

**SHIFTING CHOICE**

Provincial people are turning to homebuilders from individual contractors in the high-end segment, says the industry's body. **B2**

**PROPERTY**

# Self-built homes choice in provinces

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Self-built home demand in the provinces for the high-priced segment has seen a shift to homebuilders from individual contractors despite the higher price tag, says the Home Builder Association.

Pichit Arunepunlop, the association's president, said there is an increasing number of provincial buyers in the high-priced segment who have bought units from the association's members.

"Consumers in the provinces now have more knowledge. Those seeking to build a high-priced unit prefer homebuilders over individual contractors as housing designs from homebuilders are more beautiful and varied," he said.

Homebuilders are also more reliable and provide after-sales service, said Mr Pichit. They have site engineers and teams to supervise construction in the provinces, even though most of them are based in Bangkok.

He said sales from customers in the provinces rose to 25% of the total recorded in Home Builder Focus 2016, a homebuilders fair held by the association, up from 17% during 2015.

All of them bought units priced 10 million baht and above. These customers were business owners and sales were from key provinces including Phitsanulok, Nakhon Ratchasima, Udon Thani, Ubon Ratchathani and Nong Khai.

Currently, the association has 50 homebuilder members, 10% of whom have customers in the provinces. Some have even secured customers from Vientiane, the capital of Laos.

"Before we enter the AEC (Asean Economic Community), we should cover provinces in Thailand as the self-built home market value nationwide is huge, estimated at around 100 billion baht," he said.

Mr Pichit said the homebuilding market value in Greater Bangkok this year will reach 10.7-11.2 billion baht, up from 10.2 billion last year, as the economy is improving and the government will spend on megaprojects this year. This accounted for 23% of the self-built home market, totalling 44 billion baht in 2016.

The association will hold Home Builder Focus 2017 from March 9-15 at Central Plaza Lat Phrao, where over 20 homebuilders will take part.