

Press Release

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## **Ahli United Bank receives the Best Retail Bank in Bahrain Award in the Middle East Awards for 2017**

- **Ahli United Bank's multi-currency payment solution has helped its merchant customers drive its retail operating profit to a 20% increase**
- **The bank has continued to enhance its mobile app, MBank, as its customers rely more on mobile banking**
- **The bank's electronic fund transfer and deposit machines continued to replace the need for branch queuing, which reduces transaction costs**

**Dubai, UAE, April 20<sup>th</sup> 2017**— Ahli United Bank (AUB) received the **Best Retail Bank in Bahrain Award** for 2017 at The Asian Banker's Middle East and Africa Regional Awards Programme 2017. The awards ceremony was held in conjunction with the region's most prestigious retail banking event, The Future of Finance 2017 Middle East and Africa Convention, held at The Ritz Carlton, DIFC, on April 20<sup>th</sup> 2017.

### **AUB's multi-currency payment solution has helped its merchant customers drive its retail operating profit to a 20% increase**

In 2016, tourist arrivals in Bahrain were estimated at over ten million visitors. In support for its portfolio of merchant customers, AUB helped them solve exchange rate costs through its "Pay in Your Currency" card, a personalised multi-currency payment solution which allows qualified international visitors to purchase local goods and services in their own currency, while local-based merchants receive their payment in Bahraini dinar. Last year, fee-based income grew by 10%, which remained a key driver to the bank's retail income growth.

### **The bank has continued to enhance its mobile app, MBank, as its customers rely more on mobile banking**

Mobile and smartphone penetration rate in Bahrain was over 90% in 2016, while an average penetration rate of 77% was recorded across the GCC states. For this reason, the bank has continued to enhance its MBank app to increase its customer service capability for customers who do business across the GCC states. In effect, AUB was able to retain its market share with its consolidated assets accounting to 38% of the total retail assets in Bahrain, last year.

### **The bank's electronic fund transfer and deposit machines continued to replace the need for branch queuing, which reduces transaction costs**

AUB's electronic fund transfer scheme has allowed its conventional and Islamic customers to transfer funds, pay and view billing statements online. Similarly, the bank has placed new

cash deposit machines in its branches, which has eliminated queuing for teller services. Through automation, AUB has improved its retail cost-to-income ratio from the previous year.

About 70 senior bankers from award-winning banks in the Middle East and Africa attended the Middle East and Africa Regional Awards Programme 2017, which recognises banks' 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 of its kind.

A stringent three-month evaluation process based on a balanced and transparent scorecard determines the winners of The Asian Banker International Excellence in Retail Financial Services Awards, 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 company is headquartered in Singapore, with offices in Manila, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Beijing, and Dubai, 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.

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