

Acquisition Strategy





Your challenge

The fastest way to grow in professional services is inorganically, but it's not the most straightforward route—finding the right firm for partnership or acquisition is crucial for mapping out the future of a company and accelerating growth but we also know it's all about timing and assessing what the opportunities are for both the sellers and the buyers.

There are profound questions from the beginning: Is the timing right for an acquisition? Are you looking to expand your sector coverage, break into another geography, or double down on a particular service? Further down the line come questions about whether you've already met the ideal firm or whether you need a more comprehensive and independent search.



Our approach

We've worked with many of the world's leading consulting firms, as well as plenty of those who aspire to join those ranks, to help them consider how inorganic growth can best be achieved.

Our knowledge of the competitive landscape and breadth of insight gives our customers a fresh perspective—some want our input early on, and others in very specific areas. Combined with our independence, this allows us to be frank in our assessment of whether a target firm represents the way forward or a cul-de-sac, and even whether acquisition is appropriate at all.

We offer tailored advice to ensure you achieve your goals and get the right fit for your business. Leveraging our deep knowledge of the professional services sector, we align our proprietary database of thousands of firms with your definitions, as well as drawing on deep desk research, to produce long and shortlists that underpin an ongoing conversation about whether your Goldilocks firm is out there.



How we can help

Whether we're involved from the start in deciding whether an acquisition is the right next move or brought in to give feedback on an existing shortlist of targets, we always bring our deep knowledge and honest opinion to bear. We can:

- **Advise on your approach**, giving our strategic assessment of consulting trends and where investment could best be made in the context of our market knowledge.
- **Scan the market**, supplementing our proprietary database with detailed desk research to arrive at a shortlist of firms.
- **Conduct commercial due diligence**, validating and challenging an existing set of targets that you've already identified.
- **Look for partners**, identifying firms that could represent a good fit and bring complementary expertise.



Case study: Looking for advisory capability in North America and Europe

Over the course of two separate projects, we worked with both the corporate development and advisory leads of a large and expanding technology firm looking to bolster its advisory capabilities in its home market and overseas.

In the first engagement, we spent time discussing their criteria and establishing how best to meet their specific needs around sector focus and software specialism, before progressing to a comprehensive scan of the US consulting market. We worked together with the client to balance and refine a shortlist of targets for further approach.

The firm came back to us later in the year to conduct a similarly-focused project scanning the markets of the UK, France, and Germany. Our relationship with their team and familiarity with their proposition made for a smooth and successful search that complemented their own internal lists and brought new firms to light.



Case study: Exploring the TMT market in the UK

Our client—a global technology consulting firm—had conducted several scans of TMT and its various subsectors in the UK in recent years, but was yet to find an appropriate target for acquisition.

By cutting down our database, mapping it to the client's sector definitions, and comparing it with the searches they'd already undertaken, we produced a comprehensive survey of the landscape and its structural biases.

Our role on this project was as much to articulate the state of the sector as it was to identify firms previously unknown to the client. Our work both confirmed and challenged the client's existing understanding of TMT's subsectors and how each supported different ranges of size and specialism.

“ You approached the task with a different lens, and quickly got to grips with our business, aligning your terminology with ours. You did a great job turning around lots of content in a short space of time and your level of engagement throughout the project was great. The findings have been well received and the team are currently working through the actions. We should have done this exercise a long time ago! – **Managing Director, technology firm**



Case study: Looking for consulting partners in Southeast Asia

A UK-based software company wanted to find potential consulting partners in Southeast Asia for their workforce management platform. They were looking for local firms with expertise in operational consulting who could represent their software in the region and break through the language barrier.

Working country-by-country, we drew up detailed lists for our rolling discussions with the client, who then used these recommendations to approach potential partners over the course of the project.

In addition to finding firms that fitted the brief, perhaps more important was our contextual knowledge of the consulting landscape. This allowed us to explain the distribution of sector and service expertise across the region and encourage more strategic discussions about the possibilities for partnering in the region.

“ *During our various conversations, the insights we got about the market when reviewing firm lists was very useful. We received quite specific pieces of intel which we have acted upon.* – **Global Head of Alliances, technology firm**

