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Lotus Capital Launches Loan Sale Platform

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"Our success in the distribution of debt will be driven by our proven ability to sell paper anywhere in the capital structure between zero and 90% loan-to-value," says Lotus founder Faisal Ashraf.

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"We win business a little differently than many of our peers," Ashraf told GlobeSt.com this past October.

NEW YORK CITY—Boutique investment banking firm Lotus Capital Partners, launched in late 2016 by industry veteran Faisal Ashraf, has launched a loan sale and distribution business aimed at lenders and investors who want to de-risk and leverage their positions in whole loans, A-notes, and mezzanine debt. The firm has tapped Tim Taylor, most recently head of special situations at Ten-X, to lead the new platform.

"We're at an inflection point for loan distribution," says Ashraf. "Lenders are becoming increasingly reliant on loan sales as a mechanism to address various intensifying pressures from regulations, shareholders, competition and investment committees. Our clients are looking at distribution as a solution to rebalance holdings, leverage yield, or simply to de-risk their positions."

Distributing components within a client's capital structure is not a typical feature of loan sale advisories, but Lotus already has closed approximately \$150 million in private placements. Among these are three separate ten-year mezzanine tranches on Allergan's new US

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headquarters in Madison, NJ; Lotus structured and separately placed \$70 million with Hyundai Asset Management, Morrison Street Capital and BlackRock.

"In light of the changing landscape of real estate finance toward non-bank lenders, there is a great demand for loan sale and distribution expertise," says Greta Guggenheim, CEO of TPG Real Estate Finance Trust. "Effective execution in this space requires an understanding of the client's business objective, and the ability to match the client's needs with the right counterparty."

A 20-year veteran of real estate finance, Taylor has led debt/distribution teams at Merrill Lynch and Cantor Commercial Real Estate as well as at Ten-X. Among his CCRE colleagues was Ashraf, who ran capital markets and large loan origination there.

While at CCRE, Taylor and Ashraf led one of Wall Street's most productive distribution teams, with more than \$4 billion in private placements during a three-year run. "Joining Lotus presents a unique opportunity to reunite with a highly regarded colleague and deliver thoughtfully structured loan sale solutions," Taylor says.

Ashraf adds that bringing in a professional of Taylor's stature to manage the firm's distribution desk is essential in establishing credibility and further ensuring the optimal nexus of best price and executional certainty. "Our success in the distribution of debt will be driven by our proven ability to sell paper anywhere in the capital structure between zero and 90% loan-to-value," he says. "A world-class book of capital sources along with our track record for placing debt, especially within loan capital structures, are the key differentiators for us in the marketplace."

This past October, Ashraf told GlobeSt.com, "We win business a little differently than many of our peers. Ours is a story of career bankers and career distribution people that have come together to build a real estate capital markets advisory shop, and that's sort of counter-cyclical to what you typically see. You typically see an advisor aspire to be a debt fund or a hedge fund or a lender." He added, "We're a boutique firm, so we don't light up the room with five managing directors and stories of seven offices; we light up the room with solutions."



Paul Bubny ›

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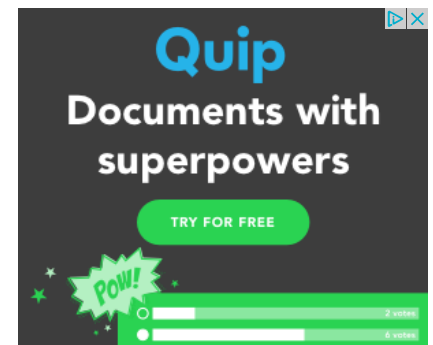
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