



As featured in  
The CEO Magazine  
For more info visit  
[theceomagazine.com.au](http://theceomagazine.com.au)



# MAKE YOURSELF at Home

Belle Property believes in creating a great experience for its clients by ensuring it does business with heart, purpose, and integrity.

Images courtesy of Belle Property

From simple studios to multimillion-dollar homes, real estate provider Belle Property is committed to offering a premium outcome for its customers no matter what their price point is. The business services the areas of Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Darwin, and is also set on entering additional markets in Melbourne and Perth in the near future.

Belle Property CEO Peter Hanscomb has been leading the company for the past eight years. He studied commerce at the Queensland University of Technology before he landed a job with a chartered accounting firm. After a short while, he moved into real estate, starting with Ray White in 1982 as a management accountant. Over the next eight years, he was promoted to financial director and then to deputy managing director at the age of just 26. He then began coaching

22 out of the top 25 Ray White offices in Australia, as well as 20 other real estate offices from different groups.

“I also ran a small development company specialising in subdivisions and apartment building. Then in 1996, I went to America and brought back a concept called RE/MAX, which was the largest real estate group in the US at the time. I introduced their business model, which was new to Australia, and over the next eight years grew the RE/MAX group to 126 franchises and about 1,400 employees nationally.”

After departing RE/MAX in 2006, Peter was approached by McGrath in Sydney to restructure its business across to a franchise model, which he did in a consulting capacity for 16 months. Soon after, he approached the then owners of Belle Property—a brand he saw great potential in—and became the major shareholder and

“I think if you concentrate on the quality of service that you bring and the quality of the result you deliver, then you have a natural capacity to be better than the average.”

- Peter Hanscomb

CEO. “There were five offices and 12 people effectively in the Belle Property group at the end of 2007,” Peter says. “Now we are at 61 offices and around 620 people. Six years ago, we were writing \$100 million worth of sales; now we have just completed \$4.15 billion worth of sales.”

Within six months of Peter taking over the reins of Belle Property, the global financial crisis struck. “We came into a marketplace that was declining, not moving forward,” he says. “So we had a great capacity to grow from a market share viewpoint and we were coming off of a very low base. Our success came largely because we were strategically focused on what we were doing and who we were doing it with. I think if you concentrate on the quality of service that you bring and the quality of the results you deliver, then you have a natural capacity to be better than the average.” >

Four years ago, the business bought the Belle Property trademarks from ACP [now Bauer Media], which Peter says was a very important decision and a step forward for the business. The *Belle* magazine publication has been around for more than 30 years and is committed to showcasing great design and architecture in Australia and overseas. "I think perception and the value of the association with a lifestyle magazine is a very important point of difference for us. There are people who don't know the brand or don't know the person, but when they see *Belle* magazine and the association that we have with it, there's actually a certain level of trust that is built."

Belle Property has experienced significant and consistent growth throughout its existence. Peter attributes its long-term success to having an excellent business culture with the right people employed. It prides itself on having talented, dedicated, and community-minded agents

who are hardworking and determined. Human values and ethics are fundamental to the company, and solid teamwork is fostered with a dynamic, trusting work environment.

"We're somewhat different from most groups because we believe in a policy of better, fewer people, and we educate and coach them at a higher level than anyone in the industry. We target people who believe in teamwork, in professionalism, in ethics, and in creating a great experience for our clients.

"We're looking for people who are committed to being successful, but not at the expense of every other person around them. The term we use in the industry is '500-pound gorillas'—yes, they do a lot of business, but they also do a lot of damage from a cultural viewpoint. We really don't encourage this type of agent because we just don't see that they add any true value.

"We want people who have experience and credibility. We have a very strong internal coaching model for individual agents and small teams. We do a lot of real estate skills training as well, but the coaching is more about strategy, personal development, and being a peak performer in this business.

"On every transaction, we have a third-party company that surveys the buyers and the sellers about their experience with Belle Property. We use it very much from a customer-service perspective and look at it as a retraining opportunity when people get it wrong. Right now, we achieve about 93-per-cent customer satisfaction and send out around 9,000 surveys a year.

"I think people really do make the difference; however, having the right environment, infrastructure, and tools to make it work are just as important. We have seven coaches in the business currently,



"I think people really do make the difference; however, having the right environment, infrastructure, and tools to make it work are just as important."

- Peter Hanscomb

Belle Property's emphasis on relationships extends to its supply chain and the communication it has with various business partners. Most of the suppliers have been involved since day one and are long term. "Since the beginning, we believed that they were honest people with a similar value set and the ability to scale with us—being scalable is really important," Peter says.

Belle Property has its sights set on further growth and expansion. While it will still focus on the residential side of business, this year a greater emphasis is being placed on the commercial and project sectors too. Peter says he is a firm believer in growth for success.

"If you're not growing, then you're dying. From a culture viewpoint, and from being a part of a company that's moving into new areas, it's all very exciting. Furthermore, growth offers people the opportunities to learn from new staff who come into the company. I think we could double the company again over the next three years and then double it again over the next three years after that. Belle's enormous capacity for Belle Property to keep on growing. I target about 30 per cent every year from a compound growth number." •

and there are constant training and education programs available every single week. In addition, the focused coaching regime is ongoing and the productivity gains from individual people have been really very satisfying. It's an extremely successful model and right in line with our core value of people development."

Peter's strategic vision for further growth is focused on Australasia's most desirable lifestyle locations in metro, coastal, and regional areas. He personally interviews every potential franchisee to ensure a strict set of company values are maintained across the network. Peter says there have been some people in the industry who have given it a bad name,

but Belle Property can only work within itself to try to change that perception.

"The thing that we're trying to do is make sure that our key focus is on people. How you make people feel is really the most important thing. It's not just about getting the result; it's about how people feel whilst getting that result. The things we talk about a lot in terms of building relationships are trust and communication. They're prime drivers for why people pick us over the competition. We have some of the most successful people in the industry, but they're not the '500-pound gorillas', who just aren't good for culture."

## 1 in 4 of the Top 100 Agents use Agentbox CRM



Visit [agentbox.com.au](http://agentbox.com.au) to join these industry leaders and discover the power of Agentbox!

