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EXCLUSIVE

"My 401(k) saw volatility, but the alts holdings provided stability": John Sweeney of Brookfield Oaktree

In an era of market volatility and economic uncertainty, Asia's wealth management landscape is undergoing a quiet transformation.



By Twinkle Sparta
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John Sweeney, CEO at Brookfield Oaktree Wealth Solutions (Brookfield Oaktree), maintains strong conviction in alternative investments - both professionally and personally.

"My 401(k) saw Q1 volatility, but my alternatives holdings provided stability," Sweeney told *AsianInvestor Wealth*. "I'm all-in on credit and infrastructure."

Asia driving international growth

Under Sweeney's leadership, Brookfield Oaktree's regional wealth business has expanded significantly.

"Our international business is now 30-35% of total, with Asia-Pacific as the driving force," he noted, highlighting the operation's transformation: "From 1 person to 17 on the ground, we're building a full wealth business—not just sales."

Sweeney also identifies a substantial allocation gap in the region.



John Sweeney

"Asia's alternative allocations are still 0-3% versus target models of 10-20%," he observed. "We're at the front end of a long trend here."

"Clients now use alternatives for low volatility, income, and diversification—not just returns," Sweeney said, adding: "Infrastructure's 20-30-year cash flows and inflation hedging resonate post-2022."

Institutional-grade access

His team has focused on product innovation to bridge the accessibility gap. "We repackaged institutional strategies into wealth-friendly containers—evergreen funds, liquidity options—democratizing access to assets like infrastructure."

He outlined Brookfield's nuanced approach to Asia's diverse markets. "Global banks matter, but regional players and family offices are equally critical. In Thailand/Japan, securities firms pivot to alternatives."

The executive stressed the importance of skin in the game. "We're often the largest investor in our own vehicles. That alignment resonates with intermediaries."

Sweeney previously served as head of U.S. business development and sales for Brookfield Oaktree Wealth Solutions and was a managing director. Prior to joining Oaktree in 2013, he was a managing director and head of product management and development for the alternative investments business at Morgan Stanley.

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