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# M&A Integration: Looking Beyond the Here & Now

*What happens AFTER the deal closes determines its true value.*

*AI talked with Conduit Consulting's founder and Managing Director Jillian Alexander who, unlike most deal advisers, has extensive buy-side experience advising on and managing transactions from conception through integration. She has garnered a reputation for ignoring bad deals and swiftly get deals done, including those others could not close. And, 100% of the deals she advised on which closed have been accretive.*

## **What determines whether an M&A deal will be accretive or dilutive?**

Buyers need to have a realistic plan of how the entities will not only be combined to generate profits exceeding that which the companies would earn independently, but also quickly recoup acquisition, integration and business transformation costs so that it may realise a healthy ROI on the transaction.

When it comes to M&A Integration, many companies fail to seriously plan beyond the here and now. Approaching a deal envisioning post-acquisition operations facilitates identifying opportunities and risks and assessing the true realisable value of the transaction.

## **When should the M&A Integration plan be developed?**

Ideally, the post-acquisition integration and business transformation planning occurs before the deal closes. Effectively communicating both the merger and the vision of the fully-integrated company to all employees and key external stakeholders upon closing the deal typically leads to more confidence in management and support for the deal.

## **What sort of support do senior management teams commonly need to smooth post-merger integration?**

M&A Integration goes well beyond integrating systems and processes, it involves revising business strategies and refining corporate cultures, and touches humans on a level that can be more impactful on the businesses than any other initiative. Very few companies have internal resources whom have had repeated successes planning and managing these extremely complex initiatives.

Companies generally need their most talented resources focused on day-to-day operations – working with vendors and customers as well as making sure personnel are performing every day

manufacturing, marketing, accounting, cash management, and other business activities without disruption rather than seeking new positions elsewhere.

Clients draw on the considerable talents, knowledge, and transaction and transformation expertise of Conduit Consulting's seasoned professionals. Our experience and knowledge enables us to foresee changes in the competitive environment and anticipate internal and external stakeholders reactions, and facilitate creating the "to-be" company's goals, strategies, organization, processes, systems, culture as well as the workplan to migrate from where they are today to where they want to be with minimal disruption.

## **Takeovers success are often dependent upon integration after a deal has been agreed. How has integration changed in today's increasingly global market?**

I have been managing in businesses dealing with globalised products and cross-border hand-offs my entire adult life. So, to me, telecommunications infrastructure and improved hardware and software have made work simpler... and it is significantly faster to build rapport, get answers and move forward.

## **How do other deal advisors feel about your firm being involved?**

Other advisors and clients have expressed appreciation for Conduit Consulting professionals' helping them avoid pit-falls and our uncanny ability to identify the elements that will be most contentious and challenging. By doing so, we can then plan and manage the situation so that due diligence, deal closing, transition, and business transformation are all relatively frictionless.

**What sets Conduit Consulting apart from its rivals and how do you use this differentiation to your advantage?**

Saving clients own time and effort while accelerating their companies' profit growth and enhancing enterprise value is Conduit Consulting's forte. We place a high value on providing appropriate guidance, creating high-quality relevant deliverables, and performing work right the first time. Additionally, how we engage with clients and other advisors not only rapidly builds rapport, but also has resulted in Conduit Consulting being repeatedly recognised for its strategic management, business model design, product innovation, strategy development, and other consulting services.

**Over the last 12 months, Conduit Consulting LLC has continued to grow as a company but what has its biggest achievement been?**

Attracting talented professionals to join our team. It isn't easy to find people with the intellectual capital, professionalism, personality, wisdom, and skills necessary to service Conduit Consulting's clients well.

**What do you anticipate will be fueling M&A activity in your region in the next 12 months?**

United States labor laws, tax rates, and reporting requirements are less business-friendly than many other nations. Add to that California's labor code, tax rates, reporting requirements, and real property cost, and it is a wonder why more businesses did not merge for tax inversion or other profitability improvement purposes.

**What do you expect to be working on during the coming year?**

We look forward to enhancing capabilities and value within a few up-and-coming and established corporate clients owning well-known brands, devising their acquisition strategies, confidentially sourcing and engaging targets, managing due diligence and orchestrating merger integration.

Additionally, we expect to help clients seeking to realise greater value from their assets with new market entry, product innovation, new venture development, reorganisation or other goal-setting transition planning, as well as transaction and transformation management activities.

**About Conduit Consulting LLC**

Conduit Consulting LLC provides corporate development advice and support spanning strategy, transaction advisory and general management to companies ranging from large multinational corporations to small private enterprises. Its professionals' client-specific confidential advice and efforts efficiently leading all or aspects of strategic cross-border and domestic transactions have resulted in successful market entry, product pipeline and service capability enhancement, operational performance improvement, profitability growth, increased enterprise value, and more than \$3.4 billion realized through IPO, M&A, and private placement transactions.

