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Press Release

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The 7th Asian Banker Excellence in Retail Financial Services Awards 2008

Al Rajhi Bank wins award for Best Retail Bank in Saudi Arabia

- *Al Rahji Bank wins the award for Best Retail Bank in Saudi Arabia.*
- *Operational efficiencies and distribution capabilities help Al Rahji Bank outperform domestic competitors.*
- *Over 150 banks and financial institutions from 23 countries across the Asia Pacific, GCC region and Central Asia were evaluated as part of the Excellence in Retail Financial Services programme.*

Riyadh , 16 May 2008 – *Al Rajhi Bank* bagged a major accolade at the seventh Asian Banker Excellence in Retail Financial Services Awards: *Best Retail Bank in Saudi Arabia*. The bank received the award at The Asian Banker Excellence in Retail Financial Services 2008 Awards ceremony, held in conjunction with the region's most prestigious retail banking event, the Excellence in Retail Financial Services Convention. The ceremony was held at the Westin Grande Sukhumvit in Bangkok on the evening of 16 May 2008.

About 150 senior bankers from award winning banks in 23 countries across the Asia Pacific, the Gulf region and Central Asia attended the glittering event, the industry's celebration of the region's best retail bankers that recognizes their efforts in bringing superior products and services to their customers.

The awards programme, administered by The Asian Banker, and refereed by prominent global bankers, consultants and academics, is the most prestigious award of its kind.

- *Al Rahji Bank wins the award for Best Retail Bank in Saudi Arabia.*

Al Rajhi Bank has won the prestigious award for Best Retail Bank in Saudi Arabia 2008 in The Asian Banker Excellence in Retail Financial Services programme.

- *Operational efficiencies and distribution capabilities help Al Rahji Bank outperform domestic competitors.*

In a challenging year for consumer banking in Saudi Arabia, Al Rajhi Bank managed to turn in one of the most profitable banks in the region, with deposits growing a healthy 22 percent.

The bank built its success on its highly efficient operations and distribution channels and has a processing capability that delivered the market's lowest turnaround time for product

applications. Al Rahji implemented one of the largest expansions in the region's industry – launching the 'Al Rahji Link' mini branch in prominent shopping malls and chalking up 160 new branches within 18 months.

Already boasting a higher ratio of self-service transactions to total transactions than its competitors, the bank broke new ground by making it possible to transact KSA share dealing via mobile phone banking.

- ***Over 150 banks and financial institutions in 23 countries across Asia Pacific, the GCC region and Central Asia evaluated as part of the Excellence in Retail Financial Services programme.***

"This year over 150 banks and financial institutions in 23 countries across the Asian region were evaluated as part of the Excellence in Retail Financial Services programme," said Mr Phillip Strause, chairman of the Excellence in Retail Financial Services programme and an International Resource Director for The Asian Banker.

The award evaluation process uses a comprehensive methodology to evaluate the strength of individual banks' retail banking businesses that involved extensive research and probing interviews, and taps the combined experience of a team of experienced researchers. The process also incorporates an AC Nielsen customer perception survey to gauge the strength and reputation of retail banks in the different countries.

Mr Strause, who has close to 40 years' experience working with commercial banks, investment banks, brokerage firms, insurance companies and other specialised financial institutions, further added: "The Asian Banker Excellence programme was instituted in 2001 on the premise that an outstanding player in the retail financial services industry should build business franchises that are sustainable, competitive and profitable over a period of time".

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About The Asian Banker

The Asian Banker is the region's most authoritative provider of strategic business intelligence to the financial services community. The Singapore-based company has offices in Singapore, Malaysia, Beijing and Shanghai as well as representatives in London, New York, Dubai and San Francisco. It has a business model that revolves around three core business lines: publications, research services and forums. For more information, please visit www.theasianbanker.com.

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