

A more meaningful role for insurance in meeting client needs

In a video interview, Richard Vargo of DBS Bank explains the growing role for insurance within wealth management offerings in Asia, especially as customers get better educated about their needs and digital tools can support the process.

The wealth management industry in Asia will continue to expand for many years to come, based on the increasing affluence and rising population of HNWI individuals, according to Richard Vargo, managing director, bancassurance at DBS Bank.

The needs of these clients include the continuation of legacy and estate planning, he explains. This is in terms of efficiently transferring assets, with more liquidity, at the time of one's demise, to their heirs to support their business and family needs, as well as to fulfil desires in relation to charity and giving. Critical illness and health insurance are also rising in demand as people live longer, adds Vargo.

REFINING THE VALUE PROPOSITION

The wealth management and insurance industries will continue to focus on providing holistic solutions, he believes. In the mass affluent space, the retirement proposition is particularly important given the ageing population. Further up the wealth pyramid, there are also

opportunities relating to risk reduction for personal assets. And in line with this, DBS is looking to expand some of its product offerings. Indeed, when it comes to product innovation, Vargo expects to see broader solutions to meet the various needs that individuals have.

There will also be increased transparency – partly based on regulatory requirements, but also to do with consumers becoming more knowledgeable about their own needs, he explains. Digitisation will support such efforts – with Vargo hoping this will help people to buy more insurance products at the right time, in the right amounts and for the right reasons.

Vargo wants to see more appreciation by consumers about what they are purchasing. With DBS particularly focused on the digital transformation of financial services, the bank has platforms to help HNWI and affluent clients gain more insights about their needs. In the insurance space, Vargo says there are updates and information



RICHARD VARGO
DBS Bank

available, which also help the bank's relationship managers and product specialists via digital enablement tools to have more efficient and relevant conversations with their clients. ■