

Getting deeper into client relationships in India

Taking a leap beyond a pure-play offering, Centrum Wealth Management's family office services aim at getting to the heart of the broader and longer-term planning that really matters to families.

Spurred by economic reforms and liberalisation, wealth creation has grown at a rapid pace in India. The country's HNW population crossed the 2 million mark in 2015; and a recent study by The Boston Consulting Group pegged the number of UHNW households in India at 928, lagging only the US, China and the UK. The opportunity to service wealthy business-owning families in India is too big to pass up.

approach to serving such clients. The idea of a 'family office' in India is also yet to discover a standard definition.

Many law firms or chartered accountants, for example, essentially double-up as providers of family office services.

But this presents a brilliantly-disguised opportunity to service clients in a holistic manner.

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The local wealth management industry is still ever-evolving, with market participants at times offering a piecemeal

Eyeing these market dynamics, Centrum Wealth Management is targeting this space in a focused manner. Its current



ARPITA VINAY
Centrum Wealth Management

team of 200 professionals spread across 15 cities engage with over 2,500 families. The group has a strong network of existing relationships with mid-size

business families. “Managing large-scale wealth requires a holistic approach,” explains Arpita Vinay, wholetime director & head - family office, at Centrum.

The need for this has only gotten more acute over recent years.

“In days gone by, things were simpler. With time, complexities have grown, as has the family tree, and family members have relocated across geographies,” explains Vinay.

“With growing wealth, the spread of assets has increased, and multiple assets create multiple operational issues, with everything requiring an expert. While external service providers meet most of these requirements, a family office aggregates all seamlessly,” she adds.

A WELL-DEFINED VISION

The firm is providing solutions in a variety of areas for wealthy families.

These include: business succession and legacy planning; enabling inter-generational wealth transfers; consolidation and reporting of all family assets across advisers and family members; and tax and legal advisory.

This brings together many specialists internally and externally to ensure the proposition is delivered through a robust and well-defined client engagement framework.

This involves the input of the client advisory team, solution experts and senior management review committee, across the dimensions of portfolio performance, risk, liquidity and costs.

Vinay believes that as a one-stop solution provider, the firm can differ-

entiate its offering from others in the local market.

More specifically, she points to attributes such as a strong understanding of family businesses, established strengths in product origination and structuring, an in-house ecosystem of experts including partnerships and associations straddling multiple domains, and a solid track record.

“These are the enablers helping us to provide unbiased holistic advice in a cost-effective manner,” she explains.

In what Vinay describes as a highly-segmented market, there is a wide gap

between a client’s expectations and what the businesses have to offer. Vinay now recognises that it’s time to scale-up the business.

ADDING SCALE

With the rate at which the UHNW population in India is growing, the challenge for Centrum is not lack of business opportunity.

It is more important to be geared with the right service platform to make the most of the potential as it continues to emerge in the country

Despite being only five years in business, Centrum is already one of the fastest-growing private wealth firms in the

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In line with this, Centrum’s boutique nature forms part of the allure too, adds Vinay.

“The solutions sought by every family are unique depending upon their cir-

“We are working towards it,” she says.

“The key is being able to attract the right talent who, without diluting the strength of the platform created, can engage with and service the clientele well.”

While a low-key organisation culturally until now, Centrum is also increasing the thrust on enhancing the visibility of its brand through curated events through which it engages with its clients and prospects. ■