



Mercantil Banco Universal selected "Bank of the Year 2011" in Venezuela by The Banker

- *The magazine emphasized the increase in the bank's key financial indicators and its low ratio of nonperforming loans*

The prestigious financial magazine, *The Banker*, recognized Mercantil Banco Universal as the "Bank of the Year 2011" in Venezuela based on its performance over the past year, as reported by Mercantil's Corporate Communications Unit.

Each year, *The Banker* reviews the performance of financial institutions in 147 countries and selects the best in each one based on their indicators.

As part of their announcement, *The Banker* acknowledged Mercantil Banco Universal's sound performance in a dynamic economic environment as a significant achievement. According to the magazine, the bank's results demonstrate management's prudent and sound business decisions, as reflected in the 26.4% growth in assets and 32.7% growth in equity, among other indicators. This performance is also a result of a decreased ratio in nonperforming loans that is less than 1% of the bank's total loans.

Mercantil's Chairman, Gustavo Vollmer Acedo, commented that "the bank has shown the ability to grow in a changing environment while meeting all its regulatory requirements. Mercantil Banco Universal also implemented new initiatives in 2011, introducing important security improvements to electronic transactions with the inclusion of chip technology in its credit and debit cards ATMs and points of sale and expanding its *Mercantil Aliado* network which now has 140 commercial partnerships - merchants and in-store banking kiosks - serving the needs of customers in underserved areas in Venezuela. Mercantil continues to demonstrate its commitment to the communities in which it operates and its employees are driven by the highest ethical principles and best management practices.

Mercantil Corporate Communications
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