

OneRock Investments CEO Michel Della Libera – on the Journey to a Billion- Dollar Vision

Michel Della Libera could be considered rather brave when he and his co-founder launched OneRock Investments in 2021 while the pandemic was still raging. But he has no regrets, and reports that their multi-family office boutique is now a thriving business with approaching 17 staff and with their collective eyes firmly set on hitting USD1 billion of AUM this year. Michel had felt empowered to create the firm to leverage his strong track record in wealth management and experience in the region, including in his former role as Senior Managing Director of EFG bank in Singapore, and a good number of years spent in key roles in Hong Kong as well. Michel is the CEO of the Singapore-based business, which, armed with its Capital Market Service licence, has for the past several years been growing its client base in key markets such as Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Hong Kong and Mainland China. Hubbis met with him recently to learn more about the progress, some of the challenges and missions ahead, and most importantly about the optimism that Michel expresses over the direction and impetus of the firm.

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MICHEL DELLA LIBERA
OneRock Investments

Michel opens the discussion by reporting that despite rising costs, and some challenges around talent acquisition Singapore has proven a solid choice as a strategic hub for its wealth management business.

Singapore: an outstanding platform

“The right base is critical for our multi-family office operations, and despite some challenges, Singapore stands out as a preferred destination for many industry players,” he comments. “Singapore’s robust and flexible platform continues to attract businesses looking to navigate and thrive in financial services. We find similar

positivity from our regional clients as well, who are all happy to either be here, come here, or comfortable with their money and affairs being handled through Singapore.”

He adds that Singapore is such a diverse and vibrant hub with a deep wealth management and professional services ecosystem that the delivery of advisory and investment services is straightforward.

“Add to that the stability of the jurisdiction and the quality of facilities here, and it all makes a compelling case for Singapore,” he says. “This is helping us build our client base.”

Fertile ground for the MFO proposition

He explains that OneRock has experienced significant expansion since its early days and has shifted increasingly towards serving entrepreneurial HNW families looking to structure their wealth.

“We have evolved the business more from an independent asset management platform to building the family office clientele, especially of entrepreneurs and their families, and we are very comfortable in this focus and trajectory,” he reports. “And Singapore’s role in enabling this growth cannot be understated

as a highly conducive business environment and strategic location in Asia.”

Deep engagement and true connectivity

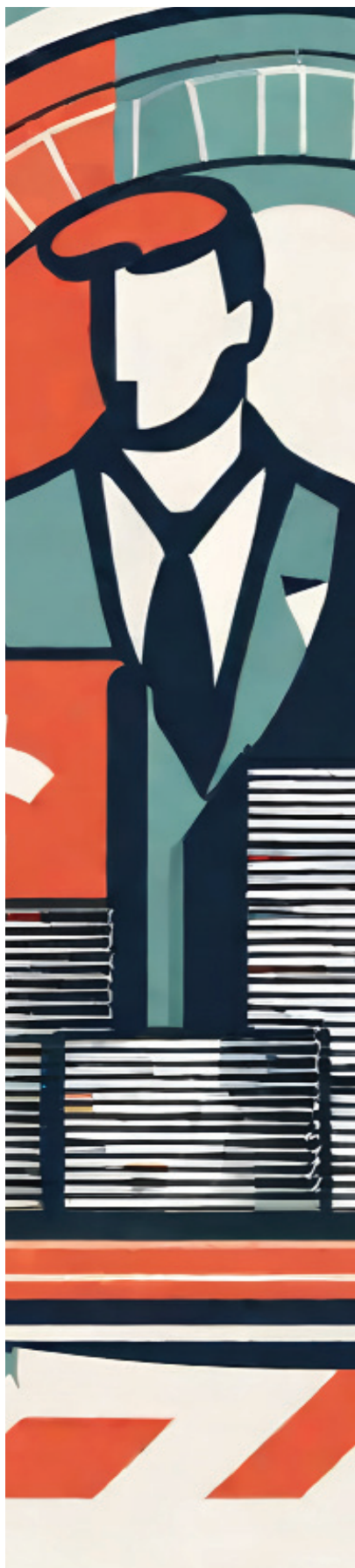
Michel drills down further into his concept of the MFO, explaining that the offering is broader than just asset management. He says, “for example, our coverage might include many multifaceted needs of clients, such as raising capital for their businesses, leveraging existing businesses to invest in new ventures and opportunities, navigating their relationships with other institutions such as banks, as well as managing their wealth and keeping an eye firmly on their future generations, including with regard to helping with succession planning.”

He says they therefore see the MFO as a comprehensive partner offering a range of services that extend well beyond simple wealth management or investment advice, touching on many aspects of a family’s businesses and delivering an altogether more connected or holistic offering.

SFOs welcomed

“We are experts, and we have a track record and we understand

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Key Priorities

Michel articulates his first priority as making sure that existing clients are properly serviced. “We want to grow the client base, but first of all we must make sure our existing clients are happy, stay with us and that we grow shares of wallet,” he says.

Another priority is to nurture OneRock’s team members. “We are trying to build a legacy, to make sure that people in this office are growing with the company, not only financially, but also professionally and personally.”

And his third key objective is to reach the USD1 billion AUM milestone. “You will see me jumping with joy when we hit that target,” he quips. “We hope to reach that goal within this year.”

these issues, which can be challenging for any family, even one that has built great wealth through its businesses,” he states. “We even have clients that have their own single-family office, but they often see that we have certain areas of expertise and specialisation they would like to engage with.”

Growing with ambition

Michel also acknowledges that OneRock is a work in progress, and that he and his colleagues have plenty more ambitions to fulfil at the firm.

“What I can say is that while we haven’t yet reached our desired shape and form, we are on the right path and ticking off the milestones along the way. We are assembling the right business model, the right core objectives, building a strong team, and navigating the right direction. And we are bringing more and more clients with us. All in all, yes there are challenges, but the positives far outweigh any of those.”

Michel zooms in on the values the firm nurtures, including independence, transparency and trust.

Performance-centric trust and transparency

“These are all key elements any independent wealth firm tries to project and communicate, but for us, it really centres on transparency around the way we work with clients, the products, the fees, and exactly how we charge for our efforts. Without that level of openness, there will never be the trust needed to build this business. I should add that it goes without saying that we must also perform – competition is intense, and performance is crucial for the clients, or they will move on.”

The firm also offers its own funds as well as open architecture. Michel reports that one of them, structured as a Variable Capital Company or VCC, is one of the largest available in the alternative asset space. “We only create funds where we know we can make a

difference,” he says. “We cannot compete with the major global brands, so our products are either when clients ask us specifically for tailored approaches or where we believe we can add value.”

Southeast Asia’s growth

Michel closes the conversation by reporting that they have been particularly successful in engaging with clients in several key markets in Asia, including Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Hong Kong, and China. They are planning to open a sister company in Jakarta.

“To expand effectively in that market and help our clients, we need to be closer to them,” he says. “And we are contemplating how to approach China, possibly in the same way. There is plenty to do here in Singapore, but we must focus also on other key markets.”

Fulfilling your potential

His final comment is that he has turned 50 recently and feels like he is literally having the time of his life. The business is thriving, the team culture is building all the time, and the firm is navigating to being sustainable, even if he were to later retire, although he

has no intention of doing so in the foreseeable future.

His two daughters are in their early 20s and ready to make their way in the world. He says he and his wife thoroughly enjoy their lives in Singapore and travelling together whenever possible.

However, he reports that he still has two areas of disappointment. “My golf stubbornly refuses to improve, and I am really struggling to find any new and exciting Lego sets to build in my spare time, as I have done for decades”, he quips jovially. ■

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