



streettalk

## The Genie

So you think you can't buy time. Well, you're wrong. Karin Oprach of Scria Services is a personal concierge who will do almost anything your busy schedule prevents you from doing. Her customer's wish is her command—from minding house to pet watching. I-S met this versatile service provider.

### What was the inspiration behind setting up this business?

I have done pet watching for my friends before, and realized there was a market because people were just too busy with work. We also realized that there were many concierge services like this in Europe, but none here—there is even a National Concierge Association in the States.

### What's your client base like, and what are some of the things you do?

Eighty per cent of them are expatriates, but I do serve a few locals. We mainly do visa applications, vacation planning and pet watching. Do you know how the delivery or repairman tells you they will come down between 9am to noon? We can even do that waiting for you.

### Do some clients ask for impossible tasks?

There was this client and her family who wanted to holiday in Singapore on National Day weekend and hired us to arrange that for them. Basically what they wanted was the comfort of a five star hotel for the price of a motel, so they kept asking for quotes and delaying their decision. The worst part was that we communicated only through email, and they decided only at the eleventh hour, making me frantically rush to book the hotel.

### Name the oddest task you had to do?

I was instructed to bring my client's rabbit to the vet, and I thought that was all. But she then told me her two daughters wanted to tag along. So eventually, I went to the vet with her two daughters and their maid!

### You do pet watching, so if a pet dies during your care, will you replace it and hope no one notices or will you tell the truth?

If it happens, it's beyond my control, but what I do tell my clients is to leave their numbers behind or the number of their vet just in case. If they don't have a regular vet, I will take it to my own vet. I love animals so I would never try to replace the pet.

### Who watches your house when you house sit?

My partner takes care of my house and my cats for me. But I don't house sit the whole day. I usually just go to the house to feed the pet and spend time with it, but I sleep at my own house.

### What is the best part of your job?

The best part is the human contact with my clients. They trust us and really appreciate our service. We even received a card from one of the cats we watched over. Our clients wrote a thank you card on the cat's behalf.—Adam Sam'on