

# BRIGHT BUSINESS STORY



**Vibeke Lyssand Leirvag**  
Founder & Managing Director  
Felicia (Thailand) Ltd.

**Domenica Piantedosi**  
General Manager  
Felicia (Thailand) Ltd.

Running a business is a difficult task, especially in a country other than your own. We are honored to know that an international company from Europe, a member of Thailand's Private Sector Collective Action Coalition against Corruption (CAC), incorporates honesty and transparency as one of the key factors which makes Felicia (Thailand) Ltd. graciously stand out as a Fine Jewelry Manufacturer in Thailand. Today we are going to talk to Vibeke Lyssand Leirvag, the Founder & Managing Director and Domenica Piantedosi, General Manager. They are two great women executives, who believe

“If each of us would only sweep our own doorstep, the whole world would be clean”.

**CAC :** *As an international company, how do you consider the overall image of corruption problem to be in Thailand?*

**Domenica :** Corruption is a disease of societies just as cancer is of people. The more pervasive the disease, the worse the situation. Corruption wastes resources and destroys public trust. But if the majority has the will, a corrupt system can be changed.

**Vibeke :** Corruption is still a challenge for Thailand, but the country is demonstrating the commitment to fight through organizations like CAC, ACT, NACC, and the World Anti-Corruption

Day. The general perception, especially among SMEs, is that we are too small to make a difference. Through the CAC SMEs program, we feel like we have a voice and can make a difference.

**CAC :** *Has your company been affected by corruption in Thailand?*

**Vibeke :** All companies face uncomfortable situations, but all have choices. We have zero tolerance for corruption. We convey this to our suppliers and business contacts, and ask for the same standards. We have achieved good results through perseverance and

now experience corruption less often.

**CAC :** *What is your company's standpoint about business ethic, especially about corruption?*

**Domenica & Vibeke :** Our company does not engage in any form of corruption. We are aware that this causes some difficulties, but it is the best course of action. Our business would be at risk if we did not adhere to good business ethics as Felicia's clients are based overseas. Corruption is extremely frowned upon and heavily penalized in Scandinavia, where many of our

clients are located.

**CAC :** *As your company deals with valuable objects (jewelry) and numerous people, are there any risk allowing corruption to happen?*

**Vibeke :** Importation and exportation of luxury goods has several inherent risks. Thai law requires the detailed description of goods on invoices, so our parcel contents are visible. During the past 25 years we have lost some parcels, but not too many. To minimize having to face corruption, we strive to work with suppliers who share our same values.

**CAC :** *Why did your company consider joining CAC?*

**Domenica :** Felicia follows Norwegian values and was always operating

Felicia. The tailored CAC training helped our staff have a better understanding of the reasons behind some of our policies for example, the “no gifts policy”.

**CAC :** *How did CAC help your company to manage or prevent corruption?*

**Domenica & Vibeke :** Joining CAC gave us the opportunity to review and refine the policies we had. It has also given us the opportunity to expand training to ensure both management and staff truly understand. We also have the opportunity to publicly convey our commitment and show that we have the strong backing of CAC.

**CAC :** *Has your company been using CAC member status to refuse corruption?*

**Domenica :** We have always refused to

fight against corruption. CAC understands the constraints of SMEs and has tailored a process to help SMEs obtain certification.

**Domenica :** In our opinion two things are necessary to fight corruption:

1. Refusal to engage, 2. Taking a stand against corruption. If one does not stand up against corruption, he is tacitly supporting it by allowing things to remain the same. Indifference can facilitate many crimes. Any company that feels this way should join CAC because together we can change the system. Society is made up of all of us. Changes will take hold only when the majority applies these principles,

**CAC :** *Please kindly give a speech to invite other companies in Thailand to join CAC/ Could you give an invitation speech to invite other companies in Thailand to join CAC ?*

**Domenica :** Joining CAC has value both internally and vis-a-vis the outside world.

**Internally:**

- An effective way to communicate and reinforce anti-corruption message to the staff
- Helpful review for companies that already have good policies in place
- Opportunity to formalize policies for companies that have no formal documentation.
- Good exercise to implement new policies made easier by CAC training and support

**Externally:**

- Indicates to suppliers and customers that the company respects all laws and regulations and treats everyone fairly
- Reassures suppliers and customers that they will not be put in uncomfortable situations

All companies face uncomfortable situations, but all have choices. Our company does not and will not engage in any form of corruption.



according to CAC values. We joined to demonstrate to our clients and the world that it is possible to be clean of corruption in Thailand, to improve foreign perceptions of this country, and also to show our staff that we practice what we preach.

**CAC :** *After joining CAC, were there any changes in your company?*

**Domenica :** Joining CAC allowed us to reinforce the anti-corruption message to our staff as many of them attended the CAC training courses and learned the CAC principles. After, we asked our staff to help analyze the risks facing

engage in corruption and we proudly display the CAC logo on our webpage and the email signatures.

**CAC :** *In your opinion, is CAC necessary for an international company? How?*

**Vibeke :** International companies have well-established policies as they must comply with foreign laws and/or stock-exchange regulations, plus they have large resources. Engagement with CAC helps to strengthen policies and internal controls specifically in Thailand providing assurance that Thai Management and staff have been trained and taken ownership of the