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## Low-profile shop prices billions of dollars in commercial real estate loans

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Several floors above a burrito shop in downtown Boston, more than \$800 billion worth of commercial real estate loans are under scrutiny.

Some of the country's largest banks are paying DebtX, an online exchange for selling loans, to price assets that many believe will be at the center of the next global credit crisis. Banks and other financial institutions want to know what these loans are worth as they weigh options that include selling them or marking down their value.

Some banks ultimately need to clean up portfolios as they posture for merger and acquisition activity. Others are in pain as they try to figure out how to emerge from a cloud of suspect loans.

Pricing activity inside DebtX, founded nearly 10 years ago by loan workout specialists who cut their teeth during New England's last banking crisis, has accelerated since early 2007.

"It's a result of the growing credit concerns, accounting rule changes, and increased portfolio management scrutiny," DebtX Chief Executive Kingsley Greenland said.

The loan pricing upswing, however, has not turned into an avalanche of loan sales. But that could come later.

"I haven't heard anyone say it's going to be as bad as I think it will be," Kingsley said.

Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke sounded another alarm on