

BEST TRADE FINANCE BOUTIQUE

Winner: Falcon Trade Corporation Highly commended: Texel Finance

Flying higher

Falcon Trade Corporation wins the Best Trade Finance Boutique for the second year in a row, and this rapidly-expanding group is developing a reputation for a lot more than its trade capabilities.

A sign of Falcon Group's success in recent years has been its sociability. The company has become renowned for holding the best party in the entire sector – held to blow away the January blues at the top of London's iconic 'gherkin' (30 St Mary Axe). Indeed, the party has rapidly established itself as the invite for the trade and corporate finance party circuit. But that's not all. In May the company held its first Falcon Annual Trade and Corporate Finance Forum in Dubai – a private affair for clients and guests to hear invited speakers, including renowned global economists, trade experts, bankers and corporates.

"We wanted to show our clients our depth of thinking," says Kamel Alzarka, the company's youthful and energetic chairman. "That there is a macro side to what we do, but also how we translate our view of the world for the benefit of our clients and partners. For instance, many of the invited guests were Asian or Middle Eastern importers-exporters concerned about available funding from banks. We had two renowned economists and international bankers discussing this."

Underlying the events is the serious point that Falcon is keen to demonstrate that it is a partner – a valuable addition to clients when it comes to funding, financial innovation and structuring. And that it is free of the constraints of the global banking community – whether those constraints consist of restrictions in available funding or limits on innovation, especially with respect to midcap exporters.

Certainly on the trade and corporate finance side, Falcon

is motoring. Falcon continues to perform strongly, recording pre-tax profits in excess of \$23 million – a like-for-like increase on the 13-month accounts of 2008 – despite some "very difficult market conditions", according to Alzarka.

"We remain on-track to achieve our target turnover of \$5 billion in the next three to four years – as well as continue to grow our capital base," says Alzarka. "This demonstrates our ambitions to maximise our growth potential and to continue our well-established plan for growth."

To achieve the Group's ambitious growth targets Falcon is continuing to develop new opportunities and new market share through propagating and expanding the company's unique brand of trade services.

"Organic growth is key," says Will Nagle, Falcon's CEO. "This means we must continue to recruit top talent, to expand our geographic presence and to develop new product areas. In 2009 we achieved strong growth in all three areas and intend to continue this process during 2010 and beyond."

To this end, structured, medium-term financings are being developed, and additional representations are planned for Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand – meaning there should be plenty to discuss at the next party.



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3. Taylor DeJongh

(2009 winner: Falcon Trade Corporation)
