

Leverate

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**Itay Damti, Managing Director Asia-Pacific
Leverate**



Israeli Fintech Company Sets Up Asian Headquarters in Hong Kong

Leverate has set up its Asian headquarters in Hong Kong to capture opportunities arising from growing interest in forex trading within the Asia-Pacific region, especially in Mainland China

Founded in Israel in 2008, Leverate is a B2B (business-to-business) SaaS (software as a service) company, with a vision to make online FX trading easy for both brokers (direct customers) and traders (indirect customers). Leverate distinguishes its products by offering a turnkey brokerage solution to brokers, who pay an initial setup fee and a volume-based monthly fee. Since 2012, the company has experienced a business boom thanks to customer confidence in its cutting edge brokerage technology solutions and increase in number of startup brokerage companies.

“Hong Kong is a fantastic choice as the base for our Asian headquarters and our first step into the Asia market. We can now serve clients in the entire region, including Mainland China, Japan, Indonesia, Singapore, Taiwan and Australia,” said Itay Damti, Managing Director Asia-Pacific, Leverate.

“The city has the right ecosystem as a financial and technology hub – with a ready pool of talent in financial services, a strong customer base, huge network, funding opportunities and the ease of doing business,” Damti continued.

Leverate’s Hong Kong office has a three-fold objective: to provide excellent customer service to the region, including IT, support and training; to accelerate the company’s growth by capturing opportunities in the huge potential market within the Asia-Pacific region; and to build brand awareness in the region.

Hong Kong Office as Role Model

Headquartered in Tel Aviv, Leverate has an office in Ukraine for R&D, and an office in Cyprus for regulation and operations. The Hong Kong office manages all customer-facing departments, including marketing, sales, account management and support. There are eight team members who all speak fluent Mandarin. Damti plans to double the size of the team in 2015 and establish new offices in Asia but keeping Hong Kong as the regional headquarters.

“We see Hong Kong as the role model for our future branches in other parts of the world,” Damti said.

Damti first met Jonathan Sternberg, InvestHK’s Israeli consultant, at a networking event in Tel Aviv. “The Hong Kong SAR Government is putting in a lot of effort to make entrepreneurs feel at home and InvestHK was a pleasant discovery – it provides services and solutions for everything I need, not only in setting up a business, but with respect to my personal life as well. It has a strong worldwide network and I urge people who want to set up in Hong Kong to get in touch with InvestHK in whatever business stage they are at,” he said.

Although Damti only arrived in Hong Kong three months ago, he has already fallen in love with the city. “Hong Kong has got everything I need – nature, music, food, sports, education, travel, etc. I have always had a strong interest in Chinese culture and am learning Mandarin. Moving to a whole new place from the other side of the globe is never easy, but everything here is easily accessible and there are plenty of opportunities to make new friends here,” he enthused.

Damti has found a lot of goodwill in Hong Kong’s startup scene and has a few tips to share with aspiring startups: learn from the global and local networks and tap into the wisdom from people who have been there – do not waste effort re-inventing the wheel; develop technology in-house instead of outsourcing to ensure the company is fast-moving; and make full use of Hong Kong, i.e. its locational advantages.

Leverate

- Headquartered in Tel Aviv, with offices in Hong Kong, Ukraine and Cyprus
- 160 employees globally and over 150 clients

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