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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Akihito Nohara wins Retail Banker of the Year Award for 2012

- Rakuten Bank saw a turn-around from a loss making entity to the current successes under Mr. Nohara's leadership
- He introduced new products that led to greater success at the bank
- He led the bank to take advantage of the synergies that Rakuten Inc could provide

Seoul, South Korea, 22nd March 2013 – Akihito Nohara has won the Retail Banker of the Year 2013 Award. The bank received the award at The International Excellence in Retail Financial Services 2013 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 Chosun, Seoul in South Korea on March 21st 2013.

The Asian Banker and the panel of advisors for the International Excellence in Retail Financial Services Awards were impressed with Mr. Nohara's achievements in leading the recovery of Rakuten Bank during his tenure as Executive Vice President. He has been a thought leader and has pioneered the Bank's super point system by developing the "Happy Program" customer loyalty program and "Money Bridge" Rakuten Bank x Rakuten Securities account linkage. With the increase in profitability that the Bank saw under his leadership, Mr Nohara rightfully wins the Retail banker of the Year 2013 Award.

About 150 senior bankers from award-winning banks in 29 countries across the Asia Pacific, the Middle East, Central Asia and Africa attended the glittering event that recognises their efforts in bringing superior products and services to their customers.

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

A stringent three-month evaluation process based on a balanced and transparent scorecard used to determine the winners and the positions of various retail banks in the region is attached.

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, Hong Kong and Shanghai as well as representatives in London, New York and San Francisco. It has a business model that revolves around three core business lines: publications, research services and forums. The company's website is www.theasianbanker.com

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Evaluation Criteria for Excellence in Retail Financial Services Programme

The Excellence in Retail Financial Services Programme was instituted in 2001 to recognise the pursuit of excellence amongst retail financial institutions in the region. The programme is also a repository of evolving best practices from which players can benchmark their own products and processes over the long term.

The Excellence in Retail Financial Services programme is predicated by the belief statement below.

Core Belief:

“We believe that a well-run retail bank is one that demonstrates a long term, sustainable, profitable franchise with the customer as its core proposition.”

As per the belief, an outstanding player in the retail financial services industry should demonstrate the following attributes:

- 1. Outstanding annual performance of the retail banking unit**
- 2. Sustainability as a franchise over a long period of time and across economic cycles**
- 3. A well-defined franchise in the chosen marketplace**
- 4. Transparency and accountability of business model**
- 5. Clear sales and execution skills at the product level**
- 6. Rigorous risk management capabilities**
- 7. Superior business and operational processes and technology**
- 8. Strong penetration and efficiency of distribution channels**
- 9. Focus on developing human resources to support the bank's strategy**
- 10. Ethical banking**

In addition, we have developed stringent evaluation criteria for each product or process. The decision-making process we use for these prestigious awards is made as transparent as possible so that banks in the region can understand where they stand as sustainable retail franchises, as well as use the process to re-examine their own products and processes.

Further information on the programme can be found at The Asian Banker website, Awards Programme, at www.theasianbanker.com.

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