

Bank Assistance Conference



From left: Krzysztof Charchuła, member of the board at BZ WBK-Aviva TUO SA; Henryk Pietraszkiewicz, president of FM Bank; Włodzimierz Kiciński, president of Nordea Bank Polska SA; Norbert Jeziolowicz, director of the Polish Bank Association; Ryszard Grzelak, chairman of Europ Assistance Polska Sp. z o.o.; Paweł Zylm, chairman of BRE Ubezpieczenia TU S.A.

■ Almost 100 bankers and insurance business professionals showed up at Warsaw's Sofitel Victoria Hotel May 18 for the Fourth Assistance Forum, a conference on bank assistance and bank insurance services held by daily life service provider Europ Assistance Polska.

The event, held in partnership with the Polish Bank Association, was hosted by Director Norbert Jeziolowicz, director of the Polish Bank Association, and Ryszard Grzelak, chairman of Europ Assistance Polska.

During the conference, Krzysztof Szczerbacz, senior project manager at ARC Rynek i Opinia Sp. z o.o. polling company, discussed the findings of a survey in which respondents nationwide were asked about bank assistance services.

Paweł Pietryka, managing director at BNP Paribas Fortis SA, made a presentation on bank insurance services "as a marketing strategy in the process of sales and customer retention." Using a practical example, Pietryka set out to prove that it is possible to give an individual twist to run-of-the-mill

banking products that look the same as their counterparts offered by the competition. Banking products can be promoted successfully by combing them skillfully with bank assistance services, according to Pietryka.

Marcin Siekierski, a director at the ACR SA agency, argued that online financial services are still in their infancy in Poland and that large insurance and banking institutions use only a small fraction of the potential offered by the internet.

Apart from presentations made by experts, another highlight of the conference was a panel discussion on e-commerce in the context of bank insurance services. Participants in the discussion agreed that the role of the internet in the sale of financial products is on the rise and will continue to grow in the future. They also voiced the view that bank assistance products will be selling increasingly well and become an important source of income for banks as the standard of living in the country improves, accompanied by an aging of the population and a growing number of single-person households.

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