

The Vital Importance of Reliability according to the CEO of Singapore MFO OneRock Investments

It was three years ago, just at the outset of the global pandemic, that Michel Della Libera took the plunge and founded OneRock Investments with another business partner. Today he still acts as CEO of the Singapore-based fund management and multi-family office boutique firm, which holds a Capital Market Service licence issued by the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS). To create the firm, he had left his previous role as Senior Managing Director of EFG bank in Singapore, bringing some 20 years of experience in wealth management and business consulting to the OneRock proposition, including many years in Asia in both Hong Kong and Singapore. Hubbis met with him recently to hear more of the firm, Michel's ambitions and his mission to create a self-sustaining firm with the structure, culture and team to grow for many years to come.

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MICHEL DELLA LIBERA
OneRock Investments

Michel opens by stating that the firm's two key characteristics that clients most value are trust and independence.

"The independence is both from an ownership perspective – we have no corporate shareholders – and also from an operational point of view," he explains. "We provide the full range of multi-family office services and complete objectivity around all investments and other advice to clients. Our RMs are free to provide best-in-class advice, products and structures, able therefore to focus their energies entirely on the best interests of the client, and to find the most suitable partners and external providers to work with for each client and their specific needs. It's a process that starts with understanding the client's needs and then building the best solution around them."

Building and retaining trust

Transparency is another key element of the proposition. "To trust us, it is also important that clients know and understand where and how we make our money, hence we fully disclose our

Key Priorities

Michel's first objective is to refine their proposition for different types of clients, for example offering a slightly different approach to clients from Singapore or from Indonesia. "We want to formalise that somewhat, so that we can better build out our offering for specific markets, including potentially opening small representative offices in markets such as Thailand, Indonesia and China," he reports. "If it looks sensible to do so, we can also consider establishing partnerships or potentially obtaining licenses in selected markets. Having your flag planted in some form definitely helps us get closer to clients."

Another priority is to develop the OneRock team in terms of quality and governance. "We want to nurture the right culture that will help the firm be self-sustaining, not only financially but in terms of people and values," he explains. "These are the foundations to build a lasting business. At some stage in the future I will want to step back from being CEO, but we want the company to endure and have a life of its own without me necessarily being at the helm."

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retrocession income to them," he reports. "Moreover, this allows us to build the most appropriate and effective cost and fee structure based on different options. Everything is on the table and clear, so we can help them make good decisions."

Aside from investments, the families the firm works with need sound structuring advice and support, with OneRock able to survey the landscape of trust, legal and other experts available to recommend the right team to support them in their wider estate and legacy planning.

Taking the right path

Michel reports that the journey thus far since creating the business has been immensely rewarding. "Unlike private banks which typically offer pre-packaged investment products, we can truly focus on working outwards from the client's needs and developing personalised solutions based on their needs and risk profile," he explains.

He says his clients understand their approach of putting them first, and they are genuinely appreciative. "I really feel like popping open a bottle of champagne every day when I

think of the mission that we set out to achieve, and how far we have come and how successful we have been in delivering on those intentions,” he quips, jovially.

Into the future...

Michel says sticking to their core values and practices has helped them garner more AUM from existing clients and collect more clients along the way. “We have built a team of 15 now and clearly we need the revenues to support that type of skill base and expertise,” he says. “We have achieved that by sticking to our principles, focusing on the best outcomes for clients, and expanding our range of services and also our capabilities.” ■

Getting Personal with Michel Della Libera

Michel comes from Bellinzona in Switzerland. He graduated from the university of Fribourg with a degree in Business Economics. His career before OneRock included business consulting with KPMG before joining Banca del Gottardo, which he describes as a very traditional private bank. He was later involved in the merger with BSI while he was located in Luxembourg, and then the later merger of BSI with EFG, which is how he came to work with them for some years in Hong Kong and Singapore before starting OneRock.

Michel has two daughters aged 22 and 21 from his first marriage and has remarried. “It is just the two of us now,” he reports. “My wife is Swiss, and we enjoy our time and travels and adventures together. “I have been incredibly busy building the firm and spare time might see me on the golf course, keeping fit, and building Lego Technic supercars, a great distraction from everything else.”

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