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International award-winning Conduit Consulting LLC provides strategy, corporate development, general management, as well as transaction advisory and support services. We spoke to Jillian Alexander, Founder and Managing Director of its Strategy & Corporate Development practice, about how recent developments are driving major changes in deal strategy and process.

We find that in the United States high deal prices, data security concerns, increased distrust of investment bankers and business brokers, as well as new and pending legislation are driving changes in deal strategy and process.

It's always been the case that small companies could never afford to waste money on a bad acquisition. However, with today's prices and slow economic growth rates, big companies have become far more cautious. Now, the pressure is on deal advisors to ensure the buyer has clarity of both the assets and liabilities it is acquiring or risk losing the client or the deal after considerable effort.

Advisors understand that buyers can no longer rely on holdbacks in escrow accounts, as the amounts will not be enough to cover severe data privacy breach penalties or material misrepresentations. As a consequence, operational due diligence MUST OCCUR and appropriate governance policies and practices need to be in place BEFORE deal close. C-suite executives are engaging firms like Conduit Consulting to obtain guidance and support from myself and similar professionals whom are skilled at managing transactions from inception through post acquisition integration in a manner that completes the transaction without disrupting operations and discord, yet accelerates profit growth.

Attorneys and Accountants are now advocating for the more complex deal strategies and comprehensive due diligence which I have been leading for more than 20 years. They frequently refer their clients to us due to our unique ability to quickly produce breakthrough innovations and breakaway strategies, resulting in catapulting our clients toward success. We guide clients to grow revenue, improve customer satisfaction, bolster operational performance, decrease cost of capital, increase profitability, gain market share and enhance company's value. Clients have included multinational and domestic public corporations, private enterprises, government agencies, and non-profit organizations.

In 2015, not only does the deal-flow continue, but also buyers are getting serious about fully integrating past and newly acquired businesses to increase profitability. Many companies stockpiled cash during 2009-2013 and now have money to spend. As the US dollar has strengthened and the cost of capital remains relatively cheap, we are seeing many backward vertical integration and cross-border market expansion deals. This is occurring not only in intellectual property asset-rich industries (i.e., communications-media, biopharmaceuticals-drug discovery), but also in consumer and industrial product industries (i.e., vehicles, module housing, bulk and packaged food).

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