

# Top of the Pile

*Distinguished award icing on the cake as Crossinvest strategy, transparency and attitude recognised, says CEO*

**C**ROSSINVEST ASIA CEO ROHIT BHUTA now has tangible proof that his small independent company can take on the world's wealth management giants and win after landing the "Best Discretionary & Advisory Offering 2017" category at the Private Banker International (PBI) awards. This is one of the biggest accolades on offer within an industry that has been trying to fundamentally shift its focus to a discretionary and advisory led portfolio-based approach.

Bhuta commented: "Last year we were punching above our weight when we gained a distinguished mention in this category and now this year we are at that weight. Lifting this award serves as an endorsement of our proposition and proves that we are offering a service that is recognized as best in class.

Singapore-based Crossinvest took this latest award on the back of being voted the Best Independent Wealth

Manager in Asia at the Wealth Briefing Asia Awards in June 2017.

Bhuta added: "To come up against the biggest and best private banks and to come out on the top of the pile is a fantastic achievement for our team. This just goes to prove that indeed size does not really matter - our small team of experienced investment professionals has demonstrated that we are a worldwide force to be reckoned with. This is a testament to our strategy and resolve.

"We are an independent wealth management company offering bespoke and exclusive discretionary management, financial advisory and family office services to sophisticated individuals, entrepreneurial families and institutions.

"Our team of experienced advisors and portfolio managers help our clients understand an increasingly complex investing landscape through making the right investment decisions. All client portfolios are booked and managed in Singapore and our market agnostic position means that we manage investment portfolios of clients domiciled and banked across the globe, from Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Latin America to Australasia."

## Independent, objective

Bhuta is at pains to stress how Crossinvest differs from normal private banking operations, all of which have led to this most recent recognition.

"We believe in offering the best in class in every underlying investment we offer our clients. This means that every asset within our client portfolio is top quartile in terms of performance. In order to remove any conflicts, real or perceived, we have made a strategic decision not to have our own in-house investment products. This allows us to be independent, objective and transparent when managing portfolios and providing advice. We only have the clients' best interests in mind and we work with, and for, our clients, with a view to building and fostering a long term relationship.



ROHIT BHUTA  
Crossinvest Asia

“Unlike banks, our primary source of revenue is from our clients and not from product manufacturers or outside commissions. This alignment means that we can offer the best underlying investment advice to our clients without being driven by commission incentives. In fact, we ensure that any outside fees that the clients have to pay are kept at a minimum.”

Bhuta added: “Not relying on revenue from investment churn, or commission, or distribution fees from manufactures, means that our team is not motivated by any monetary incentives linked to sales target revenues or product targets. This independence allows us to establish a meaningful and a long-term relationship with our clients.

“Our focus is to build investment portfolios for our clients for the medium- to- long term. We maintain high conviction on the underlying investments within our portfolios. These investments, each meticulously created, managed and maintained, are available for selection and customization individually or through a combination by way of portfolio construction.

Our team proactively monitors the portfolio on an on-going, real-time basis to ensure that the clients’ portfolios are risk managed, while maintaining our conviction to build clients’ portfolios with a medium-to- long term view. So, unless a risk limit has been breached, or a target price has been reached, we typically do not react. Banks, on the other hand, would generally focus on the immediate market events and make investment decisions based on these events.”

### **Transparency and trust**

Bhuta continued: “The core difference between these two models is that the banks offer a transactional proposition while we offer a portfolio-based proposition. The banks would therefore typically react to immediate market events while we take a medium- to- long term view. Both are necessary in a proportion that best typifies the clients’ underlying risk profile. As important as it is to make the most of market movements as advised by the banks, it is equally important if not critical on investing over the medium- to- long term with a focus on capital preservation with steady growth. This is the cornerstone of Crossinvest’s proposition.”

Bhuta puts great store in portfolio management for his clients, with Crossinvest adopting a system that allows his staff to make use of sophisticated technology tools that handle multi-asset portfolios to consistently and effectively perform their tasks.

“We provide a last-mile, single consolidated view of the client investments. We have access to the client’s

## **Crossinvest:**

■ **BEST DISCRETIONARY & ADVISORY OFFERING 2017** (Private Banker International)

■ **BEST INDEPENDENT WEALTH MANAGER 2017- ASIA** (Wealth Briefing Asia)

entire portfolio, whether or not we are managing them,” Bhuta said. Bhuta believes that trust and transparency, a complete alignment of client interests with that of the company along with his team’s competencies and an unwavering commitment are the cornerstones of his business. “We are transparent in what we do, from the fee our clients’ pay to the security of their portfolios. Our team cherishes the trust of clients and aims to protect our clients’ interests at all times without compromise.

“We have invested a significant amount of our time in outlining to our clients why paying a fee for advice introduces transparency and control. There is unfortunately a misconception that the clients are not paying a fee when they are transacting with private banks.”

Bhuta added: “There is no such thing as a free lunch - the private banks earn their revenue through commissions from the investment manufacturers, who in turn indirectly recover these from the client. That is, when a client buys an investment product on ‘advice’ from the private bank, the product pays a distribution fee / commission to the private bank. These fees are usually embedded within the entry price of the product so the client therefore ends up paying that fee in any case. “Because we charge our clients a fee directly, we always ensure that there will never be an embedded fee within any investment products that we advise our client to invest in”.

Bhuta believes these core differences between Crossinvest’s proposition and offerings from major banks, which he maintains is one of the primary reasons why his firm won the Private Banker International award.

Crossinvest has a multi-generational presence and a global reach. They were established in Switzerland in 1985 and were one of the pioneers of the external asset management industry there. Crossinvest has operated in Asia since 2005 and is now on a level par with some of the world’s biggest names in wealth management. ■

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