

RIA IN A BOX ACQUIRED BY PRIVATE EQUITY FIRM AQUILINE CAPITAL

05/23/2018 Originally Published by Jeff Benjamin, InvestmentNews

Software service provider RIA in a Box has been acquired by the private equity firm Aquiline Capital Partners.

While the terms of the deal were not disclosed, this represents the latest in a growing trend of P-E investors adding exposure to the financial services industry.

Aquiline has appointed Barnaby Grist, a former senior executive at Schwab Advisor Services and Cetera Financial Group, as executive chairman of the board of RIA in a Box.

"The management team has built a market-leading business, and I see multiple opportunities to increase market penetration and expand the suite of services provided to clients," Mr. Grist said in a prepared statement. "The company will pursue organic growth initiatives as well as an acquisition strategy in the wealth management software and compliance industry."

Daniel Seivert, chief executive of investment bank **ECHELON Partners**, said the deal is in line with P-E firms' appetite for fintech companies providing service as a software, or SaaS.

"P-E firms have been in love with these SaaS companies, because they have a high level of operating leverage: They build technology and then the cost stays relatively low," he said. "And RIA in a Box has made huge inroads in terms of automating."

Approximately 2,000 RIAs of varying sizes across the U.S. use the platform to increase compliance work-flow efficiency. Launched in 2005, RIA in a Box was acquired in 2011 by an investment group led by Will Bressman and GJ King.