The Digital Future of Wealth Management in the Philippines: Insights from Mathieu Cambou

Mathieu Cambou is the Chief Product Officer of Wealth Management Technology provider Evoog, a Swiss firm that prides itself on the design, build, and delivery of technology solutions that enable high-quality personalised investment services to be offered by banks and other wealth managers to a wide range of investors. He offered delegates at the Hubbis Vietnam Wealth Management Forum in November a lively talk focusing on the right attributes of a 'good' wealth management journey, the needs and expectations of these Vietnamese (and broader Asian) clients, and how providers can offer a simple (yet also sophisticated) wealth journey through relationship managers and advisors that are supported and empowered by the right management strategies and optimal digital solutions and processes. Mathieu shared his insights during the Hubbis Philippines Wealth Management Forum. His analysis, rooted in Evooq's commitment to helping wealth intermediaries foster high-quality personalised investment services, provided a forward-looking perspective on the integration of digital solutions with the indispensable role of relationship managers (RMs), thereby sculpting the future of wealth management in the Philippines.

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MATHIEU CAMBOU Evooq

The Central Role of Relationship Managers

Mathieu initiated the conversation by spotlighting the significance of RMs in the wealth management ecosystem. Drawing upon comprehensive studies by McKinsey and Accenture, he emphasised the RM-driven nature of the industry, particularly within the Philippine market.

He observed: "Like many Asian clients, Filipinos prefer a personal touch in managing their investments, with a significant portion opting for advisory services where they can validate the proposals made by their advisors." This preference underlines the advisory journey as a critical element for success, necessitating a nuanced understanding and approach from RMs towards each client's unique financial landscape.

Journey Beyond Portfolio Performance

Expanding on the conceptual framework of the wealth management journey, Mathieu reported that the essence of wealth management transcends mere financial returns. "The destination - portfolio performance - is vital, yet it's the journey that leaves a lasting imprint on the client's memory," he articulated.

This journey encompasses the quality of conversations, the strength of relationships, and the overall experience provided by banks and wealth managers. His perspective shifts the focus from the end results to the processes and interactions that define the client's experience, emphasising the importance of maintaining and enriching the advisory relationship.

Tackling Industry Challenges Head-on

Identifying key challenges within the industry, Mathieu pointed out the potential erosion of trust due to perceived product pushing, a diverse array of client expectations, and the prevalent knowledge or talent gap among advisors.

"The wealth management sector faces the dual challenge of aligning advisor capabilities with client expectations, all while maintaining the trust and confidence of the client," he told delegates. "Addressing these challenges involves not only refining the advisor-client interaction but also investing in the continuous development of RMs to ensure they are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge."

Balancing Simplification with Personalisation

Looking deeper into the dynamics of client engagement, Mathieu advocated for a balanced approach that marries simplification with personalisation.

"Clients value a journey that, regardless of the underlying complexity, is presented with clarity and tailored to their specific goals," he explained. "This approach, which Evooq terms "customisation at scale," is crucial for penetrating the rapidly expanding market segments in the Philippines. It is vital for me to stress the importance of delivering advice that is both accessible to the client and reflective of their individual aspirations."

The Imperative of Scalability and Integration

Highlighting the necessity for scalable solutions in wealth management, he presented an ecosystem of integrated tools

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designed to empower RMs and advisors effectively. This ecosystem facilitates strategy management, product selection, and portfolio management in a cohesive manner, enabling advisors to deliver personalised advice efficiently to a wider audience.

"The key to capturing the rapidly expanding mass affluent market lies in our ability to help scale personalised advisory services without compromising quality," he explained, underlining the growth potential in the Philippines and the demographic trends driving the demand for wealth management services.

Envisioning the Future of Wealth Management

In his concluding remarks, Mathieu reiterated the central and pivotal role of RMs in the wealth management journey and highlighted the industry's transition towards goal-based advisory services. He underscored the necessity of personalisation at scale to meet the rising demand from the mass affluent segment and stressed the importance of equipping RMs with the tools and knowledge to excel in their roles.

"The future of wealth management in the Philippines hinges on our ability to innovate, personalise, and scale our advisory services to meet the diverse needs of our clients," Mathieu said, closing the talk. "As the industry embraces the challenges and opportunities presented by the digital age, forward-thinking analysis and strategies are vital for wealth managers and advisors to navigate the evolving landscape, ensuring that clients receive the tailored, high-quality investment services that define the future of wealth management in the Philippines."

