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Alter Domus seeks to carry its Luxembourg success through to Asia

An expansive network of double taxation treaties and the early implementation of the European Union's directives have propelled the growth of Luxembourg's financial sector, making it one of Europe's most conducive environments for companies to locate their businesses.

Contributing to the cultivation of this growth, independent company Alter Domus provides a broad range of fully integrated services, specialising in alternative asset fund administration, corporate and management services and financial reporting services. Alter Domus, meaning "other house", is a Latin phrase from which the company derived its philosophy. "This represents who we are, what we want to be for our clients – an extension of their houses. We are part of their company and we act in their best interest," says Dominique Robyns, chief executive of Alter Domus.

The company spun off from one of the Big Four audit firms when it was sold in two parts, first in 2001 and then in 2003. Since finalising the sale, Alter Domus has grown steadily, indicated by the tripling of its personnel – from 85 in 2003 to 350 last year.

Alter Domus serves listed and unlisted institutional and multinational companies, private equity and real estate firms, hedge funds and other alternative investment vehicles. With cross-functional, highly-trained employees ready to offer their expertise, Alter Domus caters to the needs of clients with comprehensive administration services for investment vehicles and underlying funds, from the establishment of their companies to their eventual liquidation.

Corporate and management services comprise 85 per cent of the company's business. Specific services under this arm include company formation, company management, corporate services, administrative and accounting services, tax compliance services, consolidation, statutory audit, special audit report and liquidation services. Alter Domus is increasing its focus on



Dominique Robyns, chief executive

consolidation services, specifically the preparation of client consolidated financial statements.

Alter Domus prides itself on being independent from banks, lawyers, private equity houses and other advisers, allowing the company to focus on the needs of the clients.

"Independence differentiates us from competitors. We serve our clients better because we can work with different parties. We can tell our clients how to get the desired deals from banks and how to get better service from their auditors. Unless you are independent, you cannot fully advise your clients about the best options they can take," Robyns says.

Alter Domus uses technology to efficiently address the requirements of clients and swiftly react to market needs. The company developed an electronic data management system allowing clients to access data 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This system also makes archiving of corporate information seamless.

A testament to the capabilities of

Alter Domus is its popularity among business feeders and intermediaries. Recognising the company's reliability and stability, industry colleagues refer clients to Alter Domus.

"We are completely independent from business feeders. They do not get a commission if they refer a client to us. They recommend us because they know that we give the best price-quality ratio. They know that clients are happy with our work, that we are the best in what we do," Robyns says.

Expanding in markets outside Luxembourg has been part of Alter Domus's strategy. As Asia continues to develop, the company sees the opportunity to expand and to strengthen its product portfolio to target the special needs of this market. Alter Domus has implemented a two-pronged approach to penetrate Asia.

The first one was a merger last year between Alter Domus Alternative Asset Fund Administration and alternative investment fund company Skye Fund Services. Present in Hong Kong and Singapore, Skye provides administration, middle office and other support services to alternative investment vehicles such as private equity funds, hedge funds, real estate funds and funds of funds.

This merger serves as a conduit between East and West, allowing the firm's participation in an environment with increased investment flow between Europe and Asia. Alter Domus also capitalises on the expertise of Skye to improve its position in the hedge funds industry in Europe.

The second approach to expanding the company in Asia is the establishment of Alter Domus Asia in Hong Kong, where the high quality corporate and management services structure of Luxembourg is replicated for the Asian market.

"Through this strategy, we hope that Asia would be as big as our Luxembourg operations in five years time. We are open to merging with companies from China and Singapore to help us achieve this goal," Robyns says.



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