



THORNTON GLOBAL

# Balance, Standards & the Priceless Value of Honesty

Slow and steady growth has been the hallmark of THORNTON GLOBAL WEALTH MANAGEMENT says its President SONDY LO for whom investing should be a way of life, not a lottery ticket.

**T**he interview couldn't have come at a better time when investors in Asia are looking for direction. Faith in major financial institutions is at its lowest and as investors are discovering, it is now harder to find integrity, than it is to target a good stock pick. What does the future hold for such volatile markets and an industry that's nearly lost all credibility?

"Investors need to review their own investment strategy and take care to ensure they are not overexposed," says Sony Lo, President of Thornton Global Wealth Management. Sony Lo is also the Councilor of the Independent Financial Advisor Association and a Certified Financial Planner (CFP) in HK and China. "People tend to suffer from such unforeseen storms in the financial markets because they are often too sentiment-led, or in a hurry to make more gains. This is not what I call responsible investing. If you are that reckless, then yes, you will suffer from unexpected financial turmoil. At Thornton Global we have always believed in sustainable investment strategies and we don't encourage our customers to behave like punters. Investment should be part of one's life and not like buying a lottery ticket or betting in a casino."

## In Standards We Trust

"Another ongoing issue we have in Hong Kong is the question of regulation and standards. Banks today sell insurance-related products for example but are they adequately trained to understand or meet the customer's individual requirements? Do they have the time to provide that personal attention? Do they have the experience to provide the customers with a history of the concerned

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investment vehicles?"

Lo says: "Ethics is a must in our industry and Independent Financial Advisors should be adequately qualified. Furthermore, overall investor education is also a must. I think education on financial planning needs to be increased as this will bring in greater transparency, boost investor confidence and ensure that ethics and integrity come before profit."

"In the past the industry has not paid enough of attention to these areas but the best time to start is always now and if we do this honestly, we will be setting a

stronger foundation for tomorrow. With this new understanding and clarity between market and industry we will all move on to greater heights of success. I am cautiously optimistic about the immediate future and on one has a crystal ball but all we can do is play by the rules, be honest and upfront with the customer and together on the back of this mutual respect, we can ride out any storm," concludes Lo. ■

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