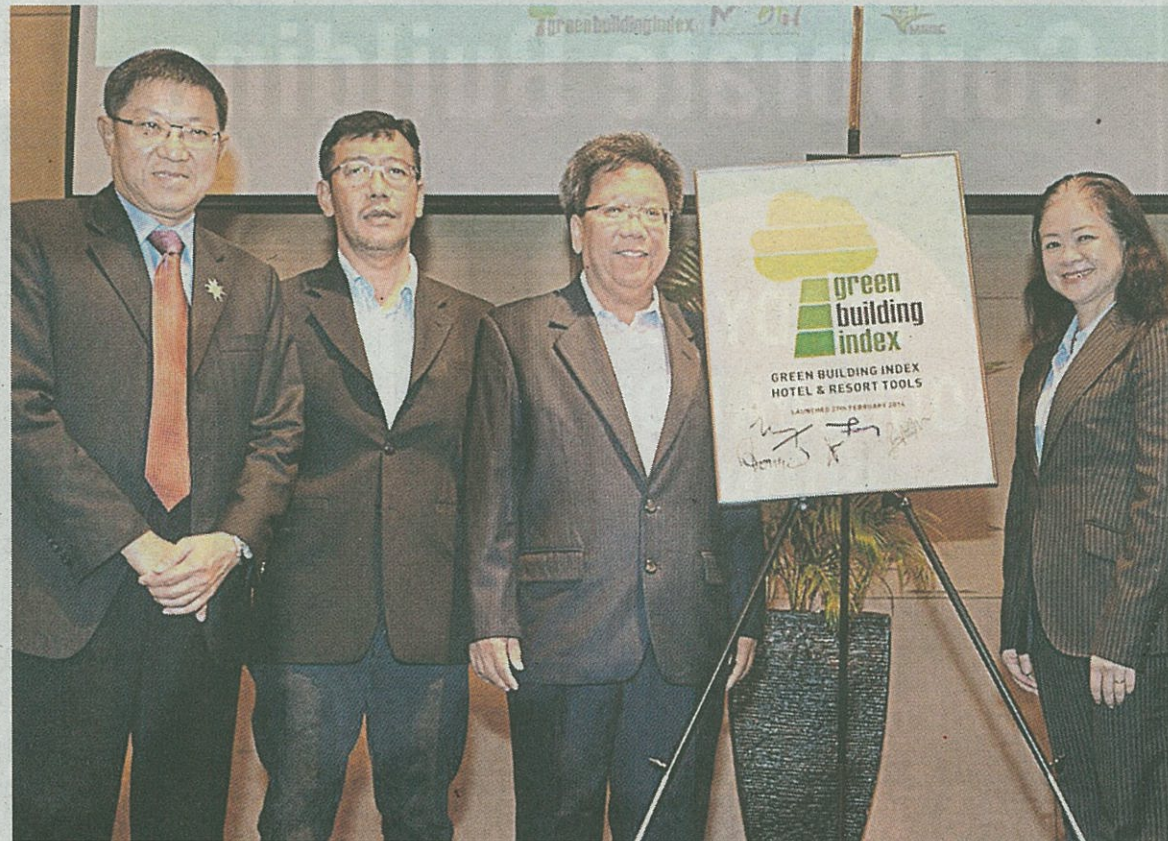
"Greater demand has led to increased availability of materials and other things that help create a green building.

"In fact, greening buildings does not necessarily require high technology," he said, adding that a return on investment could usually be seen within one to five years.

Von said unlike other countries that have made it mandatory for all buildings to be energy efficient, in Malaysia it was done on a voluntary basis.

A green building is one that efficiently utilises resources such as energy, water and materials while reducing the impact on human health and the environment during the building's lifecycle, through elements such as design, construction, operation, maintenance and removal.

GBI was set up in 2009 as Greenbuildingindex Sdn Bhd to provide for a localised green building rating tool and is a wholly-owned subsidiary of PAM and the Association of Consulting Engineers Malaysia (ACEM).



Greening properties: Chan (left), Von (third from left) and Malaysian Association of Hotels (MAH) vice-president Christina Toh (right) at the launch of the GBI Hotels and Resorts Tool.