

Our objective with Planet Idea India is to create smart, sustainable and digitally connected communities.

DANIELE RUSSOLILLO
COO, Planet Smart City and
Global Head of Planet Idea



Planet Idea India aims to transform smart living in urban India by putting people and the needs of the local community at the heart of its activities. We intend to address developers and societies with tailor-made solutions based on their specific needs and requirements, responding to the needs of their existing and future residents," states **Daniele Russolillo, COO, Planet Smart City and Global Head of Planet Idea.** Excerpts from the interview...

Could you throw some light on the launch of Planet Idea in India?

Planet Idea is the advisory arm of Planet Smart City. The launch of Planet Idea in India was envisaged by Giovanni Savio, Global CEO of Planet Smart City and Rajesh Patil, Chairman of Kolte Patil Developers Ltd (KDPL), two distinct leaders in the real estate space with a unified vision.

Planet Idea India is a partnership between Planet Smart City, a leading proptech operator based in the UK, and Kolte-Patil Developers Ltd, the leading real estate group based in Pune. Planet Idea India's inception came about with KDPL embracing our vision and objective of building innovative, environmentally friendly and socially inclusive communities by combining Planet Smart City's global experience and KDPL's local expertise.

Our objective with Planet Idea India is to create smart, sustainable and digitally connected communities. We cover every aspect from design to implementation – be it for existing societies

or for greenfield real estate projects, we aim to deliver places that are future-proof and that anticipate residents' needs. In the near future we also intend to sit at the table with the policymakers to support the process of defining the urban development agenda in accordance with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

How matured is the Indian realty sector to adopt such tech-enabled community living and how do you envision the future prospects?

India is a rapidly growing economy and there are several smart city initiatives currently underway. Traditionally, the real estate sector has been resistant to adopting technological advancements, but the current situation proves there is a change in this trend. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) is implementing policies to place smart city initiatives at the core of upcoming urban development. Hence, we believe it is the right time to embrace innovation.

Smart solutions are seeing increasing demand among residents and will soon become paramount in enhancing community living. We believe we have the expertise to guide the real estate market in India through this change by utilizing our global experience in Italy and Brazil combined with Kolte-Patil's understanding of the local culture and residents' needs.

Cities in India are showing great potential for technological integrations. Planet Smart City has already launched its first real estate project in Pune, India. It is, again, in partnership with the

We aim to create communities and foster relationships through the integration of innovative technologies and social innovation practices.

Kolte-Patil Group. Together we have created 'Universe' – a sector in Life Republic, the largest township in Pune. We are integrating more than 25 smart solutions within the project, including our unique offering of the Planet App and a Community Manager. We are confident and look forward to integrating these solutions with other developers across the country – particularly in Mumbai, Bangalore and Hyderabad.

What is the expected qualitative impact this could bring on the realty sector and the end user segments as well?

People are at the core of our approach. We aim to create communities and foster relationships through the integration of innovative technologies and social innovation practices. We give residents the tools they need to improve their quality of life, which is where a Community Manager and the Planet App play a crucial role.

The implementation of smart solutions positively impacts communities by enhancing and enriching the lives of residents. It also brings benefits in terms of energy efficiency and optimized resource management. To date, we have reduced the electricity bills of our communities by up to 60%.

What do you think are the major pain points in this space?

Based on our experience with Greenfield projects, the cost of smart solutions integration is about 1.5-3% of the cost of construction. We believe that it shouldn't be seen as a cost but as an added value directly perceived by the final users.

In the case of already existing societies or communities, the economic impact of what is to be implemented depends largely on the status of existing infrastructure. With that said, we know that our consumers understand that the value is not in the price they pay but rather the value they expect out of it. We can tailor smart solutions according to consumers' specific requirements, needs and budget.

Could you update us on the Pune project and your contribution in creating sustainable and smart communities?

Our first advisory project in India is the smartisation of Life Republic in Pune. We are upgrading the township's existing infrastructure to an IoT-enabled, algorithm-based environment, integrating smart solutions such as smart lighting, smart irrigation and smart water management. Additionally, we are integrating 25+ smart solutions in our Universe project within the same township.

Our Community Manager, who is dedicated to all community-related services and activities, has already received a positive response from Life Republic residents. We have witnessed a positively growing relationship between the two, with community engagement increasing, participation in events growing exponentially and residents joining forces to help co-create a thriving community.

How have you been able to leverage the disruptive technologies and digital platforms in creating smart communities?

Quartiere Giardino, our existing project in Milan, Italy, provides proof of the benefits of integrating smart solutions and a digital platform into existing communities. The results are clear for both residents who live in the smart community and the property managers who, in one year, witnessed the development go from having 200 vacant units to full occupancy and a waiting list to live in the smart district.

The work we do is about designing and developing places where residents can say they feel at home. We always consider technology

We are upgrading the township's existing infrastructure to an IoT-enabled, algorithm-based environment, integrating smart solutions.



as a tool for social innovation, and since the implementation of a Community Manager into the neighbourhood, residents are positively participating in recreational activities and coming together as a community.

What is your road map for the next couple of years in India?

We believe 2021 will be a crucial year for establishing our presence in the Indian market. We will work in the main cities of India – namely Pune, Mumbai, Bangalore and Hyderabad. We want to reach hundreds of communities and impact the lives of thousands of people. We hope to be the driver of change for the better. 