

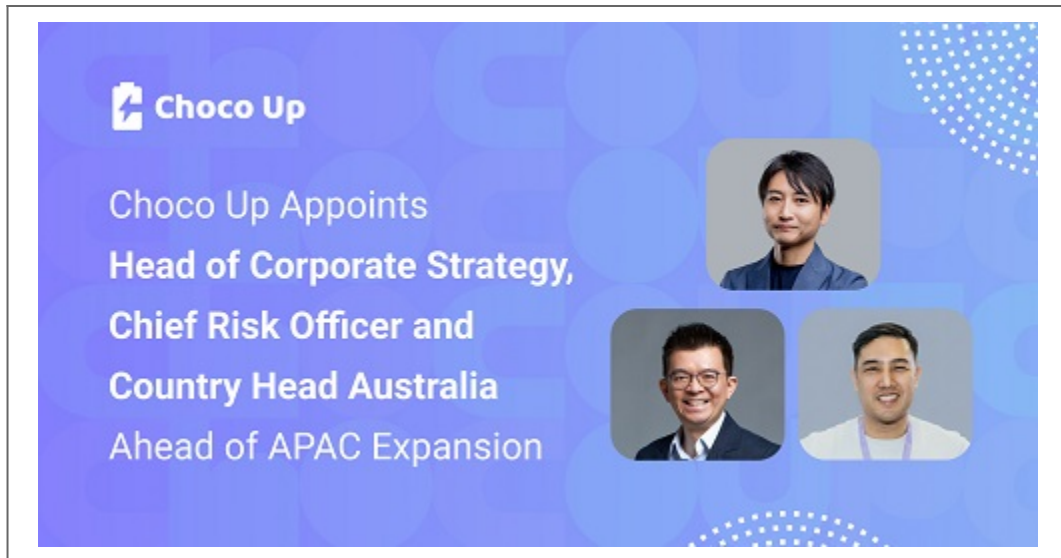
Choco Up Appoints Head of Corporate Strategy, Chief Risk Officer, and Country Head Australia Ahead of APAC Expansion

Category: Business

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Choco Up, Asia's leading growth financing platform for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), today announced three strategic leadership appointments as part of its ambitious expansion across Asia-Pacific. These hires position the company to scale sustainably as a trusted financing partner within the region for the SME ecosystem.



Leadership changes span corporate strategy, risk governance, and market execution to drive hyper business growth

To date, the company has supported 1,000 SMEs across Singapore, Hong Kong, and Australia. It has deployed growth capital to businesses in e-commerce, software-as-a-service, and technology-driven sectors.

With the expanded leadership structure in place, strategic planning and risk governance will be centralised. Local market execution will be strengthened to support disciplined regional scale.

Strengthening Strategy and Governance

Koichi Saito has been appointed Head of Corporate Strategy, bringing over 20 years of experience across corporate planning, mergers and acquisitions (M&A), capital markets, and venture building in Asia-Pacific.

As Founder and General Partner of KK Fund, a leading seed-stage VC firm focused on Southeast Asia, Mr Saito has worked closely with founders across scaling operations, entering new

markets, and navigating complex cross-border environments. His earlier career includes roles at ORIX Group, private equity with George Soros' IHG, investment banking at Mitsubishi UFJ Morgan Stanley Securities, and venture capital at IMJ Investment Partners, where he backed category-defining startups. Across his investment career, he has led investments in more than 30 companies and advised on cross-border expansion across the region.

With the new appointment, Mr Saito will shape the company's long-term strategy, forge strategic alliances, and drive the company's next phase of regional dominance.

Elevating Risk as a Core Growth Function

Kitti Chiraseivinupraphand has been promoted to Chief Risk Officer as the company scales transaction volume and expands across multiple Asia-Pacific markets.

Mr Chiraseivinupraphand joined the company in 2021 as Head of Risk and brings over 20 years of experience in corporate banking risk management across Asia. Prior to joining, he held senior roles at Bangkok Bank Co. and holds an MBA from Boston College. Since joining, he has played an instrumental role in developing Choco Up's AI-powered credit assessment framework, enabling same-day approvals while maintaining rigorous controls.

In his expanded role, Mr Chiraseivinupraphand will continue to advance risk governance and risk technology, ensuring consistency, resilience and control as operations accelerate.

Strengthening Market Execution in Australia

Bart Joanilho will take on the role of Country Head, Australia, as the company continues to deepen its presence and operating footprint in the Australian market.

He has led the Australian business since its market entry in 2023. Mr Joanilho brings over 15 years of experience as a serial entrepreneur across property, food and beverage and e-commerce, combined with deep expertise in tech ecosystem partnerships. Since spearheading Choco Up's market entry, he has driven enormous growth to the Australian businesses through innovative go-to-market strategies and localisation efforts.

As Country Head, Mr Joanilho will continue to deepen local partnerships and oversee market execution in Australia, ensuring alignment with the company's broader priorities.

*"Koichi, Kitti, and Bart each bring experience that is important to how we operate today," said **Percy Hung, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Choco Up.** "As we expand across markets, aligning strategy, risk management and local execution becomes increasingly important. This leadership structure gives us the confidence to support SMEs more effectively as we propel towards becoming the go-to financing partner for APAC's SMEs and e-commerce merchants."*

Choco Up

Choco Up is a global technology and financial services platform that offers alternative financing and growth solutions for SMEs. With data analytics and machine learning

at its core, Choco Up employs vast integrations to automate fund deployment, providing fast-growing companies with zero-equity funding in a quick and seamless manner. Choco Up has offices in Singapore and Hong Kong and serves businesses with smart-growth analytics and global payment solutions to fuel their growth.

