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Offshore Markets - Looking Better All The Time!

By Dave Laforge

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The World's Market Capitalization is Shifting

Emphasis in major market capitalization is shifting away from established industrialized countries toward emerging markets.

US market dominance has dramatically declined. The present tendency in the US to excess equity market valuation will accelerate the movement of capital to more attractive emerging markets. Share valuations in Asia, often at 1 1/2 times book value, compare most favorably with characteristic multiples of 6 for similar companies on the US market. Major US pension funds, e.g., CALPERS, are in high gear to diversify internationally by direct

investment in emerging market growth companies.

It will be some time before confidence in the Japanese capital market fully returns.

The less liquid European equity markets, compounded by economic Uncertainties, remain unattractive.

The move of investment capital will clearly be toward the emerging economies of Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America.

World Economic Opportunities are Moving Too.

Prior to 1970, the US represented half of the world's Gross National Product (GNP). By 1995 it's share of world GNP had dropped to one third. Estimates are that by 2010 the US share of world GNP will have dropped to one quarter.

The European economies are faced with an endemic problem of rapidly aging populations increasingly burdening their producers with taxes to cover the escalating costs of state-funded retirement benefits as fewer wage earners have to pay for growing numbers of retired persons. The net effect inevitably is declining competitiveness in a world market increasingly

dominated by lower cost producers in countries with abundant young labor resources. The current political swing in Europe toward more socialistically inclined governments can only exacerbate growing unemployment and declining productivity problems.

Any serious investor has to think in global terms!

Wise institutional and private investors are responding to these trends by diversifying their portfolios internationally.

Considering the inherent investment risks in emerging markets where some degree of disorder is present, private investors without the necessary research capacity to make sound investment decisions independently, take refuge in collective investment schemes, including partnerships, unit trusts, and funds.

Domestic security dealers in countries with substantial capital markets, such as the US, are not necessarily well equipped to comfortably manage the transition from local trades to international ones.

European brokers with stronger international orientation may find it easier, thanks in part to the access they have had to offshore funds which have taken the lead in emerging market investing. Hence, the growth in offshore funds has been phenomenal. As the economies of Eastern Europe, Asia and South America expand further, this growth will accelerate.

The fundamentals are in favor of emerging economies with abundant workforces and a national desire to succeed. Until they reach the stage of maturity where their savings rates begin to satisfy their capital needs, these countries will continue eagerly to invite foreign investment.

Under circumstances requiring cross-border investment on an unprecedented scale, the offshore financial services industry offers opportunities of a lifetime.

The question is whether it can systematically rise to the occasion to retain the initiative without becoming bureaucratic in itself and so lose its principal regulatory advantage over domestic financial centers.

Offshore finance is no longer the exclusive domain of the very wealthy, and as its clientele becomes more mainstream, the nature of its services and their means of delivery are changing dramatically.

The ability to securely communicate complex information around the world in a flash, profoundly affects the way in which business is conducted.

Offshore finance is a prime candidate for electronic delivery of services on a grand scale.

For more information on the world of offshore business go to <http://www.valtechservices.com>

and click on Offshore Special Report. Between the manual that is provided, and the four special reports on four of the world's best financial districts, this is a great information source.

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Offshore Banking: What You Need To Know Before Opening An Account

By Joseph Kenny

Offshore banking, we have all heard about it before. Unfortunately, many are misinformed when it comes to offshore banking. We have all heard news reports of offshore accounts being used to front illegal activities or to avoid taxes. In fact, we have also seen it in the movies, being used a similar way. This has led many individuals to believe that offshore banking is illegal. Despite what you may believe, offshore banking is legal. However, how you use it may be considered illegal.

Offshore banking is done through a bank that is known as an offshore bank. Offshore banks are banks that are located in another country, other than the country that you reside in. For instance, if you live in the United States an offshore bank would not be located in the United States. Many popular offshore banks are located in Switzerland. There are a number of advantages to offshore banking, but there are disadvantages as well.

The biggest advantage of offshore banking is that you are offered privacy and stability. There are many individuals who place their money in offshore accounts for security purposes. When your money is in an offshore account, you can access it, but many choose not to. It is easier to access and spend your money if it is at a local bank. That is why a large number of individuals use offshore banking to help them increase their savings.

Another advantage of offshore banking is that just about anyone can open an account. The most common users of offshore banking are corporations, the self-employed, or individuals who are wealthy. Offshore banks may have restrictions on the amount of money that is needed to open an account, but it is not always a large amount. Whether you are a small business owner, wealthy, or you consider yourself middle class, you should still be able to open up an offshore bank account.

As previously mentioned, offshore banking is often associated with illegal activities. One of these illegal activities is tax evasion. If you set up an offshore bank account, you will still need to report your savings. Not reporting all of your money in an offshore account can lead to you being brought up on tax evasion charges. It is important to note that you have the ability to prevent this from happening. As long as you choose to use your offshore bank account legally, there shouldn't be any disadvantages to having one.

The decision to open up an offshore bank account is a large one. If you are interested in opening up an offshore bank account, it is advised that you fully examine your decision. Many benefit from offshore banking, but not all do. If you are planning on using your offshore account to avoid a lawsuit or to evade taxes, you may want to reexamine your decision. As previously mentioned, there are serious consequences for doing this. As long as you plan on using your offshore account in a legal way, you can benefit immensely from offshore banking.

Joe Kenny writes for the UK personal finance sites <http://www.ukpersonalloanstore.co.uk> and also <http://www.financefool.co.uk>

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