

Assessing Singapore's wealth management positioning

In a video interview, Urs Brutsch of HP Wealth Management explains the role Singapore can play going forward as Asia's private banking hub – if it continues to develop an industry able to deliver the right skills and knowledge to clients.

Singapore is well-positioned to be the private banking hub of Asia, if it can navigate various challenges such as the likely increasing flow of funds back onshore, in the wake of the Common Reporting Standard, tax amnesty programmes and other initiatives.

This is according to Urs Brutsch, managing partner and founder of HP Wealth Management, who thinks the larger international players have to be prepared to spend money to go onshore.

Yet Singapore can remain as the centre for private banking if clients from markets around the region think the expertise is still available. And he believes the local market is on the right track in terms of technical know-how around products and how markets work, as well as in relation to people skills and building relationships.

This latter component is where the industry needs to collectively focus

more time and attention in the next few years, adds Brutsch.

INDEPENDENCE

Singapore also has the most developed segment within Asia for independent wealth management – although it has grown at a slower pace than many practitioners might have hoped.

The main reason for that, believes Brutsch, is a lot of relationship managers in the banks like the idea of moving firms but ultimately don't take the perceived risk of going independent – including a lower salary for a while and no guaranteed bonus.

The independent segment could therefore benefit from some better marketing of its potential advantages, he adds.

In his view, these far outweigh the disadvantages of reduced bonus and the lack of an established brand-name on a business card.



URS BRUTSCH
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For example, being independent means being able to offer clients more, in turn helping the relationship develop in a more personal way, he explains. ■