

European Custodian of the Year BNP Paribas Securities Services

One key to success in the European market, according to Alan Cameron, head of relationship management, international banks and brokers at BNP Paribas Securities Services, is being able to manage the balance between having an effective centralised set-up and maintaining local knowledge and presence where required. This, he says, makes BNP Paribas stand out.

A base in Lisbon houses around 1,000 staff. "The centre affords us great efficiencies that come with scale, while our local presence allows us to maintain asset-servicing expertise for all European markets. This localisation is so important, because each market has its own nuances and being able to interpret and translate those coherently into market-leading service levels for local clients adds huge value," says Cameron.

He says that treading the line between centralisation and local speciality is increasingly important in a market where scale, the ability to provide volumes and accompanying price points is key.

Reporting and risk monitoring is another integral facet of the business. Last year, BNP Paribas launched several new reporting services, including intraday liquidity reporting for banks and brokers, and online reporting for private equity and real estate clients. This service gives general partners direct access to their fund accounting data, which means they can respond more quickly to queries from investors and board members, while the decision-making process can also be expedited. In addition, the bank's Collateral Access solution saw the addition of Smart Allocation, which transforms the way collateral is managed. "It used to be cumbersome and time-consuming, but this solution has simplified the process," says Cameron.

But reporting also relates to scale. "Clients increasingly need to be able to show their regulators how they have extended their liquidity and credit across their businesses. For some time, the trend has been [moved]

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away from having multiple service providers in favour of fewer providers that are able to provide a holistic reporting model, which gives both client and regulator alike a transparent overall view," Cameron says. "Pan-European, even global, coverage really is a prerequisite of a successful business model," he adds.

The ability to provide both scale and local tailoring has been reflected in the year's activities, which have seen a 21% year-on-year growth in global assets under custody to €7.7 trillion. This was partly due to the acquisition of Commerzbank's depository banking business in Germany and that of Banco Popular in Spain, providing clients with greater flexibility in the face of the Alternative Investment Fund Managers Directive (AIFMD) and Ucits V. In addition, Prime Fund Services – a leading provider of fund administration, custody and banking solutions – was acquired from Credit Suisse. This also helps BNP Paribas offer expertise and product offering to clients post-AIFMD.

BNP Paribas this year signed a landmark pan-European mandate that covers global custody, fund administration and depository banking with Generali Investments. It also extended a highly important existing relationship with loan and credit fund provider Intermediate Capital Group, to provide fund administration custody and transfer agency for their Senior Debt Partners Fund, as well as collateral administration, trustee and liquidity services for the launch of their St Paul CLO IV.



Alan Cameron, head of relationship management, international banks and brokers, BNP Paribas Securities Services



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