Intermediary profile Alexander Beard Group

I'm a celebrity... get The stands me an adviser

Alexander Beard has for a long time drawn its impressive client list from the movers and shakers of the UK's music and entertainment scene, and as they have slowly migrated overseas the company has extended its reach to keep pace By Helen Burggraf

Like a number of advisory firms still active in the UK today, the Alexander Beard Group was founded in the wake of the Financial Services Act 1986, which, among a range of regulations, precluded chartered accountants from recommending their clients to tied advisers.

At that point Paul Beard was with the UK insurance company Allied Dunbar, where he had been for almost a decade. Many of his clients were in the entertainment industry in London. (Allied Dunbar later became a part of BAT industries, which in turn was devoured by Zurich Financial Services.)

signing up clients from new areas of the entertainment world, including record producers, TV and radio presenters, small record companies and associated businesses.

Global expertise

"By setting up my own advisory business, I thought I would be able to maintain and hopefully strengthen my contacts in the music and entertainment world," Beard says.

The strategy worked and Beard's new company was soon thriving,

Key facts

Founded: 1987, Cheshire

Assets under management:

Approaching £160m

No. of clients: "Thousands" around the world

No. of employees: About 50, including 41 in the UK, of which nine are advisers

No. of offices: UK offices in Chester, Bath, Leeds and London; international offices in Australia (two), Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and the US. Cyprus office closed last November Remuneration: Mostly fee-based

Website: www.abg.net

As Alexander Beard grew, many of the company's entertainment clients moved abroad, particularly to the US, Beard recalls, obliging both him and his company to develop an ever-higher degree of international expertise.

By 1995 the first overseas office had opened its doors in Kuala Lumpur, and by 2005 Alexander Beard had become one of the few UKbased advisory firms to have established a full-time, licensed presence in the US, which it did in San Francisco, near the epicentre of America's music and entertainment industry.

Since then Beard has opened and closed a number of overseas offices, acquired several operations from his rivals, launched and sold off divisions and entered new lines of