



B.A Trust Group :

# A cross-border business with local roots

The B.A. Trust Group began life in the early 2000s as a family office and after various corporate evolutions in the intervening years, the partner-owned firm is considering a return to the sector in the next stage of its development.

## An entrepreneurial spirit

In a corporate and trust services sector where many of the leading players are private equity-owned, B.A. Trust Group stands out for its entrepreneurial culture, a character that stems from being owned by its partners. Eric Bernard, Bob Faber and Michael Probst bring the group extensive experience, after having worked for many years with “big four” professional services firms and other sector players such as KBL sister company Kredietrust. The group, which traces its origins back to the establishment of Bernard & Associés in 2003 as a family office and corporate domiciliation provider, has evolved into a cross-border provider of a broad range of services. It offers tax accountancy and advisory through Luxembourg-based B.A. TaxAccountants and B.A. Tax-HauckSchuchardt, a joint venture with a Frankfurt-based tax advisory and law firm

specialising in cross-border tax advice focusing on German real estate. Chartered accountants B.A. Fiduciaire, established last year and headed by Romain Hilger, provides accounting, tax and advisory services to an extensive range of Luxembourg companies, while Paddock Corporate Services offers domiciliation and management services to international institutional, corporate and private clients.

## Evolving Luxembourg market

The development of the group over the past decade reflects the evolution of trust and corporate services in Luxembourg from a sector dominated by traditional fiduciary firms into one where the big global firms, including the “big four” and international groups such as Alter Domus, SGG and Vistra, are complemented by the emergence of skillful, specialised providers with local roots. Following the creation in 2006 of Fideos, which was subsequently acquired by Atoz, the B.A. Trust Group was established in its present form in 2009 by Bernard, Faber and Probst as a provider of domiciliation and tax services with a staff of nine, which has now grown to 30 in addition to the firm’s partners. The Paddock Corporate Services

business then grew to its present size during a temporary partnership with another Luxembourg accounting firm.

#### **B.A. Tax-HauckSchuchardt: One-stop shop**

Starting out in 2009 with tax reporting services for Luxembourg banks, under the influence of Probst, B.A. Tax has developed strongly in the German market, especially following its joint venture with HauckSchuchardt established in 2015. Indeed, today tailor-made and innovative IT tools such as accounting via an integrated software-as-a service platform are more than ever critical to efficient service delivery. The group's success has always been its ability to provide clients with a one-stop shop offering targeted tax advice alongside corporate domiciliation services. This is why B.A. Tax-HauckSchuchardt consolidates this understanding of doing business. The group is currently stabilising following its rapid growth over recent years, but for 2018 the partners are planning to add family office services as a fifth string to their bow – one that, appropriately, takes B.A. Trust right back to its roots.