

**Consumer Confidence In Malaysia's Banking Industry On A Strong Rise: EY Survey**  
**Bernama**  
**4 March, 2014**

KUALA LUMPUR, March 4 (Bernama) -- Confidence in Malaysia's banking industry is on a significant rise, trust in individual banks is high and many customers in Malaysia are satisfied enough to recommend their main banking provider, said Ernst & Young (EY) in its 2014 global consumer banking survey on Malaysia.

Against a backdrop of improved sentiments globally and in the Asia-Pacific region, almost two-thirds of customers in Malaysia have indicated increased confidence in the banking industry in the past year and have expressed complete trust in their primary financial services providers (PFSP).

EY Malaysia's Advisory Services Managing Partner, Chow Sang Hoe, said: "Coinciding with the heightened confidence, our local retail banking customers have also expressed strong levels of advocacy for their PFSPs -- higher than the global and Asia-Pacific respondents -- and are likely to increase their business with their PFSPs."

The study, "Winning through customer experience", which surveyed over 32,000 banking customers in 43 countries, shows banks are providing traditional banking services well but are viewed as falling short on important aspects of the customer experience, and are also increasingly vulnerable to competition from new providers of banking services.

"In Asia-Pacific, Malaysia's respondents recorded the highest levels of increased confidence at 61 per cent," said Chow.

He said the survey finds customer experience to be a main driver of trust, and across the globe, customer experience is also the single most common reason that customers open and close accounts.

"Among many customers in Malaysia, the "convenience of having everything in one place" and branch office location are also strong motivations," said Chow.

He said in Malaysia, with almost half (45 per cent) of respondents indicating that they have opened or closed accounts/services in the past year and 39 per cent intending to do so in the coming year, there are indications that customers are actively exploring and pursuing options.

Banks are poised for growth and well-positioned to continue the recent momentum in building customer confidence.

It will be essential to preserve the competitive advantages that banks have in delivering those

benefits which are fundamental to banking and highly valued, including protection of customer information and increasing convenience across channels, he said.

"Financial institutions can win and retain customers by making banking simple and clear for customers, for example, through transparency of fees, simplicity of offers and communication, and delivery of an omni-channel experience.

"Customer engagement can also be increased by helping customers make the right financial decisions in a complex environment through more and better advice and through greater use of data and digital channels to empower them.

"Last but not least, solving a problem or addressing a complaint creates a critical customer interaction, which, if done well, can actually increase a customer's business," Chow added.

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