

Simplifying Your *Finances*

SMATS Group's co-founder Steve Douglas remains passionate, even after three decades of taxation work.



Initially, a query about Australian taxes brought Steve to sunny Singapore, but when the queries and interest kept growing, Steve decided to open the SMATS Group in the mid-'90s. An umbrella business for his Specialist Mortgage branch and Australasian Taxation Services, amongst other support services, SMATS is built upon his team's key expertise in Australian tax and finance, property, technology, FX, migration and development.

Clients Come First

The business's core audience comprises expats, people who intend to immigrate to Australia and foreign investors who are looking to purchase Australian property. Steve has found that these audience members tend to be misinformed or underserved, which is why, he says, the SMATS team works to improve their knowledge and help them adjust to, and be fully aware of, Australia's financial culture.

One of Steve's main goals at SMATS is to get his clients into the home they want to live in at the lowest cost possible. How does he achieve this? His answer is simple: "Ask questions and then listen to the answers."

Often, he says, good opportunities are not fully harnessed because consultants aren't asking enough – or any – questions. This is how Steve sets his clients on the right path towards making quality decisions that will help secure their future.

Honest Advice

While this may be the digital age, old-school word of mouth is still SMATS's main method of growth. "Do a good and honest job, and people will appreciate it and tell others," shrugs Steve. Excellent client service is one of the reasons SMATS has progressed even in a tough economic climate. Be consistent, exceed your client's expectations and care more about his or her circumstances and outcomes than your own opinions or reward, Steve advises.

Despite being in the tax and finance industry for at least 33 years, Steve has no plans to slow down. In fact, he wants to add property management into SMATS's existing services, because property managers are what the SMATS team often hears complaints about.

"We want to bring the SMATS service standard to property management in Australia and remove the headache for our clients through better, consistent performance."



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