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Service

**Profile** 

Benvenuti

Welcome

Bienvenue

Welkom

Willkommen

Benvenidos

**Bem-vindo** 

Karşılama

歡迎光臨

ようこそ

בברכה

स्वागत

أهلا بك

добро пожаловать

오신 것을 환영합니다

## **Selling a Business**

Buyers Sourcing & Buy-side M&A Advisory Services for selling SMEs in Europe





## **SELLING A BUSINESS WHAT YOU** NEED TO KNOW BEFORE SETTING OUT ON YOUR JOURNEY

- 1. A lifetime of hard work and sacrifice even spanning across multiple generations, this is often how business owners view their business before evaluating potentially selling. A distinctive heritage of projects, skills and resources that make it unique, valuable and deserving of a worthy solution for continued growth and development.
- 2. Continue or sell? A common doubt that finds its way into the minds of business owners is whether it is the *right time to sell*. The answer depends on a combination of *internal factors* such as age, health, family and personal interests, as well as generational continuity and material needs. Together with *external factors* such as the attractiveness and prospects of the relevant sector, and the company's competitive strength and economic-financial capacity.
- **3.** The evaded or deferred sale. It is possible that a business owner is not completely *aware of the current situation* or *does not accept the sale of their business*, terrified by the consequences to follow. In some cases, they may state *in words their desire to sell*, but they do not act on it and the sale is postponed indefinitely.
- **4.** A collective and balanced decision. The decision to sell a business *not* only concerns the business owner, but also their family, any other minority shareholders, and sometimes, the closest and most trusted collaborators. To make a feasible and effective decision, one must find the right balance in their family and business needs.



- **5.** A clear and consistent will. The sale of a business should not be undertaken in the absence of *a clear will to sell by the business* owner, or if only driven by the objective of achieving a disproportionate or *unrealistic* price, or even worse to *mislead third parties*. The choice should be made *confidently* and *consistently*, to avoid the waste of time, unnecessary costs and the risk of heavy legal disputes.
- **6.** A collaborative and loyal partnership. The sale of a business is a complex, challenging and perilous process that requires an *ongoing*, *collaborative*, *transparent and fair partnership between the client and the advisor*. In order to ensure a successful outcome, both parties must diligently fulfill their contractual obligations, communicating and informing each other in a thorough and truthful manner.





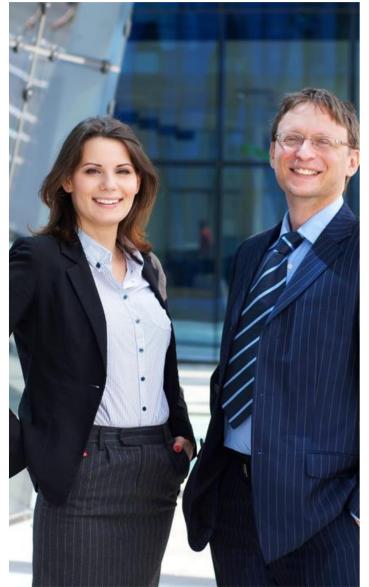
- **7. Assets or shares?** The *sale of a company* can take place through the transfer of all the company's shares or through the transfer of its assets and liabilities. The legal implications, methods applied, and the relative tax impact are obviously different and must be considered prior to the sale of the company.
- 8. The business owner's team of professionals. Whether consultants, accountants, or lawyers, regardless of their area of competence, all collaborators must contribute to the success of the sale. It is necessary that they do not interfere with the advisor's activity because of personal interests and that they do not deceive the owner with promises or flattering values that have no correspondence with the reality of the market.
- **9. Marketing Opportunity.** The success, price and contractual terms of a business sale depend on the choice of an expert *advisor*, with an extensive online platform and *network of potential buyers*, from a highly-quality *pitch book* to a rigorous *marketing strategy of* potential *targets*, at a national and international level.
- **10. You sell the future and not the past**. Regardless of the amount of effort expended and the glories of the past, a buyer accepts a price that reflects the future expectations of the company and not the past. For this reason, industrial and financial plans assume a fundamental value, in order to determine the future business plans and provide a correct evaluation of the company's capacity in terms of economic and financial returns.
- **11. Information alignment and truthfulness.** Prior to any company sale, information alignment must be achieved in order to bridge the obvious asymmetry between the seller and buyer. The information exchanged must be exhaustive, truthful and valid, and will be protected by a solid confidentiality agreement.

### **CAVEAT AND BASIC REQUIREMENTS** FOR A SUCCESSFUL TRANSACTION

- **12. Welcoming the buyer.** Accepting a potential buyer requires an *open, helpful and cooperative* attitude, free of prejudices and stereotypes. The potential seller must be able to *listen to visions, operational processes and management styles* that may differ from their own experience. They must strive to mediate and seek *win-win solutions* that are most suitable for the company and the transaction.
- **13. The business transfer.** Every transfer is accompanied by a handover, i.e. the willingness of the seller to accompany the buyer during the introduction phase. This period can vary between 6 to 24 months and is often decreasing. It is not unusual that a small part of the total payment (e.g. 20%) can be deferred until the conclusion of this passage, for the agreed time frame
- 14. Timing and contract structure. The entire process of performing a company sale, from the confirmed mandate to the signed agreement (closing), requires on average between 8 to 16 months. Also, the transfer agreement could be accompanied by other accessory contracts, such as: option rights, shareholders' agreements, commercial leases, employment or consultancy contracts, etc.
- **15.** Critical cases and their negotiability. Selling a company that is in internal or market conditions considered critical, or that is insolvent, is particularly difficult and sometimes impossible. In such cases, the chances of sale and the selling price depend on whether a buyer exists and the price they are willing to pay.







### **SELLING A BUSINESS** HELVIA'S RESOURCES and COMPETENCES

### **RESOURCES**

NATIONATIONAL AND GLOBAL PORTFOLIO OF POTENTIAL BUYERS AND INVESTORS, M&A TECHNOLOGY AND BEST PRACTICES

- Portfolio of 500+ buyers and industrial investors nationally and globally (from all 5 continents) as part of Pro-Investo Deal Club, including: holding companies, multinational groups, small and medium-sized enterprises (SME), private investors, etc. - from various economic and real estate sectors – assisted by HELVIA as their Advisor/Investment Desk
- Privileged Access to tens of thousands of financial and institutional investor worldwide, such as: private equity/debt and venture capitalists, investment banks, asset management companies, family offices, trusts, sovereign wealth funds, pension funds, foundations, etc.
- ProINVESTO global platform, M&A portals and channels, process automation, big data, analytics, robotics, global targeting tools
- Staff of M&A advisors, business fiduciaries, accountants and real estate experts
- Extensive network of industrial, real estate,
  financial and professional partners
- HELVIA's international best practices and 
  M&A methodologies
- HELVIA's global brand reputation

### **COMPETENCES**

SELL-SIDE ADVISORY AND BROKERAGE OF COMPANIES, INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROPERTIES, END-TO-END M&A SERVICES

- Track record of over 150 M&A transactions carried out on corporate groups, SMEs, infrastructure projects and prestigious properties, in Italy, Switzerland and the rest of Europe
- Sale desk and sell-side advisor on behalf of the actual owner of over 600 companies and 400 properties in Italy and abroad
- End-to-end M&A services: from the organization of the sale to the research and contact of potential buyers; from conducting and assisting in negotiations, to the finalization of final agreements
- Relationship management, such as sharing and communicating information and managing negotiations with counterparts in the main European languages
- Professional services such as: financial appraisals, business planning, due diligence, asset consultancy, etc.
- Family business consulting, various fiduciary services and asset protection
- M&A legal and contractual assistance to the Client's trusted law firm or to our professional partner law firms





### **BUSINESS SALE PROCESS** From COMPANY PREPARATION to FINALIZATION of the SALES AGREEMENT







ITALIAN BUSINESSES FOR SALE OR PURCHASE

### ADDED VALUE of HELVIA PHASE 1: ANALYSIS and PREPARATION of the COMPANY for the SALE

Phase 1 ANALYSIS and PREPARATION of the COMPANY for the SALE Phase 2 PITCH BOOK set-up and COMPANY VALUATION Phase 3 RESEARCH, SELECT and CONTACT POTENTIAL BUYERS

Phase 4 PRESENT POTENTIAL BUYERS and START NEGOTIATIONS Phase 5 ASSIST DUE DILIGENCE and FINALIZE NEGOTIATIONS

Phase 6 UNDERWRITE and FINALIZE the SALES AGREEMENT

#### Phase 1: ANALYSIS and PREPARATION of the COMPANY for the SALE

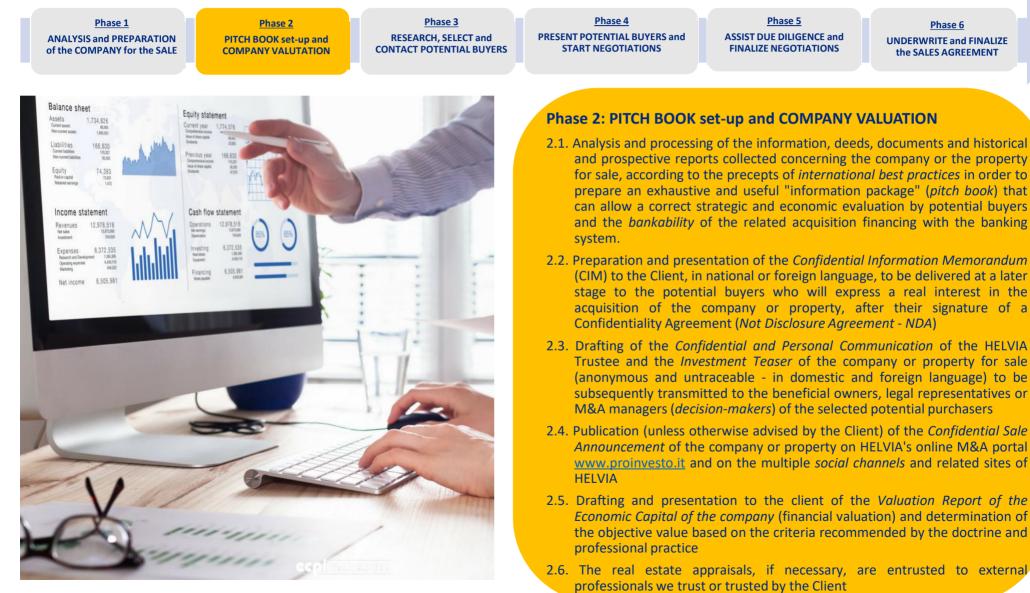
- 1.1. Exclusive engagement by the Client and project kick-off
- 1.2. Survey of the Client's objectives, criteria and perferred transaction methods for the relevant company or property and verification of its willingness to accompany the future buyer during the entry phase
- 1.3. Gathering and examination of summary information, deeds and key documents relating to the company or property for sale, as well as the current structure and dynamics of the competitive environment
- 1.4. Verification of strategic coherence, economic-financial, organizational selfimportance, of possible constraints or threats weighing on the object for sale or on the selling party, of acceptable or unacceptable risks on the part of the Client
- **1.5.** Formulation of the strategy for the sale of the company or property and of the possible methods of execution of the transaction
- 1.6. Collection of all the information, deeds, documents and reports available from the Client concerning the historical and current management of the company or property
- 1.7. Gathering of all the information, documents and reports available from the Client concerning the multi-year strategic plan for the growth of the company or development/valorization of the property, as well as the respective financial plan
- **1.8.** Identification of the Client's collaborators and consultants as possible support to the sales activity and assignment of the respective responsibilities and tasks
- 1.9. Refinement of the timetable of execution of the sales project
- 1.10. Presentation to the client of HELVIA's strategy and recommendations for the best preparation of the company or property for sale







### ADDED VALUE of HELVIA PHASE 2: PITCH BOOK set-up and COMPANY VALUATION



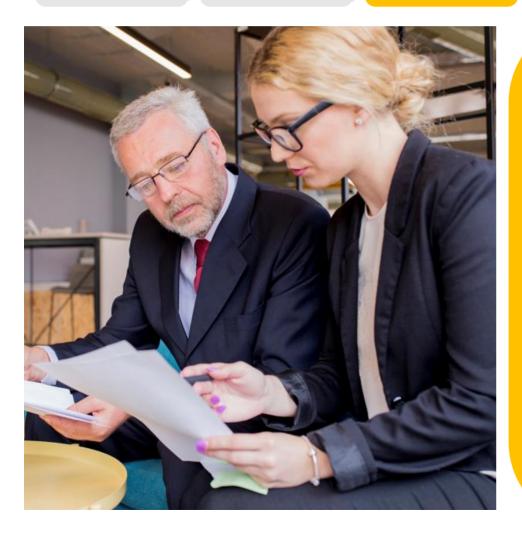




### ADDED VALUE of HELVIA PHASE 3: RESEARCH, SELECT and CONTACT POTENTIAL BUYERS

Phase 1 ANALYSIS and PREPARATION of the COMPANY for the SALE Phase 2 PITCH BOOK set-up and COMPANY VALUATION Phase 3 RESEARCH, SELECT and CONTACT POTENTIAL BUYERS Phase 4 PRESENT POTENTIAL BUYERS and START NEGOTIATIONS Phase 5 ASSIST DUE DILIGENCE and FINALIZE NEGOTIATIONS

Phase 6 UNDERWRITE and FINALIZE the SALES AGREEMENT



#### Phase 3: RESEARCH, SELECT, CONTACT POTENTIAL BUYERS

- 3.1. Meeting with the Client to collect the potential buyers he "likes" (to be solicited) or "dislikes" (not to be solicited) and to agree on the methods of confidential contact of the decision-makers of the selected potential buyers
- 3.2. Research and selection of potential buyers (*market intelligence*) according to the *target profile* and geographical area agreed with the Client and identification of names and confidential contact details of *decision-makers*
- 3.3. Extension of the search and selection of potential buyers to the potential acquirers and investors of the *Pro-Investo Deal Club* already in HELVIA's portfolio.
- 3.4. Contact and transmission of the confidential and personal communication of the HELVIA trustee and the *investment teaser* (*anonymous*) of the company or property for sale, to the *decision-makers* of the selected potential buyers or investors
- 3.5. (Multiple) communications to decision-makers made by HELVIA, asking them (nonbindingly) if they would consider acquiring or investing in the proposed company or property.
- 3.6. Collection of feedback from the contacted decision-makers and verification of the real degree of interest in assessing
- 3.7. Delivery of the *confidential information memorandum* and any other ancillary documents (addendum, video, sample, etc.) to the decision makers who have expressed interest in evaluating the potential acquisition of the company or property, after signing the *Confidentiality Agreement* (NDA) as a guarantee to the Client.
- 3.8. Collection and response to requests for clarification/detail received from interested *decision-makers*, in close collaboration with the Client
- 3.9. Presentation to the Client of the collected responses and the final outcome of the campaign of confidential contacts of potential buyers carried out by HELVIA.





### ADDED VALUE of HELVIA PHASE 4: PRESENT POTENTIAL BUYERS and START NEGOTIATIONS

Phase 1 ANALYSIS and PREPARATION of the COMPANY for the SALE Phase 2 PITCH BOOK set-up and COMPANY VALUATION Phase 3 RESEARCH, SELECT and CONTACT POTENTIAL BUYERS Phase 4 PRESENT POTENTIAL BUYERS and START NEGOTIATIONS Phase 5 ASSIST DUE DILIGENCE and FINALIZE NEGOTIATIONS

Phase 6 UNDERWRITE and FINALIZE the SALES AGREEMENT

#### **Phase 4: PRESENT POTENTIAL BUYERS and START NEGOTIATIONS**

- 4.1. Organization of the cognitive meetings between the Client and the potential buyers
- 4.2. Verification of objectives, investment criteria and implementation methods by the potential buyer
- 4.3. Verification of the reputation, financial soundness and possible contribution to the growth of the company by potential buyers
- 4.4. Negotiation assistance in preliminary negotiations with potential buyers
- 4.5. Presentation of the financial evaluation and justification of the sale price requested from the potential buyer, in the light of the "objective value" of the company and the potential synergies that can be achieved by the potential buyers
- 4.6. Negotiation assistance on the vision of business development by the potential buyers, on the contractual structure of the transaction, on the implementation methods and timing of the possible sale agreement
- 4.7. Collection of feedback and indicative offers submitted by the potential buyers
- 4.8. Drafting of non-binding LOI/MOU/TS agreements (letter of intent, memorandum of understanding, term sheet) and any revisions to initial agreements or drafting of standstill agreements
- 4.9. Negotiation assistance on individual points of the non-binding LOI/MOU/TS agreements under discussion with the potential buyer, including possible price or pricing system, possible contractual terms, confidentiality constraints (strictly classified information), possible BCL requests, applicability of possible penalties in case of counterparty abuse, etc.

4.10. Final drafting of non-binding LOI/MOU/TS agreements and collection of signatures from Client and potential buyer





of



### ADDED VALUE of HELVIA PHASE 5: ASSIST DUE DILIGENCE and FINALIZE NEGOTIATIONS

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3			Phase 6	
ANALYSIS and PREPARATION	PITCH BOOK set-up and	RESEARCH, SELECT and	PRESENT POTENTIAL BUYERS and	ASSIST DUE DILIGENCE and	UNDERWRITE and FINALIZE	
of the COMPANY for the SALE	COMPANY VALUATION	CONTACT POTENTIAL BUYERS	START NEGOTIATIONS	FINALIZE NEGOTIATIONS	the SALES AGREEMENT	

#### Phase 5: ASSIST DUE DILIGENCE and FINALIZE NEGOTIATIONS

- 5.1. Planning, organization and monitoring of the *data room* and of the various *due diligence* activities requested by the Client (commercial, financial, fiscal, legal, labor, real estate, IT, environmental, etc.)
- 5.2. Assisting the Client and potential Buyers (and their trusted advisors) in the conduct of *due diligence* inherent in the collection, representation, interpretation and response of information, handling of highly sensitive information, examination and resolution of critical issues, etc.
- 5.3. Discussion with the Client and potential buyers regarding the findings of the *due diligence*, the possible divestment strategy and the estimated value of the business or property for sale (*value bridge*)
- 5.4. Execution of professional assignments (à la carte) requested by the Client to support the *due diligence* activities or the valorization of the company/property or the contractualisation of assets or ancillary services, such as: *business plans, financial forecasts, research and explanation of potential synergies, outsourcing of activities, tax rulings, fiscal, customs and financial optimizations, etc.*
- 5.5. Professional assistance in the settlement of any disputes or outstanding issues from a legal, labor, tax, administrative, etc. perspective.
- 5.6. Guidance and negotiation assistance in the finalization of the agreement, evaluation of options, exchange of concessions, management of stalls, option rights, pre-emptions, drag rights, *earn-outs*, representations and warranties, indemnities, etc.
- 5.7. Professional and negotiation assistance in defining the terms and conditions of the *Sale & Purchase Agreement* (SPA) and any ancillary contracts (*Shareholders' Agreement* SHA; *Option Rights Agreement* ORA; leases of commercial real estate; use of patents/brands; employment or consulting contracts, etc.).



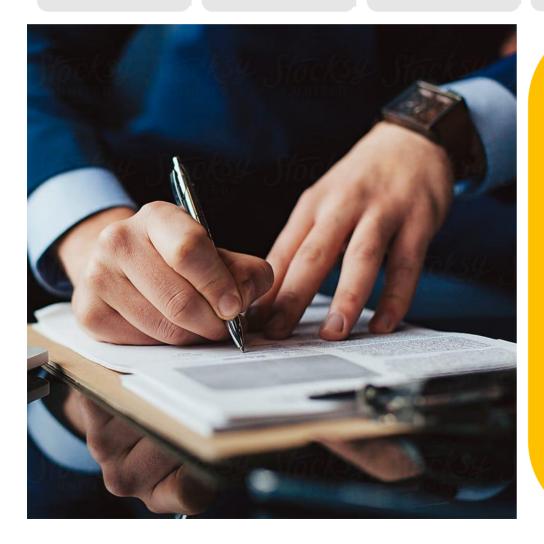




### ADDED VALUE of HELVIA PHASE 6: UNDERWRITE and FINALIZE the SALES AGREEMENT

Phase 1 ANALYSIS and PREPARATION of the COMPANY for the SALE Phase 2 PITCH BOOK set-up and COMPANY VALUATION Phase 3 RESEARCH, SELECT and CONTACT POTENTIAL BUYERS Phase 4 PRESENT POTENTIAL BUYERS and START NEGOTIATIONS Phase 5 ASSIST DUE DILIGENCE and FINALIZE NEGOTIATIONS

Phase 6 UNDERWRITE and FINALIZE the SALES AGREEMENT



#### Phase 6: UNDERWRITE and FINALIZE the SALES AGREEMENT

- 6.1.Assistance to the law firm in the preparation/revision phase of the sale/acquisition agreement (*SPA Sales & Purchase Agreement*), on various issues such as: *earn-out* and *ratchet* clauses, representations and warranties, indemnity and loss of earnings clauses, payment extensions and price adjustment/re-negotiation clauses, *covenants, way-out* clauses and *clearance* assessment, conventional and legal remedies, contractual responsibilities and indemnity obligations of the buyer, non-performance and cancellation due to seller's fraud, etc.
- 6.2. Assistance to the law firm during the preparation/revision of any shareholder's agreements (*Shareholder's Agreement*) or granting of option rights (*Put & Call Option Rights Agreement*), on various issues, such as, for example: methods and timing for the transfer of shareholdings, powers and decisions for the management of the company, co-sale or drag-along clauses (*tag-along rights*), *material breach* clauses, deadlock periods, asset drains, dividend distribution, enforceability of options, price adjustments, *collars & caps* price limits, non-competition agreements, conciliations and mediations, liquidated damages, dispute resolution, etc.
- 6.3. Assistance to the law firm in the preparation/revision of corporate deeds or other ancillary contracts, such as: new corporate by-laws, revocation and appointment of directors, pledges and escrow deposits, share capital increases, shareholder loans, commercial leases of capital properties, employment contracts or vendor consulting, trademark or patent licenses, etc.
- 6.4. Organizing and assisting in the *signing* and *closing* of the main sale/acquisition agreement and any subsequent price adjustment/adjustment stages.





#### HELVIA IS YOUR TRUSTED PARTNER FOR BUSINESS TRANSFERS AND THE SEARCH FOR NATIONAL AND GLOBAL BUYERS/INVESTORS

Selling a business or property in Italy, Switzerland or the rest of Europe is a complex challenge that requires expert guidance in juggling a variety of cultures and disparate economic and legal systems. The Swiss international trust company HELVIA, located in Lugano, in the heart of Europe, very close to Milan and Malpensa airport, with local and global correspondent partners, is your trusted partner in the search for domestic and foreign buyers willing to acquire equity in companies or business/real estate complexes or to search for strategic investors willing to enter into corporate groups, SMEs, infrastructure projects or valuable properties located in Italy, Switzerland and the rest of Europe. With confidentiality and efficiency, we ensure the correct fit, good structure and outcome of your transaction as well as the best possible economic return.

HELVIA, for the benefit of its Clients, can act as:

- Sell-side Advisor/Sales desk "DOMESTIC" for the search of <u>buyers</u> or national investors and the realization of transactions involving the sale of equity securities, company/real estate complexes or the investment in companies, infrastructure projects or <u>national</u> property
- Buy-side Advisor/Sale Desk "CROSS-BORDER" for the research of national and global buyers or investors (from the 5 continents) and the realization of transactions involving the sale of equity securities, company/real estate complexes or investment in domestic or foreign companies, infrastructure projects or properties

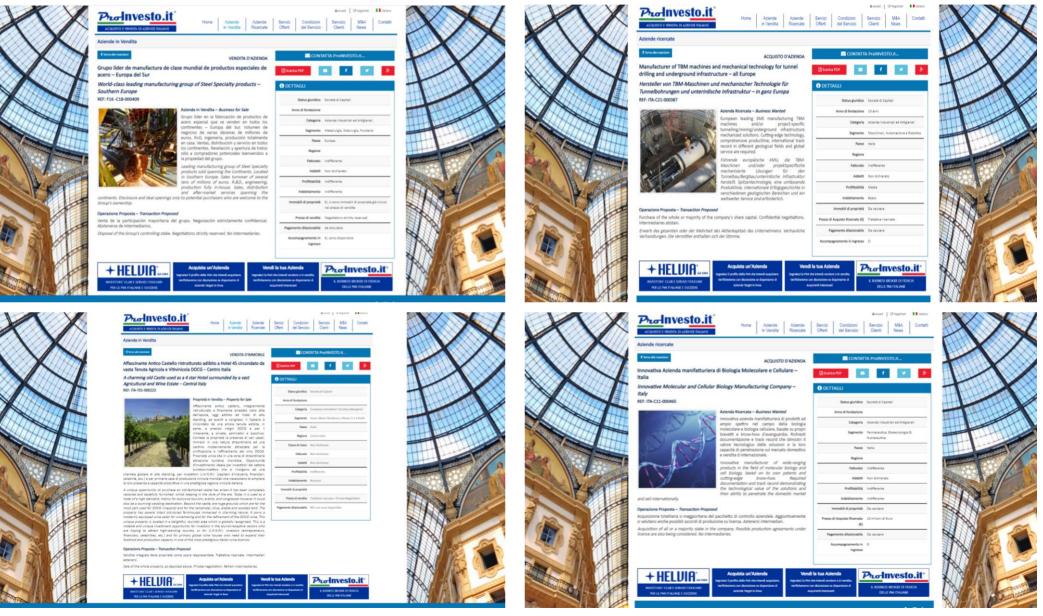
### The SELL-SIDE Advisor and the confidential M&A PLATFORM for POTENTIAL SELLERS of COMPANIES and PROPERTIES in search of BUYERS and INVESTORS nationally and globally (from all 5 continents)







### www.Pro-Investo.it – M&A PLATFORM of Confidential Ads for ACQUISITION and SALE







### **EXCLUSIVE ENGAGMENT LETTER SELL-SIDE** MAIN Contents



- The distinctive contribution to the sale (or investment) of HELVIA's business or property is available upon the provision of an "Exclusive Letter of Assignment for the Sale of Business or Property (Sell-side)" or "Exclusive Letter of Assignment for the Search of Strategic Investors" by the actual owners or legal representatives of the Client.
- Indicatively, the Engagement Letter with HELVIA includes the following services:
  - 1) Planning of the sale or investment transaction
  - 2) Research, confidential contact and presentation to the Client of one or more potential Buyers/Investors from the target group selected by HELVIA.
  - 3) Organization of meetings, guidance and assistance of HELVIA to the Client in the pre-negotiation phase with the counterparty, up to the acceptance of the LoI/MoU/TS/NBO
  - 4) Guidance and negotiation assistance to the Client during the due diligence phase, negotiation and finalization of the terms with the counterparty
  - 5) Coordination of the sale/investment project up to the signing and finalization of the final agreements

Any additional professional services (à la carte) required by the Client in relation to specific needs arising during the sale or investment process, are excluded from the scope of the Letter of Assignment and to be regulated separately.

- The assignment to HELVIA is normally given for a period of 9-12 months and is automatically renewed if there are ongoing negotiations by the Client with one or more potential buyers/investors presented by HELVIA.
- HELVIA's Letter of Assignment is accompanied by the following **attachments**:
  - General Conditions of Engagement
  - Confidentiality Agreement (NDA)
  - Adequate Verification of Clients (required by anti-money laundering legislation)
  - Data Processing Authorization





### **EXCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT LETTER PROFESSIONAL FEES applied**

- HELVIA's professional fees depend on the size, extent and complexity of each sale or acquisition and are in proportion to:
  - in part, the actual amount of time dedicated by HELVIA to providing the sale/investment services to the Client's benefit, as written in the official Exclusive Engagement Letter and any other additional services (à la carte) requested
  - and in part, to the successful outcome of the sale/investment transaction, commensurate with the total value of the agreements signed by the Client with the buyer or investor of the company, project or valuable property, presented by HELVIA
- HELVIA' Fees are dues as follows:
  - Initial Fee (Retainer Fee) and Advanced Expenses: fixed fee and advanced expenses, applied at the time of the assignment and related to the professional services provided by HELVIA until the stage prior to the acceptance of the LoI/MoU/TS/NBO (Phase 1, 2, 3)
  - Interim Success Fee: fixed fee, applied at the start of each negotiation with a potential Seller presented by HELVIA, sanctioned by the signing of a LoI/MoU/TS/NBO and related to the negotiation assistance services provided by HELVIA until the phase prior to the signing of the final agreements (Phase 4, 5).
  - Final Success Fee: variable fee on a percentage scale, applied in <u>regressive steps</u> on the total value of the final agreements signed between the parties, including the possible debts of the Customer. The Interim Success Fee is <u>fully deductible</u> from the Final Fee. In extraordinary cases, HELVIA may allow for the deduction of a <u>special Bonus à la carte</u> on additional professional services rendered to the Client. In case of failure of the sale/investment, the Success Fees do not apply.

Any additional professional services requested by the Client from HELVIA are regulated according to the professional rates set out in the Exclusive Engagement Letter.







# The sale of a SME

Many entrepreneurs and business owners 3. Buyer Prospecting & Targeting. struggle to navigate through the jungle of business intermediation and ask us for guidance and assistance to help them place their company in the best possible market position for *domestic* or cross-border mergers & acquisitions. Here is a brief survival guide covering the main stages of the sale of an unlisted small-medium enterprise (SME).

#### 1. Divestment strategy and value.

Contrary to popular belief, there are various ways and techniques to create economic value from the disposal of a company. For more than 30 years, we have been assisting owners to monetize and maximize the divestment price of their companies, applying the most proven value-based management techniques and selecting the best available options, from the sale of equity securities or company assets, transfer of operations, carve-outs, spin-offs, IPOs, etc.

#### 2. Investment teaser e info-memo.

We prepare all communication materials that enhance the investment opportunity or sales pitch, according to professional standards dictated by best practices. In particular, the Investment Teaser ('teaser') is created without revealing the identity of the company and seller. The teaser is given together with the Information Memorandum which includes the company's Business Plan, for potential buyers' reference to assess the investment opportunity and the type of transaction envisaged.

Research and selection of potential buyers (Prospecting) and confidential contact of respective decision makers (*Targeting*). This is done through both the ProInvesto Investors Club and new contacts. Following the Teaser presentation, we can verify the level of real interest by selected potential buyers. Those who declare themselves interested are asked to sign a letter of confidentiality (Non-Disclosure Agreement), then they receive the Info-Memorandum, based on which they can evaluate the investment opportunity and the type of transaction proposed.

4. Letter of Intent and initial negotiations. Through the LOI (Letter Of Intent) the parties regulate the confidentiality of the negotiation, manifesting in writing (or by concluding deeds) the effective will to evaluate and eventually carry out the transaction according to the principles and rules established. The letter of intent does not impose any obligation on the parties, but it should not be neglected as it clarifies the expectations of the contracting parties and defines of the deal structure, scope and methods of execution (e.g., asset deal or share deal).

#### 5. Pre-sale due diligence.

*Due diligence* bridges the information asymmetry between seller and buyer and analytically screens the crucial aspects of the target company. In cases where the amount of information is considerable or where an auction between several bidders is foreseen, a data room is used, i.e., an organized archive.

A brief guide in 7 points on how to understand and manage the disposal of a Small-Medium Enterprise

whether physical or virtual, of the relevant information to be examined by potential buyers. The results of the due diligence are fundamental to determine the economic value and key contractual terms of the business being sold.

#### 6. Signing the Transfer Agreement.

If the *due diligence* does not reveal any serious problems, the Signing of the contract for the sale of the shares or *assets* of the company is carried out. Through this, the contracting parties agree on and define the mechanism for determining the price, payment methods, contractual conditions, any guarantees and indemnities, ancillary agreements, and non-competition agreements, etc.

#### 7. Share exchange and adjustment..

If the agreed conditions are met, the Closing is carried out, otherwise known as the delivery of the securities or assets for partial or total payment of the agreed price. During the interim period between Signing and Closing, the seller still has de jure control of the transferred company, even if his ability to act is usually limited by the ancillary clauses of the sale and purchase agreement. The latter protect the company's assets as determined by the statutory financial statements or by a balance sheet prepared ad hoc. Which will then serve as the basis for determining any future price adjustment, should there be any significant variations between it and the *completion accounts* prepared at the Closing. Underestimating the complexity of this process and acting solely on one's own capacity could be a costly mistake.









ACQUISTO E VENDITA DI AZIENDE ITALIANE

long friendships

### Shareholder agreements lav down the rules of corporate governance. but they may limit freedom to transfer shareholdings





Shareholder agreements are agreements between

investing shareholders, complementary to the company's articles of association, which aim to ensure uniformity of management and regulate future relations between the shareholders. For example, they might regulate the relations between the majority non-managing shareholder and the minority managing shareholder. By means of these agreements, the investing shareholders agree to exercise in a predetermined manner rights arising from the articles of association and/or the law, both during the investment and later should they sell their shareholding.

The purposes of the covenants depend on the nature of the business interest at hand. A majority non-managing investor has an interest in securing a secure level of control over the actions of the minority managing shareholder. The latter will want to protect itself from the exercise of power and vetoes by the majority non-managing shareholder, by providing more effective safeguards than those provided for by law or the articles of association.

The agreement also usually contemplates the terms and conditions of the 'exit' or the exit from the share capital by both partners. The clauses that most frequently appear in shareholders' agreements are of two types: those dictating the rules of corporate governance and those that limit the transfer of shareholdings. The clauses that dictate the corporate governance rules provide mechanisms that allow the investing shareholders to participate in the decisions of major strategic importance, especially where they do not have operational management powers.

representation of all the shareholders of the on sale but may choose the future purchaser of company, especially the minority ones.

For this purpose, clauses with statutory value are used such as voting list clauses, or clauses with a blocked list system, or clauses to limit the number of candidates to less then those to be filled. The same purpose can be pursued with shareholder clauses, such as voting trusts. Another tool for controlling the actions of the managing

firm's business.

shareholdings include block syndicates, pre-

emption and approval clauses, and partners' co- In contrast, with drag along clauses, the obligation emption clauses.

It is usual that the appointment of board members Some provide an advantage (or hierarchy) to to the board of directors is not left to the exercise pre-emption in favor of certain groups of dynamics of the shareholders' meeting but is shareholders over others. While others envisage already pre-arranged to ensure an adequate that the shareholders do not buy the shareholding

**Clear agreements equal** 

their choice. Other clauses allow the shareholders declare themselves purchasers of the to shareholding for sale, but at a price determined by a board of arbitrators, based on previously agreed criteria. Clauses that provide for co-sale rights for shareholders allow all shareholders to benefit in whole or in part from the proceeds of the sale of a shareholding.

shareholder is a provision for a qualified majority In the case of tag-along clauses, the shareholder beyond what is outlined contractually, such as to who intends to sell his shareholding must allow the consider the will expressed by minority other partners, pro rata, to sell their shareholdings shareholders. These majorities create a blocking under the same conditions. If the majority influence, i.e., a veto power, that balances the shareholder were the 'obligated partner' in a taginterests at stake and protects the investing along and wished to sell its entire shareholding partner. If abused, however, they risk crippling the (80%) to a third-party purchaser, they would have to accept a partial sale (64%), in order to 'make The clauses that limit the transfer of room' for the managing partner by allowing him to

sale rights. In the block syndicates, the investing is literally reversed. The shareholder who intends to partners reciprocally agree not to sell their sell his shareholding to a third party has the right to shareholding for a period normally corresponding oblige the other shareholders to sell their to the time horizon of the company's business shareholdings, to the potential buyer, under the plan. The objective is to stabilize the relationship same conditions. This clause is applied when the between the investors in order to ensure the third-party purchaser agrees to purchase only the success of the plan. The pre-emption and approval entirety of the share package and the transferring clauses prevent an unwanted third party from shareholder who is the majority shareholder but entering the shareholding structure, taking over however does not own 100% of the shares, wishes the shareholding of an existing partner. This to avoid obstacles on the part of minority practice has also created a wide range of pre- shareholders. This is only a small taste of the prodigal forensic of shareholders' agreements.





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Success Stories of DISPOSAL TRANSACTIONS







### DISPOSAL OF THE MAJORITY STAKE OF AN ITALIAN SME, NICHE LEADER ON THE FMCG MARKET

On behalf of an Italian business family, HELVIA managed the disposal of a **leading SME** in the European *Fast* Moving Consumer Goods market with revenues of over € 20 Million. HELVIA searched & selected the potential investors, conducted and finalized negotiations, together with the Client. Over 150 global and domestic potential buyers were contacted, several expressions of interest and purchase offers were received from Italian. Swiss. French. American. Swedish and U.A.E. investors. The ended with transaction the acceptance by the Client of a purchase binding offer from a foreign buyer of € 18 million for the majority stake and the confirmation of 2 family members as **CEO** and **CTO** of the company.

### DISPOSAL OF THE WHOLE CONTROLLING STAKE OF A SWISS SME OF HIGH-TECHNOLOGY ELECTRONICS

On behalf of 2 shareholders of a Swiss high-tech electronic SME, who had been unsuccessfully looking for an investor for a long time. HELVIA restructured the company's business model and set up the required decisions and tools to enhance its market positioning and to increase the generation of economic value. Over 100 potential industrial acquirers in Switzerland, Germany, Austria, France and Germany were carefully selected and contacted. Following the gathering of expressions of interest, a competitive **bid** was presented to investors, which led to the collection of **3 binding offers**. The transaction ended with the acceptance by the Client of a price offer of CHF 9.5 million from a wellestablished Italian industrial group.

### PRIVATISATION OF THE CONTROLLING STAKE OF A STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE ON THE ITALIAN TERRITORY

On behalf of a State-owned enterprise managing a strategic infrastructure in Italy, HELVIA set up the long-term industrial plan, the financial valuation and the M&A pitchbook for its effective valorization and marketability on the global capital market. HELVIA contacted over 200 selected global investors, gathering 12 expressions of interest from Italian, French, English, Belgian, Russian, American, Arab, Chinese, Argentinean and South-African investors. Later HELVIA organized the virtual data room with due diligence documents, that led to the competitive bidding procedure. Three binding offers were received by the Client and one was accepted from a foreign investor at an overall price of approx. € 30 Million.





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Success Stories TRANSACTIONS

### SALE OF CONTROLLING STAKE IN AN INNOVATIVE ITALIAN BIOTECH COMPANY

#### On behalf of Italian an entrepreneur, HELVIA managed the sale of an innovative SME, operating in the **biotech segment** in the European market, with a turnover of over € 3.5 million. HFIVIA selected potential investors, led and finalized the negotiations together with the seller. domestic 160 and international investors in the biotech sector were contacted, interest and purchase offers were received from Swiss, Italian, US, Israeli and Chinese investors. The transaction was concluded with the acceptance of an offer of over € 5 million for 100% of the shares.

### SALE OF CONTROLLING STAKE IN A HISTORIC SWISS REAL ESTATE COMPANY

On behalf of the **heirs** of a **historic** Swiss real estate company, HELVIA coordinated and executed the valuation of the real estate and business assets. contacted with the utmost confidentiality a small circle of potential buyers of high standing, conducted and finalized a negotiation with a prestigious international financial counterpart, at a significant and strictly confidential price. HELVIA then assisted the Client in the field of tax advice, eventually carrying out a second sale transaction for a real estate company with the same buyer.

### FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT AND PRICE NEGOTIATION STRATEGY FOR AN ITALIAN MULTI-UTILITY GROUP

On behalf of the controlling shareholder of an Italian multiutility group, HELVIA carried out a valuation of the company's economic working capital in order to determine the exchange ratio, to achieve a share exchange with an industry leader. The financial valuation was carried out considering the pursuable strategic options and international best practices. Finally, HELVIA assisted the client in defining the negotiated price strategy in accordance to underlying drivers.

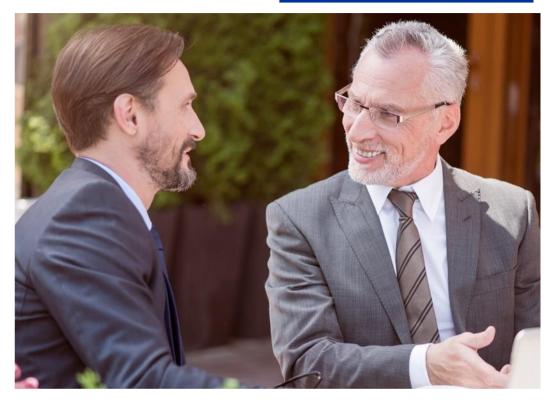






## **10 GOOD REASONS TO PARTNER WITH HELVIA**

- Buy-side Advisor and Investment Desk working on behalf of 400 foreign and domestic investors who make up the community of Pro-Investo Deal Club
- Sell-side Advisor and Sales Desk acting on behalf of shareholders, entrepreneurs and directors for a portfolio of over 1,000 businesses and real estate properties for sale, carefully selected in Italy, Switzerland and the rest of Europe
- **3. M&A confidential platform** and **latest multimedia technologies** for the purchase and sale of companies and properties, the search for strategic and financial partners, abroad and at home
- 4. International trust & advisory boutique firm specialized in cross-border M&A with a track record of over 150 deals
- 5. 38 years of *expertise* in providing M&A, corporate and management advisory services to corporations, institutional investors, SMEs and individuals with a *suite* of cutting-edge solutions inspired by *international best practices*
- **6. Cross-cultural**, polyglotism, global and domestic experience in the purchase and sale of equity securities, SMEs, business assets, infrastructure and real estate properties
- 7. Highly qualified *staff* of M&A advisors, trustees, chartered accountants and business experts (Italian and Swiss) with broad experience, covered by a solid professional indemnity insurance



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ITALIAN BUSINESSES FOR SALE OR PURCHASE

- 8. Maximum confidentiality, reliability and accuracy, results orientation code of ethics and quality service to the Customer
- 9. Global and domestic network of industrial, financial and professional partners able to contribute effectively to the success of any M&A deal
- **10. Convenient Location** in the international financial center of Lugano the Italian-speaking part of Switzerland accessible by car or train in 10 min. from Lugano airport, in 60 min. from Milan or 45 min. from Milan Malpensa airport, in ca. 120 min. from Zürich or Zürich Kloten airport

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# The 3 BUSINESS UNITS of **HELVIA** Swiss Advisory Group

Since 1984, in the center of Lugano (Switzerland), HELVIA Swiss Advisory Group assists Investors, Entrepreneurs, Board Directors and Managers in seizing investment and business opportunities.

### HELVIA PARTNERS

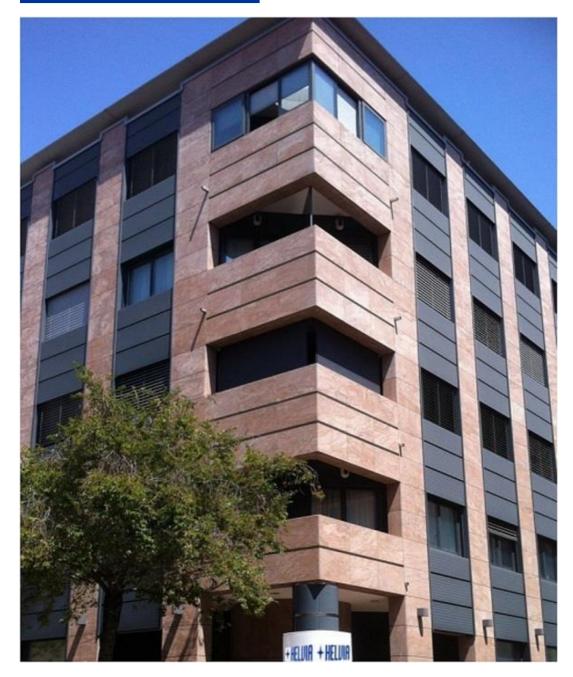
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Thank you for giving us your attention. For more information or to make an appointment:

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