



ECHELON's RIA M&A Deal Report

U.S. Wealth Management 1Q26



Investment Bankers | Management Consultants | Valuation Experts

to the Wealth and Investment Management Industries

First Quarter 2026

Key Trends and Highlights

RIA M&A Reaches Yet Another All-Time Quarterly Record, Driven by a Rise in Larger Transactions: Deal activity showed no signs of slowing in 1Q26, with 142 transactions closed, a new record that surpassed the prior high of 125 quarterly deals set in both 3Q25 and 4Q24. The milestone is notable given the quarter’s macroeconomic headwinds and uncertainty in private credit markets. Average AUM per transaction reached \$1.8 BN, the highest since 2021, and total transacted AUM was \$1.67 TN, more than double the \$805 BN in 1Q25 (+107% YoY). The high average AUM per deal and increase in total transacted AUM show that the RIA industry is institutionalizing at a rapid pace.

Buyers Are Building Platforms, Not Aggregating Assets: Buyers’ focus has shifted from being primarily focused on generating additional scale to focusing on creating a truly integrated platform for clients. Corebridge Financial’s merger with Equitable Holdings is one such example of a deal that aims to create one company offering retirement plan advisory, insurance, wealth management, and asset management services under one roof. Strategic acquirers are increasingly adding tax, estate, family office, and institutional consulting capabilities through M&A as clients seek more holistic service offerings.

International Expansion Is Becoming a Battleground: Cross-border activity emerged as a defining theme of the quarter, with U.S. acquirers accelerating their push abroad, seeking to expand in new markets where valuations may be lower than they are in the U.S. Creative Planning has completed two international transactions in 2026: its January acquisition of Swiss RIA Baseline Wealth Management (\$1 BN+ AUM), followed by its acquisition of U.K.-based MASECO (\$5+ BN AUM) in March. Western Europe, Australia, and New Zealand have become prominent investment hubs given their similarity to U.S. markets, large pools of mobile wealth, and existing professional service infrastructure.


Private Equity Linked Transactions Continue to Dominate: PE-involved activity reached 102 transactions in 1Q26 (71.8% of deals announced), driven by a new all-time high of 95 PE-sponsored transactions, while direct investments dipped to seven from nine. Notable direct and strategic investments this quarter included Carlyle’s acquisition of a majority stake in MAI Capital Management and Stone Point Capital’s overseas investment in Amber River, another example of U.S.-based acquirers seeking transactions overseas.

WealthTECH M&A Activity Regains Traction: WealthTECH transactions reached 49 in 1Q26, up from 35 in 1Q25, continuing an acceleration that continued throughout 2025. Activity is increasingly concentrated around AI workflow tools, client analytics, and compliance automation, capabilities that firms are acquiring to simply keep pace with a rapidly evolving competitive landscape.

142	\$1.67 TN	475
Total 1Q26 Transactions Announced	in Total 1Q26 Assets Transacted	Total Deals Expected in 2026

Note: Totals above exclude WealthTECH deals unless an RIA is the buyer.

Recent ECHELON Deal Announcements




announced its sale to



ECHELON Partners served as the exclusive financial advisor to Gunderson and provided:

Sell-Side Investment Banking




announced its sale to



ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to L.M. Kohn and provided:

Sell-Side Investment Banking





announced its sale to




ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Total Wealth Planning and provided:

Sell-Side Investment Banking





announced its sale to



ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to The Paul Group and provided:

Sell-Side Investment Banking





The 14th Annual DDM Summit



The 2025 Deals & Dealmakers Summit witnessed record-setting attendance of dealmaking experts and industry-leading speakers. ECHELON is excited to announce that the DDM Summit will return in 2026, and we hope to see you there!

Exclusive Perks for Wealth Managers



Advanced education and training across a diversity of rarely addressed subjects.



Solutions to key needs including financing, deal structuring, valuation, and equity sharing.



A unique experience that stands apart from other industry conferences and workshops.



Substantial opportunities to learn about the valuable resources of **sponsor partners**.



Advisory relationships with a comprehensive team of real deal experts.



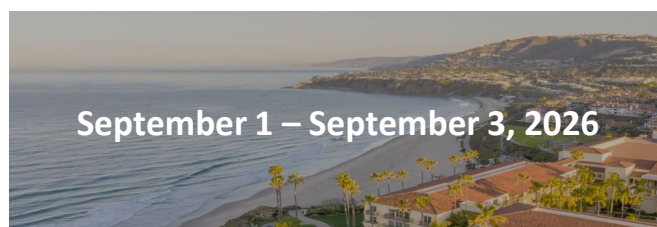
An unparalleled opportunity to network with dealmaking and practice management experts.

Venue and Event Details



THE RITZ-CARLTON

The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel
1 Ritz Carlton Dr
Dana Point, CA 92629



First Quarter 2026

Exhibit 1: M&A Deal Volume Off to Strong Start in 2026



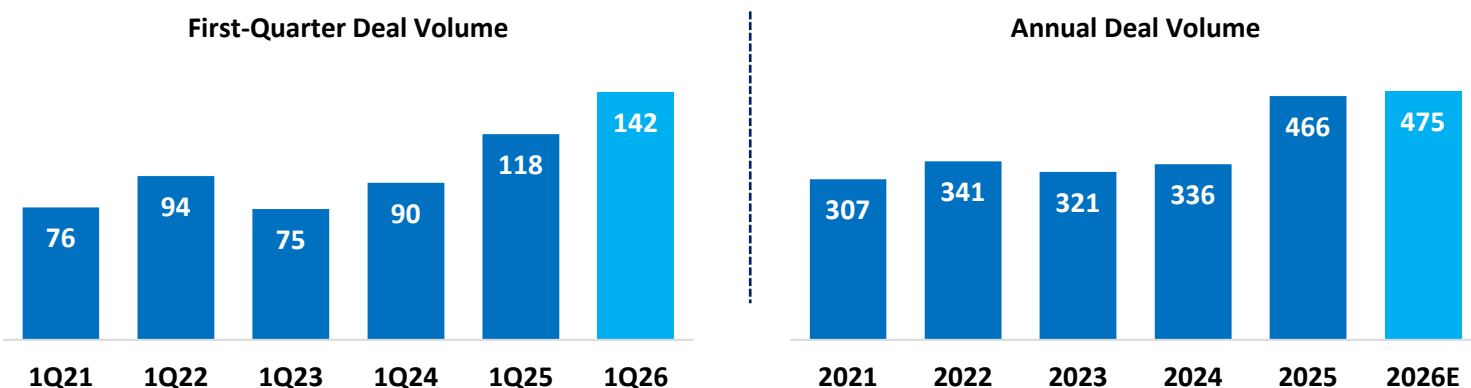
Sources: Company reports, SEC IARD, ECHELON Partners analysis

Exhibit 1 illustrates that firms announced 142 transactions in 1Q26, surpassing the prior quarterly high of 125, which was set in both 4Q24 and 3Q25, by 13.6%. **Exhibit 2** shows that 1Q26 volume was 20.3% higher than the 118 transactions recorded in 1Q25 – the second most active first quarter in industry history – and 57.8% higher than the 90 deals announced in 1Q24, marking this the third consecutive year with increases in Q1 deal activity and setting up 2026 as a potential banner year if the current pace holds.

As outlined in **Exhibit 3**, ECHELON estimates 2026 total deal volume will reach 475 transactions, surpassing 2025’s record of 466 and positioning 2026 as the most active year in wealth management M&A history.



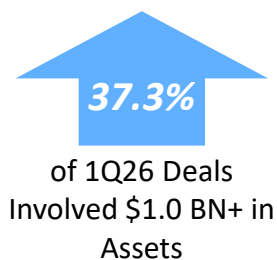
Exhibits 2 & 3: 2026 Sets New Record for Total Deal Volume in First Quarter



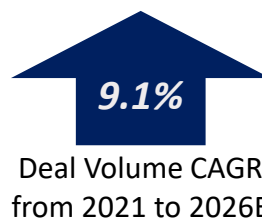
Sources: Company reports, SEC IARD, ECHELON Partners analysis

First Quarter 2026

1Q26 saw a steady increase in overall M&A deal volume and average deal value (measured by AUM) relative to both 1Q25 and 4Q25, resulting from accelerated M&A activity by strategic acquirers.



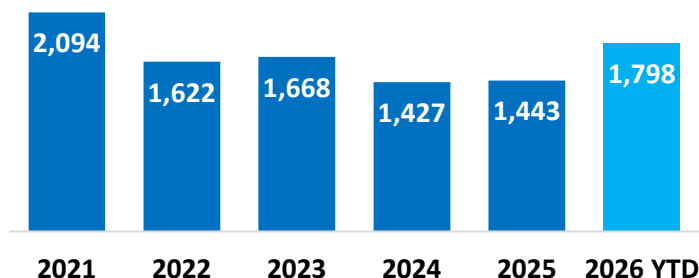
4.9%
of 1Q26
Transactions Were
Announced by
Financial Acquirers



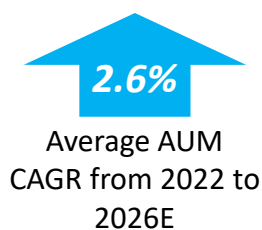
2026 Is on Pace for
the
Highest
Annual Deal Volume
on Record

Exhibit 4: Average Assets per Transaction Reaches Five-Year High

Average Assets per Deal (\$MM)



Excludes transactions involving over \$20 BN in AUM
Source: Company reports, SEC IARD, ECHELON Partners analysis



2026 Is on Pace for a
8.9%
Increase in Average
AUM per Deal
Relative to the 2021-
2025 Annual Average

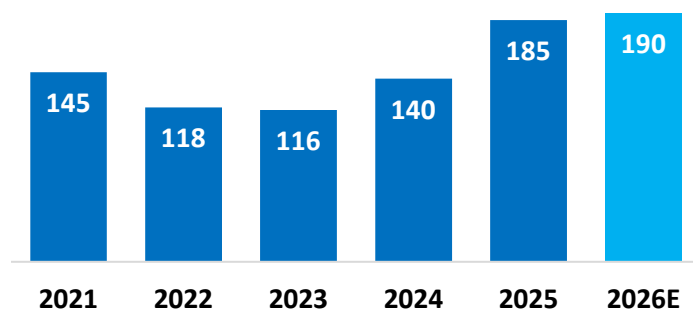
In 1Q26, 37.3% of deals involved sellers with \$1 BN+ in AUM, slightly down relative to 39.7% in 2025. Ongoing competition for high-quality, turnkey platforms has kept acquirers engaged across a spectrum of opportunities in terms of size, balancing the pursuit of scale with the practical limits of integration capacity.

Average AUM per deal, excluding transactions above \$20 BN in assets, reached \$1.8 BN in 1Q26, up from \$1.4 BN in 2025 and the four-year average of \$1.5 BN. This falls short only to 2021, when the average AUM per deal briefly exceeded \$2.0 BN. Larger transactions continue to be a sign that buyers remain well capitalized and are willing to pay premiums for at-scale M&A targets.

As has been the case historically, private equity acquirers remain most active at the upper end of the M&A scale, announcing seven total transactions with an average AUM of \$17.8 BN per deal (though the figures change to five transactions averaging \$6.9 BN, exclusive of \$20+ BN AUM deals).

Exhibit 5: Investor Demand Fuels Record Growth for \$1 BN+ Transactions

\$1 BN+ Wealth Management Transactions



Source: Company reports, SEC IARD, ECHELON Partners analysis

In 1Q26, dealmakers announced 53 \$1 BN+ deals, a 23.2% increase from 4Q25 and a 6.0% increase from 1Q25, accounting for 37.3% of all deals. Based on a conservative estimate, this puts 2026 on track to see 190 deals in this size range, surpassing the prior record of 185 set last year. Cerity Partners completed three \$1 BN+ deals in 1Q26, the most of any buyer, followed by Beacon Pointe Advisors, Savant Capital Management, CAPTRUST, Creative Planning, NewEdge Advisors, and Wealth Enhancement Group with two each, further solidifying these firms as top buyers in the industry.

First Quarter 2026

Exhibit 6: Top Wealth Management Transactions of 1Q26, Including Three \$50 BN+ Deals

Date	Seller	Buyer	Buyer Type	Seller Assets (\$MM) ¹
3/26/2026	Equitable Advisors	Corebridge Financial	Other Strategic	1,100,000
2/5/2026	Dynasty Financial Partners	Charles Schwab and Others	Other Strategic	125,000
3/31/2026	MAI Capital Management	The Carlyle Group	Private Equity	72,600
3/11/2026	GeoWealth	Goldman Sachs	Bank	49,000
1/15/2026	Clark Capital Management	Raymond James	Bank	30,554
2/26/2026	JFC Advisor Network	LPL Financial	Hybrid	27,000
2/10/2026	MIO Partners	Neuberger Berman	Private Equity	26,000
3/19/2026	AltamarCAM	Mercer	Other Strategic	23,000
3/13/2026	Manning & Napier	Abacus Global Management	RIA	18,000
2/20/2026	Amber River	Stone Point Capital	Private Equity	17,394

1. "Seller Assets" includes AUM and AUA.

Source: Company reports, SEC IARD, ECHELON Partners analysis

Exhibit 6 outlines the top wealth management transactions of 1Q26, ranked by seller assets. The quarter included three transactions involving sellers with over \$50 BN in assets. The top 10 transactions averaged approximately \$163.5 BN in assets per deal and were consummated by seven strategic and three financial acquirers, demonstrating the capital both types of investors stand ready to deploy.

The quarter's largest transaction was the merger between Corebridge Financial and Equitable Holdings, underscoring the renewed appetite for mega-cap transactions. The all-stock merger, valuing the combined entity at approximately \$22 BN, will create a \$1.5 TN retirement, wealth, and asset management platform serving over 12 million clients.

Charles Schwab's minority investment in Dynasty is particularly notable as a large step into the independent advice channel for the custodian. Dynasty is a platform for a network of independent RIAs, and half of the total AUM of RIAs on its platform is custodied at Schwab. The investment marks a potential step toward creating a fully vertically integrated platform from the custodian to the platform to the individual advisors.

Scaled U.S. acquirers increasingly looked overseas in 1Q26, with the U.K. emerging as the focal point. Stone Point Capital's agreement to acquire Amber River, one of the U.K.'s largest independent financial planning consolidators, with approximately \$17.4 BN of AUM and over 330 advisors, stands out as the quarter's marquee international at a reported valuation of ~\$1.2 BN. Creative Planning's acquisitions of two European firms, MASECO and Baseline Wealth Management, reinforce the theme. Arthur J. Gallagher is another example of a U.S.-based firm pursuing international M&A, this time in Australia with its acquisition of Australia-based Asset Partners Private Wealth.

Overall, 1Q26's top deals reflect two primary themes: vertical integration across various elements of the wealth management ecosystem as seen by the Schwab/Dynasty and Corebridge/Equitable deals and the accelerating interest of U.S.-based firms in overseas wealth management industry opportunities.

27.9%

Increase in \$1 BN+ AUM Deals vs. 4Q25's Volume

38.2%

of 1Q26 Deals Have Involved Targets with over \$1.0 BN in AUM

9

Direct Private Equity Investments in 1Q26

105

Deals Involving a Private Equity Firm as Either a Direct Investor or a Sponsor

First Quarter 2026

Exhibit 7: Private Equity Activity Remains Elevated Amid Continued Minority Investment Focus

Date	Seller	Buyer	Seller Assets (\$MM)	% Acquired
3/31/2026	MAI Capital Management	The Carlyle Group	72,600	>50%
2/20/2026	Amber River	Stone Point Capital	17,394	<50%
3/20/2026	Threadline Wealth	Cynosure Group	5,800	>50%
2/23/2026	BIP	Constellation Wealth Capital	5,500	<50%
3/11/2026	Cyndeo Wealth Partners	Rise Growth Partners	3,100	<50%
2/25/2026	IFC Advisors	Merchant Investment Management	2,500	<50%
3/2/2026	Accelerated Wealth Partners	JC Flowers	N/A	<50%

Source: Company reports, SEC IARD, ECHELON Partners analysis

Exhibit 7 highlights the seven direct investments made by financial sponsors in 1Q26. This is down relative to the 10 private equity deals in 4Q25 and the 15 in 1Q25. Five of the seven transactions were minority investments. While overall deal volume declined, sponsor engagement across the sector remained broad, with investments targeting both scaled platforms and smaller, growth-oriented firms.

Carlyle's acquisition of a majority stake in MAI Capital Management, a \$72.6 BN RIA, represented the largest private equity transaction of the quarter. Wealth Partners Capital Group, MAI's former financial sponsor, will maintain a minority interest in the company, making MAI another large RIA with more than one private equity sponsor.

Threadline Wealth (formerly Moss Adams Wealth Advisors) is an independent RIA formed last year when Baker Tilly, the recent acquirer of Moss Adams, divested the group from its main accounting business, a move that somewhat acted against the trend of wealth managers merging with accounting firms. It is Cynosure's third active investment in the wealth management space (the others being Steward Partners and Savant Wealth) and, with the new backing, represents a potential new acquirer in the industry.

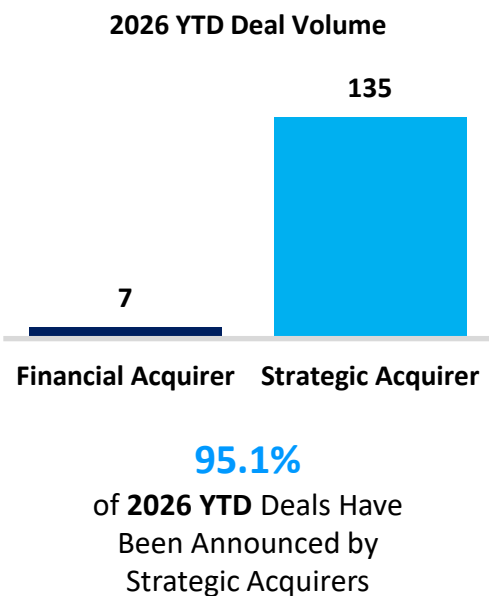
Minority investments continue to be commonly used by financial acquirers in the wealth management space. Stone Point Capital, a provider of debt and equity capital to several prominent RIAs, made a minority investment in Amber River, a U.K.-based wealth manager with approximately \$17.4 BN in assets, continuing its long-standing focus on the wealth and insurance sectors. Constellation also remained active, investing in BIP, a \$5.5 BN RIA, marking another addition to its growing portfolio. J.C. Flowers committed up to \$200 MM to support the launch of Accelerated Wealth Partners, a new RIA investment platform positioning itself as a growth-equity partner rather than a traditional aggregator, targeting only five to seven high-conviction investments in regional or niche RIAs with \$1 BN to \$5 BN in assets.

Lower-scale minority transactions remain concentrated among a smaller pool of potential investors. 1Q26 featured two deals by such investors: Rise Growth Partners' investment in Cyndeo Wealth Partners, a \$3.1 BN RIA, and Merchant Investment Management's investment in IFC Advisors, a \$2.5 BN RIA.

Overall, private equity investors' appetite for deals remained relatively consistent with the prior quarter, though deal volume is down from the higher levels shown a few quarters prior. Sponsors continue to demonstrate strong interest in the wealth management sector, eagerly backing multiple firms in the space or showing a willingness to partner with relatively new firms that have yet to demonstrate an independent operating model or a history of M&A.

First Quarter 2026

Exhibit 8: Strategic Buyers Continue to Set the Market's Pace



The wealth management M&A landscape is defined by two buyer archetypes: strategic and financial acquirers. Strategic buyers, including RIAs, broker-dealers, and similar firms, pursue deals to capture synergies, expand into new markets, or broaden their service offerings. Financial buyers, including private equity sponsors and holding companies, invest primarily to generate returns. Strategic acquirers have historically driven the majority of deal activity, though the most prolific among them typically have at least one financial partner providing incremental capital.

In 1Q26, strategic acquirers accounted for 95.1% of transactions (135 deals), with 70.4% involving a PE-backed buyer, up modestly from 70.3% in 4Q25. Financial acquirers announced seven deals, down from nine in the prior quarter, and assets transacted by financial buyers declined from \$124.7B to \$106.9B. Quarterly volume was anchored by Carlyle's majority acquisition of MAI Capital Management. Taken together, these dynamics underscore that while direct investment by financial acquirers remains modest in count, their influence on industry M&A is far more pervasive.

Exhibit 9: RIA Buyers Represent a Growing Proportion of Deal Volume

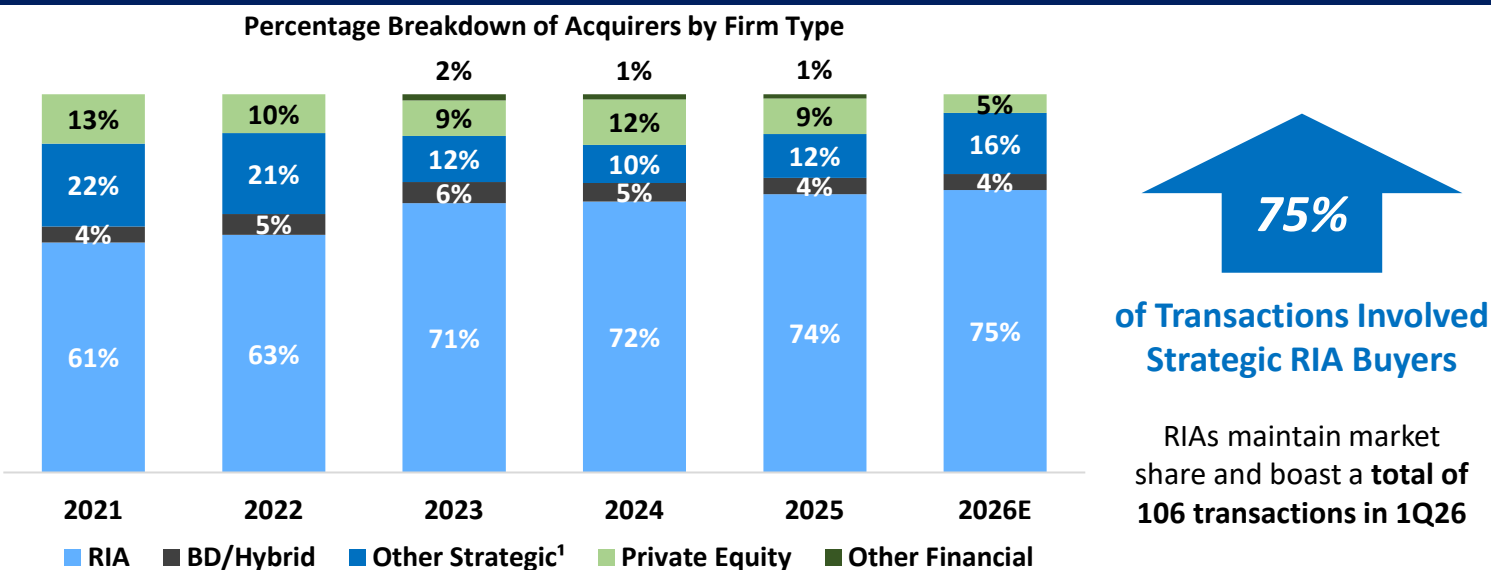


Exhibit 9 presents a more detailed view of the industry's acquirers. RIAs remain the top strategic buyers, announcing 106 transactions and accounting for 74.6% of total deal activity in 1Q26, a 15.2% increase in volume compared to 4Q25. Alongside this increase in deal count, the average deal size² for RIA acquirers grew meaningfully, from \$1.0 BN in 4Q25 to \$1.7 BN in 1Q26, reflecting a broader trend toward larger transactions. Activity by BD/Hybrid firms increased from four to six announced transactions quarter over quarter. Other strategic acquirers announced 23 deals in 1Q26, up from 15 in 4Q25. Private equity buyers were responsible for 4.9% of total announced transactions, with seven deals in 1Q26 compared to 10 in 4Q25. Average AUM per PE deal, excluding \$20 BN+ transactions, increased from \$2.4 BN in 4Q25 to \$6.9 BN in 1Q26, driven by a small number of large sponsor-led transactions during the quarter.

Source: Company reports, SEC IARD, ECHELON Partners analysis

1. "Other Strategic": Banks, asset managers, insurance companies, etc. 2. These figures exclude transactions involving sellers with over \$20 BN in assets.

First Quarter 2026

Exhibit 10: 2026's Leading Acquirers Already Outpacing Prior Years

Buyer	Headquarters	Buyer Type	# of Deals in 2026 ^{1,2}	Assets Acquired in 2026 (\$MM)
Carson Wealth	Omaha, NE	RIA	8	2,717
Beacon Pointe Advisors	Newport Beach, CA	RIA	7	5,327
Cerity Partners	New York, NY	RIA	5	22,658
Savant Capital Management	Rockford, IL	RIA	5	11,075
Mariner Wealth Advisors	Overland Park, KS	RIA	4	2,135
EP Wealth Advisors	Torrance, CA	RIA	4	1,838
Merit Financial Advisors	Atlanta, GA	RIA	4	1,119

Source: Company reports, SEC IARD, ECHELON Partners analysis

1. Deals are recorded and tracked on an "as announced" basis.

2. Acquisitions made through firms operating on the parent company's platform are not directly counted in these totals.

Exhibit 10 outlines the firms that announced the most acquisitions during 1Q26. As in prior quarters, the list features seven private equity-backed RIAs. Four of these firms, Carson Wealth, Beacon Pointe Advisors, Merit Financial Advisors, and Mariner Wealth Advisors, also ranked among the top buyers by deal volume in 2025. Savant Capital Management has already surpassed its full-year 2025 deal count of four after just one quarter, while Cerity Partners, with five deals in 1Q26, is on pace to significantly exceed its 2025 total of seven. Carson Wealth, Beacon Pointe Advisors, and Mariner Wealth Advisors are similarly on pace to surpass their respective 2025 deal totals.

Notably absent from the 1Q26 list are Wealth Enhancement Group and Mercer Advisors, which led all buyers in 2025 with 20 and 17 deals, respectively. WEG announced two deals in 1Q26, acquiring \$7.9 BN in assets, while Mercer announced three deals during the quarter. Both firms remain active but have thus far ceded the top spots to a broader group of acquirers, suggesting that the landscape for M&A is widening as more platforms scale their capabilities.

Exhibit 11: Minority Investments Remain a Central Focus for Private Equity

Date	Seller	Buyer	Buyer Type	Seller Assets (\$MM)
2/27/2026	Dynasty Financial Partners	Charles Schwab and Others	Other Strategic	125,000
3/11/2026	GeoWealth	Goldman Sachs	Bank	49,000
3/5/2026	Manning & Napier	Abacus Wealth Partners	RIA	18,000
1/7/2026	Ameriflex Group	Cambridge Investment Research	RIA	13,000
3/12/2026	Threadline Wealth	Cynosure Group	Private Equity	5,800
2/16/2026	BIP	Constellation Wealth Capital	Private Equity	5,500
3/16/2026	Verdence Capital Advisors	Wealth Partners Capital Group, HGGC	Private Equity	4,600
3/3/2026	Cyndeo Wealth Partners	Rise Growth Partners	Private Equity	3,100

Source: Company reports, SEC IARD, ECHELON Partners analysis

Exhibit 11 highlights key minority transactions in 1Q26. Minority investment activity continued to have a meaningful presence in 1Q26, with 13 minority transactions completed, representing approximately \$209 BN in assets. Large firms, specifically Dynasty Financial Partners and Ameriflex Group, will use this capital to accelerate growth and further enhance their already dominant positions. The smaller deals, such as Constellation's investment in BIP or Rise Growth Partners' investment in Cyndeo, likely represent the firms' first round of external equity capital, which they likely plan to use to kick-start their initial phase of inorganic growth.

The TAMP GeoWealth completed its Series C funding round with Goldman Sachs' \$42.5 MM investment, a deal that underscores the strategic premium being placed on technology-enabled distribution.

First Quarter 2026

Exhibit 12: WealthTECH Is Now Foundational for Firms' Competitive Advantage

Date	Target	Buyer (or Investor)	Software or Service	Seller Categorization
3/18/2026	Hexure	iCapital	Software	Alternative Investment Solutions
3/16/2026	Abra	New Providence Acquisition Corp. III (SPAC)	Software	Alternative Investment Solutions
2/19/2026	Jump	Insight Partners, Allianz Life Ventures, etc.	Software	Data & Analytics
2/18/2026	Vestwell	Sixth Street Growth, Blue Owl Capital, Morgan Stanley, Franklin Templeton	Software	Financial & Retirement Planning
2/12/2026	Stash	Grab	Software	Alternative Investment Solutions
1/27/2026	Zocks	Lightspeed Venture Partners, QED Investors	Software	Financial & Retirement Planning
1/26/2026	WealthOS	JP Morgan	Software	Financial & Retirement Planning
1/20/2026	Atomic Insights	Aquiline Capital Partners	Software	Portfolio Management & Reporting
1/17/2026	Alpaca	Drive Capital	Software	Portfolio Management & Reporting

Source: Company reports, SEC IARD, ECHELON Partners analysis

Exhibit 12 provides an overview of the top transactions within the WealthTECH subsector in the first quarter of 2026. Investors announced 49 deals, a slight increase from 46 in 4Q25, putting the sector on track for nearly 200 transactions in 2026 versus 151 in 2025, though it is still too early to draw concrete conclusions.

Standalone Capital Raises and IPO-like Events

Abra's IPO via a reverse merger with New Providence Acquisition Corp. III marks a notable public-market debut for a standalone WealthTECH platform. Vestwell's \$385M Series F, led by Sixth Street Growth with Morgan Stanley and others, was one of the largest WealthTECH raises of the quarter and underscores investor conviction in retirement infrastructure, as Vestwell's digital recordkeeping platform powers workplace retirement, education, and health savings programs. Insight Partners and TIAA Ventures' investment in Jump, an AI-powered meeting assistant, highlights VC's push into agentic AI for wealth management, while Aquiline's investment in Atomic Insights and Drive Capital's backing of Alpaca further reinforce the appetite for standalone WealthTECH platforms.

Strategic Acquisitions

As firms strive to deliver end-to-end advisor solutions, strategic acquirers are pursuing proven platforms rather than building them from scratch. Grab's acquisition of Stash signals that control of the tech platform layer has become a strategic priority. iCapital acquired Hexure, a provider of sales and order-entry software for life insurance and annuities, following iCapital's prior acquisitions of Mirador, Parallel Markets, and SIMON Markets. JPMorgan's acquisition of WealthOS reinforces that even the largest, most capitalized firms prefer to acquire proven WealthTECH platforms, confirming technology as foundational infrastructure rather than a differentiator.

Agentic AI Emerges as a Defining 1Q26 Theme

Capital is flowing decisively toward AI-native tools that automate advisor workflows rather than bolt-on analytics. Insight Partners and TIAA Ventures' backing of Jump, an AI meeting assistant purpose-built for advisors, exemplifies a broader 1Q26 pattern in which investors are underwriting agentic AI applications across note-taking, client communication, portfolio review, and compliance. With advisor headcount growth flat and practice economics under pressure, buyers and strategics increasingly view AI-driven productivity gains as the next durable source of operating leverage in wealth management.

First Quarter 2026

Case Study: Gunderson Capital Announces Sale to GCG Wealth Management



announced its sale to



ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Gunderson and provided:

Sell-Side Investment Banking



Gunderson Capital Announces Sale to GCG Advisors

Deal Size:
\$420 MM AUM

Investment Banking Role

ECHELON Partners served as the exclusive financial advisor to Gunderson Capital, providing sell-side investment banking advisory services. The ECHELON team’s deep understanding of the RIA landscape, financial institutions expertise, and extensive network were instrumental in facilitating a successful transaction with GCG Wealth Management. ECHELON worked closely with Gunderson Capital’s leadership team to identify and evaluate a strategic partner best suited to support their long-term objectives. ECHELON’s advisory services included valuation, buyer outreach, client marketing, deal process management, and negotiation of key terms.

Client Background

Gunderson Capital Management is an independent advisory firm headquartered in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. Founded in 2006 by Bill Gunderson, the firm provides active portfolio management, comprehensive financial planning, and wealth advisory services to individuals, high-net-worth families, charitable organizations, and corporations. Gunderson Capital serves clients across more than 20 states nationwide. The firm manages approximately \$420 MM in AUM and offers a suite of proprietary investment portfolios ranging from conservative growth to aggressive growth strategies, tailored to each client’s unique risk tolerance and financial goals.

Successful Outcome

The sale of Gunderson Capital to GCG Advisory Partners combines Gunderson’s active management expertise with GCG’s broader platform and resources, providing clients with expanded services while preserving the firm's personalized, fiduciary-driven approach.

First Quarter 2026

Case Study: Wealthstream Advisors Announces Merger with Greenspring Advisors

WEALTHSTREAM
ADVISORS, INC.

has announced a strategic merger with



GREENSPRING
ADVISORS

ECHELON Partners served as the exclusive financial advisor and provided:

Merger Advisory Services



Investment Banking Role

ECHELON Partners served as the exclusive financial advisor to both Wealthstream Advisors (“Wealthstream”) and Greenspring Advisors (“Greenspring”), providing merger advisory services. The ECHELON team’s transaction experience and deep understanding of the RIA landscape were instrumental in facilitating a successful merger between the two companies. ECHELON worked closely with both leadership teams to evaluate strategic alternatives and structure a transaction aligned with each firm’s long-term objectives. ECHELON’s advisory services included valuation, merger structuring, strategic positioning, process management, and negotiation of key terms.

Client Background

Wealthstream and Greenspring are independent RIAs that combine deep planning expertise with fiduciary-driven investment management. Wealthstream, based in New York and founded in 1996, manages over \$1.5 BN for high-net-worth individuals and families, offering comprehensive financial planning and unbiased investment management. Greenspring, founded in 2004 and with offices across Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and New York, provides holistic wealth management and institutional advisory services to retirement plans, endowments, and foundations.

Successful Outcome

The merger combines Wealthstream’s fiduciary-driven planning and wealth management expertise with Greenspring’s scale and institutional advisory capabilities. With more than \$9.5 BN in combined assets under management, the partnership creates an employee-owned firm positioned to deliver enhanced resources and expanded services to clients nationwide.

**Wealthstream Advisors
Announces Merger with
Greenspring Advisors**

Deal Size:
\$9.5 BN AUM

First Quarter 2026

Case Study: The Paul Group Announces Sale to United Capital

The Paul Group

has completed its sale to



ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to The Paul Group and provided:

Sell-Side Investment Banking



The Paul Group Has Announced Its Sale to United Capital

Deal Size:
\$1.1 BN AUM

Investment Banking Role

ECHELON Partners served as the exclusive financial advisor to The Paul Group, providing sell-side investment banking advisory services. The ECHELON team’s deep understanding of the RIA landscape, financial institutions expertise, and extensive network were instrumental in facilitating a successful transaction with United Capital. ECHELON worked closely with The Paul Group leadership team to identify and evaluate a strategic partner best suited to support their long-term objectives. ECHELON’s advisory services included valuation, buyer outreach, client marketing, deal process management, and negotiation of key terms.

Client Background

The Paul Group is a California-based advisory team composed of seasoned advisors with decades of combined industry experience. The firm offers financial planning, portfolio management, estate and trust services, and other complex planning services, primarily to HNW and UHNW clients.

Successful Outcome

The acquisition of The Paul Group expands United Capital’s offering across key markets while adding a seasoned team with established relationships. The Paul Group is expected to benefit substantially from United Capital’s back-office resources and other advanced capabilities, which will ensure the team can continue servicing complex client needs through its own bespoke solutions.

First Quarter 2026

Case Study: Monterey Private Wealth Announces Strategic sale to Creative Planning



**MONTEREY
PRIVATE
WEALTH**

has announced its sale to



**CREATIVE
PLANNING**

ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Monterey and provided:

Sell-Side Investment Banking



**ECHELON
PARTNERS**

Monterey Private Wealth has Announced its Sale to Creative Planning

Deal Size:
\$1.1 BN AUM

Investment Banking Role

ECHELON Partners served as the exclusive financial advisor to Monterey Private Wealth (“Monterey”), providing sell-side investment banking advisory services. The ECHELON team’s deep understanding of the RIA landscape, financial institutions expertise, and extensive network were instrumental in facilitating a successful transaction with Creative Planning. ECHELON worked closely with the Monterey leadership team to identify and evaluate a strategic partner best suited to support their long-term objectives. ECHELON’s advisory services included valuation, buyer outreach, client marketing, deal process management, and negotiation of key terms.

Client Background

Monterey is a fee-based financial advisory team based in Monterey, California that manages approximately \$1.1 BN in client assets. The firm serves a diverse client base including high-net-worth families, independent women, retirees, business owners, executives, and nonprofit organizations.

Successful Outcome

This transaction allows Monterey to further enhance its service offering, building on its core strengths in financial planning. Aligned in mission and values, the partnership positions both firms to advance their strategic goals.

First Quarter 2026

Case Study: Prio Wealth Announces Strategic Sale to Cerity Partners



has announced its sale to



ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Prio Wealth and provided:

Sell-Side Investment Banking



Prio Wealth Announces its Strategic Sale to Cerity Partners

Deal Size:
\$4.1 BN AUM

Investment Banking Role

ECHELON Partners served as the exclusive financial advisor to Prio Wealth (“Prio”), providing sell-side investment banking advisory services. The ECHELON team’s deep understanding of the RIA environment, extensive expertise in the financial institutions industry, and robust network were instrumental in securing and completing a transaction with Cerity Partners. ECHELON collaborated closely with the Prio leadership team to identify and evaluate an attractive new business partner that aligns with their strategic goals. ECHELON’s services encompassed valuation, buyer outreach, client marketing, deal process management, and negotiation of deal terms.

Client Background

Prio Wealth (“Prio”) is a leading, independent wealth management and financial planning firm primarily serving high-net-worth and ultra-high-net-worth investors. The Boston-based firm has helped clients prioritize their financial and life goals for over thirty years. Using a disciplined and collaborative process, Prio provides individuals, families, and non-profit organizations with unique and personalized wealth management and planning services.

Successful Outcome

This transaction will allow Prio to continue providing exceptional services to its clients and expand access to financial advisory solutions and strategies.

First Quarter 2026

Case Study: Simon Quick Announces the Acquisition of Proquility Private Wealth Partners



has announced the acquisition of



ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Simon Quick and provided:

Buy-Side Investment Banking



Investment Banking Role

ECHELON Partners served as the exclusive financial advisor to Simon Quick Advisors (“Simon Quick”), providing buy-side investment banking advisory services. ECHELON worked closely with the Simon Quick leadership team facilitate the strategic partnership with Proquility. ECHELON’s advisory services included valuation, deal process management, and negotiation of key terms.

Client Background

Simon Quick Advisors is a national wealth management firm based in Morristown, New Jersey, managing over \$6 BN in client assets. The firm serves ultra-high-net-worth families, entrepreneurs, and executives, providing comprehensive investment and planning solutions rooted in strong client relationships and core values.

Successful Outcome

The acquisition expands Simon Quick’s presence in the Southeast and brings together two firms committed to personalized, purpose-driven client service.

Simon Quick Announces the Acquisition of Proquility Private Wealth Partners

Deal Size:
\$355 MM AUM

First Quarter 2026

Case Study: 55 North Private Wealth Announces Merger with F4 Wealth Advisors



has announced a merger with



ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to 55 North and F4 Wealth Advisors and provided:

Sell-Side Investment Banking



Investment Banking Role

ECHELON Partners served as the exclusive financial advisor to 55 North Private Wealth (“55 North”), providing sell-side investment banking advisory services. The ECHELON team’s deep understanding of the RIA landscape and what it takes to be a successful player in the industry were instrumental in facilitating a successful merger between 55 North and F4 Wealth Advisors. ECHELON worked closely with the leadership of both firms to structure a transaction that sets the newly combined company up for success going forward. ECHELON’s advisory services included valuation, merger advisory, deal process management, and negotiation of key terms.

Client Background

55 North Private Wealth is a Florida-based RIA founded by Steve Curley in 2023. The merger with F4 Wealth more than doubled the firm’s AUM and brought the total AUM of the combined company to ~\$375 MM. The firm focuses on serving high-net-worth families with tax-efficient strategies to help clients retire early.

Successful Outcome

This merger expands both firms’ scale and service offerings, helping the company more efficiently meet its clients’ needs as it looks to further expand its customer base.

**55 North Private Wealth
Announces Merger with F4
Wealth Advisors**

Deal Size:
\$375 MM AUM

First Quarter 2026

Case Study: KFBMA Joins the NewEdge Advisors Platform



KRUEGER, FOSDYCK, BROWN,
McCALL & ASSOCIATES
Powered by NewEdge Advisors

has announced its joining



ECHELON served as the exclusive
financial advisor to KFBMA and
provided:

Sell-Side Investment Banking



ECHELON
PARTNERS

**Krueger, Fosdyck, Brown, McCall
& Associates (KFBMA)
Announces its joining NewEdge
Advisors**

Deal Size:
\$1.4 BN AUM

Investment Banking Role

ECHELON Partners served as the exclusive financial advisor to Krueger, Fosdyck, Brown, McCall & Associates (“KFBMA”), providing sell-side investment banking advisory services. The ECHELON team’s deep understanding of the breakaway environment, extensive expertise in the financial institutions industry, and robust network were instrumental in securing and completing a transaction with NewEdge Advisors. ECHELON collaborated closely with the KFBMA leadership team to identify and evaluate an attractive new business partner that aligns with their strategic goals. ECHELON’s services encompassed valuation, buyer outreach, client marketing, deal process management, and negotiation of deal terms.

Client Background

Krueger, Fosdyck, Brown, McCall & Associates is a leading Florida-based advisor team that offers wealth advisory services and traditional brokerage products such as annuities and insurance products. KFBMA manages over \$1.4 BN in AUM between the 4 partners and their supporting team.

Successful Outcome

This transaction will provide KFBMA the independence, freedom, and flexibility to continue growing and significantly expand the Company’s capacity to offer opportunities to clients, their families, and businesses.

First Quarter 2026

Case Study: Credent Wealth Management Announces Minority Investment from Crestline



announces a strategic partnership
with



ECHELON served as the exclusive
financial advisor to Credent and
provided:

Sell-Side Investment Banking



Investment Banking Role

ECHELON Partners served as the exclusive financial advisor to Credent Wealth Management (“Credent”), providing sell-side investment banking advisory services. ECHELON’s deep coverage of the investor landscape (debt and equity investors), deal structuring acumen, sophisticated valuation tools, and execution experience proved paramount in securing this industry-changing partnership between Credent and Crestline. ECHELON collaborated closely with the Credent leadership team to identify and evaluate an attractive new financial partner that aligns with their strategic goals. ECHELON’s services encompassed valuation & financial analysis, buyer outreach, marketing, deal process management, and negotiation of deal terms.

Client Background

Credent Wealth Management is the nation’s leading partner-led, partner-owned wealth management integrator, 100% owned and managed by its partners, delivering a world-class experience to clients. Credent partners with like-minded advisors who seek to lead evolutionary change within the industry today. Credent's partners share a common vision and mission, often coming from long, successful careers as independent advisors on corporate platforms, wirehouses, or hybrid RIAs. Despite their diverse backgrounds and areas of specialty, Credent’s partners are united by common values that ease transitions and accelerate growth.

Successful Outcome

This transaction will supply Credent with non-dilutive capital to enhance its inorganic and organic growth efforts. Since closing Credent has already announced an acquisition that lifts its AUM to over \$3 BN.

**Credent Wealth Management
Closes a Strategic Partnership
with Crestline Investors**

Deal Size:
\$2.6 BN AUM

First Quarter 2026

About ECHELON Partners

ECHELON Partners is a Los Angeles-based investment bank and consulting firm focused exclusively on the Wealth and Investment Management industries. ECHELON specializes in supporting several influential client groups:



RIAs



Broker Dealers



Hybrid RIAs



WealthTECH Firms



TAMPs



Asset Managers

How ECHELON Can Help

-  **Provide Transaction Assistance (M&A, Capital Raising)**
-  **Conduct a Valuation**
-  **Continuity & Succession Planning**
-  **Design Equity and Compensation Structure**
-  **Equity Recycling & Management**
-  **Advise on the Buyout of a Partner**

Investment Banking

#1 FINRA-registered investment bank serving wealth managers over the past 20 years

Management Consulting

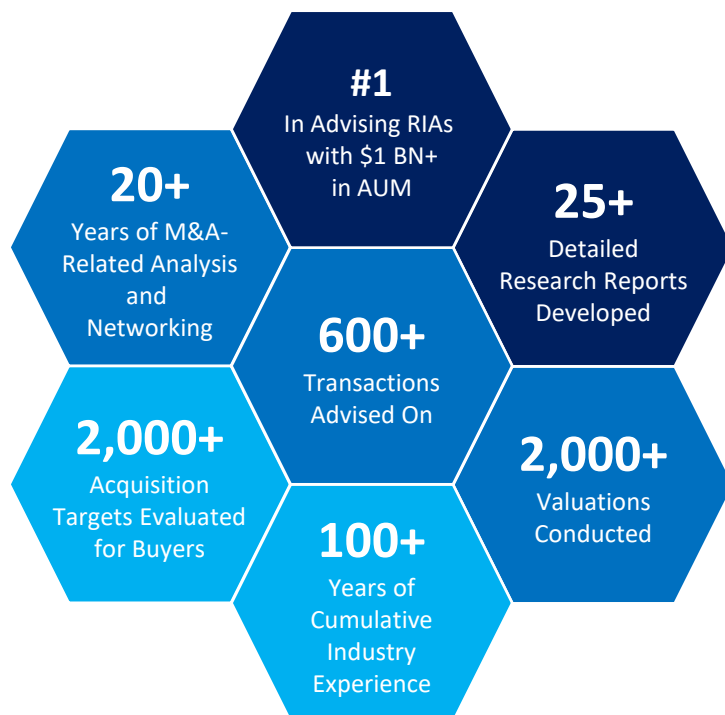
Strategy consultants who have advised on over 600 wealth and asset management deals

Valuations

#1 in valuations for wealth managers with more than \$2 MM in revenue or \$200 MM in AUM

Track Record

A three-time winner of WealthManagement.com's Most Innovative Industry Investment Bank Award



Dan Seivert | CEO and Managing Partner



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group.com

Dan Seivert is the CEO and founder of ECHELON Partners. Prior to starting ECHELON Partners, Mr. Seivert was one of the initial principals of Lovell Minnick Partners, where he helped invest over \$100 MM in venture capital across 15 companies. Before his involvement in Private Equity, Mr. Seivert was a buy-side analyst at The Capital Group (American Funds) where he valued firms in the asset management and securities brokerage industries. In his various roles, Mr. Seivert has conducted detailed valuations on over 500 companies, evaluated more than 2,000 acquisition targets, and authored 25 reports dealing with the wealth and investment management industries. Mr. Seivert has an Advanced Bachelor's degree in Economics from Occidental College and a Master of Business Administration from UCLA's Anderson School of Management.

Barnaby Audsley | Managing Director



baudsley@echelon-
partners.com

Barnaby Audsley is a Managing Director at ECHELON Partners and focuses on a diversity of M&A advisory, investment banking, strategic consulting, and research assignments across the wealth and investment management industries. Prior to joining ECHELON Partners, Mr. Audsley worked as an Associate for Bel Air Investment Advisors, a \$9 BN multifamily office based in Los Angeles. During his time with Bel Air, Mr. Audsley focused on Private Equity and assisted in the sourcing and underwriting of fund, co-investment opportunities, and direct transactions, resulting in over \$300 MM of capital deployment on behalf of the partners and clients. He also conducted market research to identify attractive asset classes, industry trends, and investment opportunities.

Brett Mulder | Managing Director



bmulder@echelon-
partners.com

Brett Mulder is a Managing Director at ECHELON Partners and spends time across all of the firm's core activities including M&A advisory, strategic consulting, and thought leadership. Prior to joining ECHELON, Brett was a Senior Associate with Deutsche Bank Securities, working in their US investment bank and within the Financial Institutions Group. With Deutsche, Brett advised wealth managers, asset managers, FinTech companies, and financial sponsors on a variety of strategic endeavors including M&A, capital raises, IPOs, SPACs, and leveraged finance. Through that experience, Brett spent significant time cultivating relationships with the Private Equity firms and platform buyers involved and interested in the wealth management ecosystem. While at San Diego State University, Brett served as Vice President of the student investment council.

Sam Sphire | Vice President



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partners.com

Sam Sphire is a Vice President at ECHELON Partners and spends time across all the firm's core activities, including M&A advisory, strategic consulting, and valuation services. Sam has spent the entirety of his professional post-university career at ECHELON Partners, working as an investment banker for wealth and asset managers. Notable transactions on which Sam has advised include Prio Wealth's sale to Cerity Partners, SEIA's strategic investment from Reverence Capital Partners, and Monterey Private Wealth's sale to Creative Planning. Sam also spends a significant amount of time cultivating relationships with ECHELON's valuation and strategic planning clients. Sam has a B.S. in Management with concentrations in Finance and Information Systems from the Carroll School of Management at Boston College.

Sample Transactions & Advisory Assignments Executed by ECHELON

 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Horsmouth and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Gunderson and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to L.M. Kohn and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Total Wealth Planning and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced a strategic merger with</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor and provided:</p> <p>Merger Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to The Paul Group and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 
 <p>has announced a capital raise of \$20 MM from private investors</p> <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Legacy Knight and provided:</p> <p>Financial Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced the acquisition of</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Simon Quick Advisors and provided:</p> <p>Buy-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its merger with</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to 55 North and F4 Wealth and provided:</p> <p>Merger Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Monterey and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to KFBMA and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Prio and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 
 <p>has completed the sale of its interest in</p> <p>A Multinational Wealth Management Firm</p> <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Lee Equity and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced a strategic partnership with</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Credent and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to tru and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to PRW and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Align and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to PAM and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 
 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Syntinsic and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Integrated and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Earth Equity and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to ERA and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Hayes Financial and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>announced strategic investment from</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to SEIA and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 
 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to HFW and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale of</p>  <p>to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Vestmark and Adhesion and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to BK and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced the acquisition of</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Pacific Portfolio and provided:</p> <p>Buy-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>Has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Red Hook and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Daintree and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 
 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Paradigm and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to RTS and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Sawtooth and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Bainco and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Pinnacle and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 	 <p>has announced its sale to</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Oakwood and provided:</p> <p>Sell-Side M&A Advisory Services</p> 

Research Methodology & Data Sources

Research Methodology & Data Sources:

The ECHELON Partners RIA M&A Deal Report is an amalgamation of all mergers, majority equity sales/purchases, acquisitions, shareholder spin-offs, capital infusions, consolidations, and restructurings (deals) of firms that are SEC Registered Investment Advisors (RIA). The report is meant to provide contextual analysis and commentary to financial advisors pertaining to the deals occurring within the wealth & investment management industries. The deals tracked and identified in the Deal Report include any transaction involving an RIA with over \$100 MM assets under management, which have also been reported by a recent data source (e.g., SEC IARD website, a press release, ECHELON Partners Deal Tracker, industry publications). This methodology aims to maintain consistency of data over time and ensure the utmost accuracy in the information represented herein. Additionally, the report includes financial advisors who terminate relationships with other financial service institutions in order to join RIAs. As with the other transactions reported in the Deal Report, the identified breakaway advisor transitions are transitioning over \$100 MM assets under management to a new financial services firm. The reason for this being that transitions of this magnitude are more often than not accompanied with compensation for the transition of assets. The contents of this report may not be comprehensive or up-to-date and ECHELON Partners will not be responsible for updating any information contained within this Deal Report.

The ECHELON RIA M&A Deal Report: An Executive's Guide to M&A in the Wealth Management, Breakaway, and Investment Management Industries.

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to the Wealth and Investment Management Industries

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