



# ECHELON's RIA M&A Deal Report™

## U.S. Wealth Management | 1Q22

### Key Trends and Highlights

- **Quarterly Deal Volume Declines, but Still Remains Well Above Historic Levels:** There were 94 deals announced in the first quarter, a decrease from the record setting 4Q21, but still a level that is 20.5% higher than the next highest quarter, 3Q21.
- **Strategics & Consolidators Remain Busy While Fresh Private Equity Investment in Large Firms Slows Following an Active 2021:** Strategics & Consolidators accounted for 55.3% of all acquisitions in 1Q22. Private equity continues to impact the market indirectly, but large direct investments by private equity firms in wealth managers were relatively limited this quarter.
- **Sustained Momentum Keeps the Year on Pace for Growth:** ECHELON still expects 2022 to be a record-breaking year for industry M&A. Barring a significant pullback in the second half of the year, 2022 will surpass 2021's record of 308 transactions.
- **Key WealthTECH Trends Proliferate:** Advisors continue to seek outsourcing tools, direct indexing and the expansion of automated investment solutions for mass affluent clients become increasingly common, and established wealth managers seek opportunities in the cryptocurrency industry.

**Executive Overview:** Total wealth management M&A activity declined in first quarter from the record-setting fourth quarter of 2021. Still, deal activity remained very high, with 94 transactions being announced in 1Q22, far more than any other period outside of 4Q21.

**With Fresh Private Equity Capital from Last Year, Strategics & Consolidators Have Largest Share of Deal Volume:** The buyer market continues to be dominated by "Strategic & Consolidator" acquirers, nearly all of which have private equity backing and continue to be the most powerful drivers of wealth management M&A. Strategic & Consolidators accounted for over 55% of all transactions in the first quarter, with Creative Planning and Beacon Pointe Advisors leading the pack, announcing six deals in 1Q22.

**Average AUM Per Deal Declines Since Last Year but Remains High Relative to Pre-2021 Levels:** The average AUM per transaction declined from \$2.1 BN in 2021 to \$2.0 BN per deal in 1Q22, indicative of smaller sellers entering the market eager to capitalize on the same trends that their larger peers benefited from in the last 12 months.

**Positive M&A Outlook Despite Macroeconomic Headwinds:** Transitory trends such as rising rates and capital markets volatility in 1Q22 could be perceived as headwinds to M&A across the wealth ecosystem. However, to date the realized effect has been little to none as M&A volumes have remained strong and valuations continue to be supported by fundamental tailwinds such as buyer appetite and funding, quality business performance, and low financing costs relative to historical averages. Given the number of buyers active in the space and new entrants arriving, we expect M&A volumes to continue near trend levels unless macro conditions deteriorate dramatically from here.

94

Total 1Q22 Transactions Announced

46


Deals in January 2022

338


Total Deals Expected in 2022

Note: Totals above exclude WealthTECH Deals unless an RIA is the Buyer or Seller.


### Recent ECHELON Deal Announcements



has completed its sale to




ECHELON served as the exclusive M&A advisor to Daintree and provided:  
Sell-Side Investment Banking




has completed its sale to




ECHELON served as the exclusive M&A advisor to Paradigm and provided:  
Sell-Side Investment Banking


has completed its sale to




ECHELON served as the exclusive M&A advisor to RTS and provided:  
Sell-Side Investment Banking

has completed its merger with

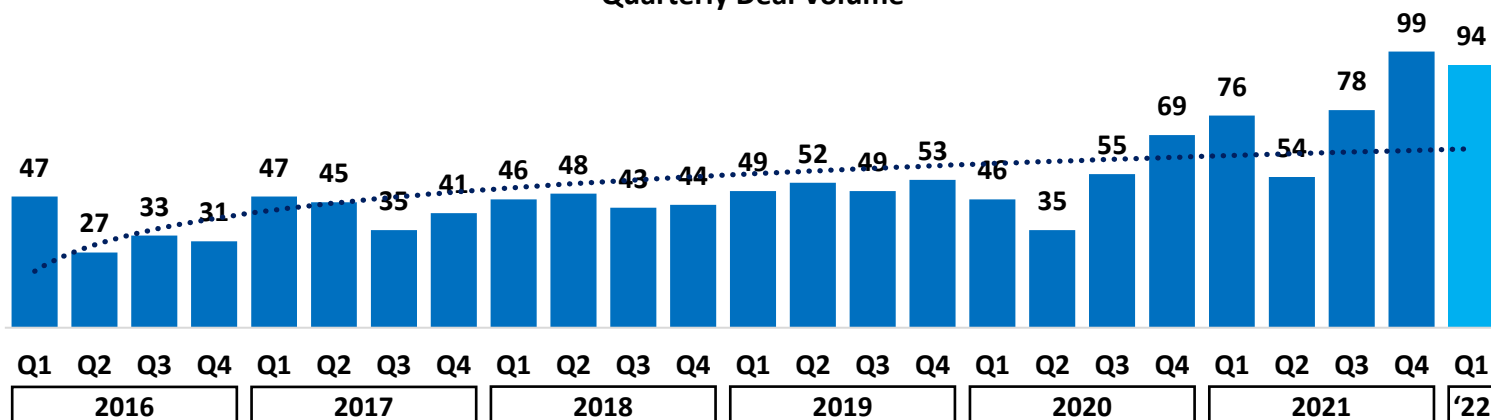


ECHELON served as the exclusive M&A advisor to Simon Quick Advisors and provided:  
Buy-Side Investment Banking



## Exhibit 1. Wealth Management M&A Deal Volume Decreases from Record, Remains High

Quarterly Deal Volume



Source: Company Reports, SEC IARD, ECHELON Partners Analysis

**Exhibit 1** highlights that the first quarter experienced a slight quarterly decrease in deal activity, though it still maintained the trend of elevated deal volume relative to prior levels. 1Q22's deal total was the second highest quarterly total observed to date and saw 20.5% more deals than were announced in 3Q21, the next highest quarter, and over 74.1% more announced transactions than in 2Q21, the least active quarter in the last 12 months. While the trend continues to show an obvious appetite to transact and grow, it comes at a time of uncertainty in U.S. and global capital markets. Still, as **Exhibit 3** shows, we expect 2022 to continue the trend of growth in the wealth deal market with a projected total of 338 announced transactions.

**10.1%**

Increase in  
Projected Deal  
Volume Relative to  
2021

**10<sup>th</sup>**

Straight Year of  
Projected Record-  
Breaking M&A  
Activity in the Sector

**338**

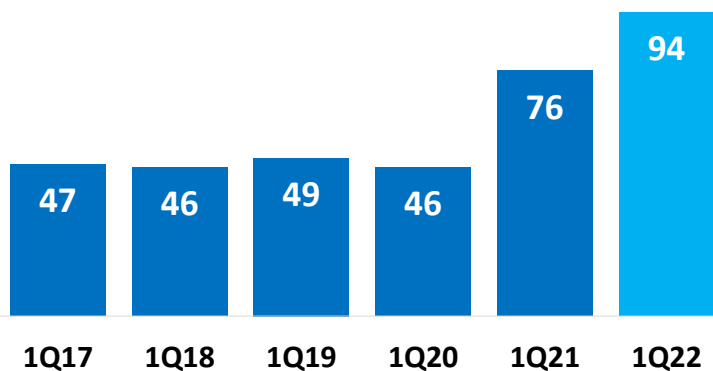
Deals  
Projected  
in 2022E

**31**

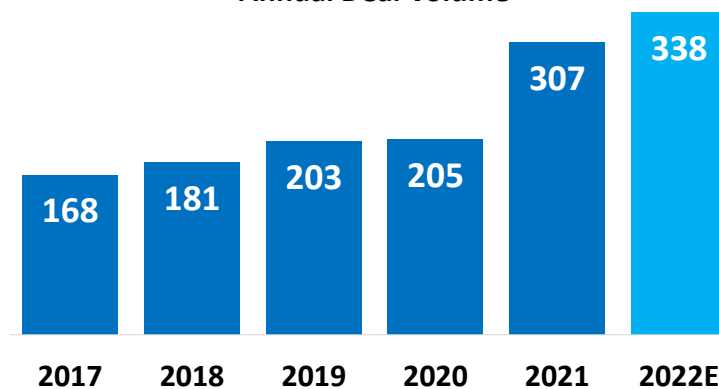
More Deals Expected  
in 2022 Relative to  
2021's Total

## Exhibits 2 & 3. Annual Deal Volume Expected to Hit Records Amid Best Q1 in Observed Time Frame

First Quarter Deal Volume

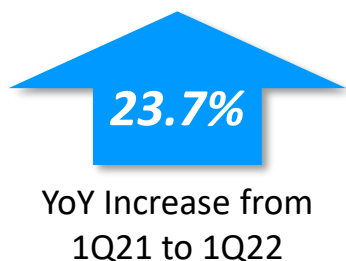


Annual Deal Volume

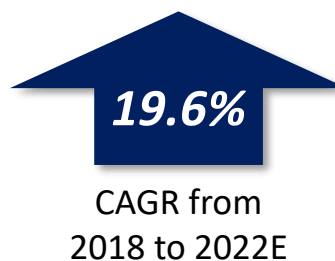


Source: Company Reports, SEC IARD, ECHELON Partners Analysis

As illustrated in **Exhibit 3**, if the M&A activity observed through the first quarter of the year continues, 2022 will see upwards of 338 transactions announced, up from the 2021 total of 307 transactions. That 10.1% increase would represent another annual M&A record and significant year-over-year increase.

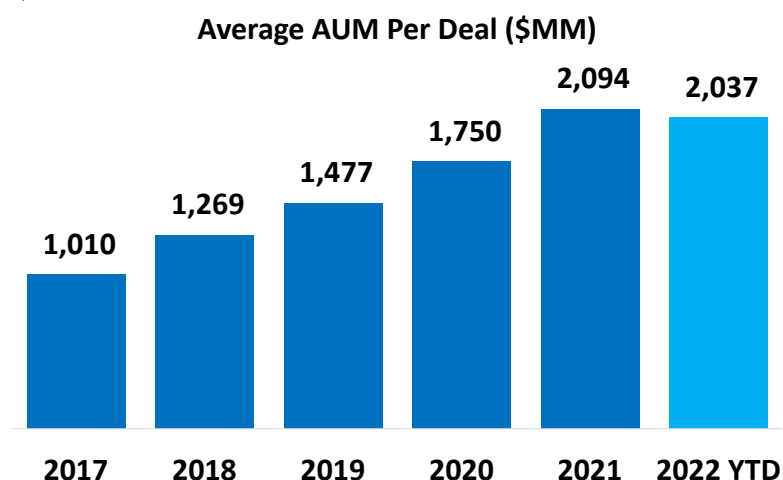


**18**  
More Deals in 1Q22  
Relative to 1Q21

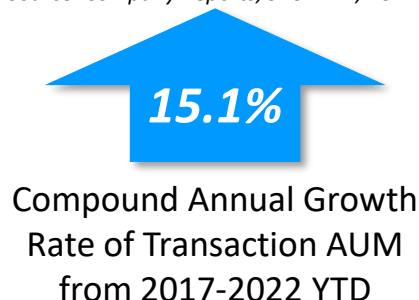


**157**  
More Deals Than  
in 2018  
(Projected)

## Exhibit 4. Average AUM per Deal Declines, Remains Near the \$2 BN Mark



*Excludes Transactions Involving Over \$20 BN in AUM  
Source: Company Reports, SEC IARD, ECHELON Partners Analysis*

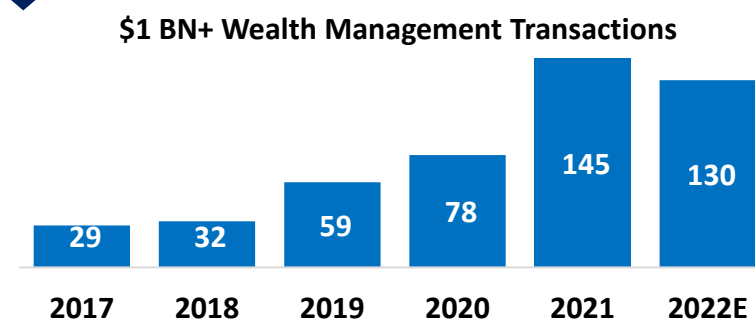


Set for  
**2.7%**  
decrease in  
Average AUM  
Transacted YOY

In 2021, the Average AUM per transaction increased at its lowest year-over-year rate since 2018. As shown in **Exhibit 4**, this trend became more extreme in 1Q22 resulting in an actual decline in the average AUM per transaction which was 2.7% lower than the average observed in 2021. Despite the decrease relative to 2021, 1Q22's average was still 16.4% higher than 2020's average. In total there were 36 deals involving over \$1 BN in AUM announced in 1Q22 which is an 16.3% decrease relative to 4Q21's total of 43 \$1 BN+ deals. This decrease in \$1 BN+ deals is one contributing factor to the YTD decrease in Average AUM per Deal.

Also, it appears that smaller wealth managers have taken note of the headlines about the record-breaking successful transactions announced by their larger peers. Roughly 60% of transactions (with under \$20 BN in AUM) announced in the first quarter involved less than \$1 BN in AUM, relative to only 55% of transactions in that size range that were announced in 2021. This may be driven by the increased number of "platforms", assembled by private equity firms, targeting smaller "tuck-in" transactions.

## Exhibit 5. Quantity of \$1 BN+ Transactions Falls, Contributing to the Lower Average AUM per Deal



*Source: Company Reports, SEC IARD, ECHELON Partners Analysis*

Building off the analysis above, **Exhibit 5** shows that the decrease in average AUM per deal is not simply driven by a small drop in the number of large transactions. The number of total \$1 BN+ transactions is expected to decline relative to 2021's record total. However, like the metrics in Exhibits 1-4, 2022E remains well above that of 2020. The \$1 BN plus AUM subsector continues to be the most competitive and sought-after piece of the overall RIA market for buyers.


**42.0%**

Compound Annual Growth Rate of \$1 BN+ Deals from 2018-2022E

Set for  
**10.3%**

Decrease in \$1 BN+ Deals Transacted Over 2020

**130**

Projected Total Number of \$1 BN+ Deals Expected in 2022

## Exhibit 6. 1Q22's Top Wealth Management Transactions Shows a Diverse Buyer Pool for Large Deals

Date	Seller	Buyer	Buyer Type	Seller Assets (\$ MM) <sup>1</sup>
1/14/2022	Portfolio Evaluations Inc.	CAPTRUST	Strategic or Consolidator	107,000
3/17/2022	Pensionmark Financial Group	World Insurance Associates	Other	80,000
2/10/2022	Cook Street Consulting	Morgan Stanley	Bank	72,000
1/27/2022	Wealthfront	UBS	Bank	27,000
1/24/2022	Hefren-Tillotson	Baird	Other	18,000
1/25/2022	Lion Street	Integrity Marketing Group	Strategic or Consolidator	15,000
1/31/2022	Taplin, Canida & Habacht	Loop Capital	Other	12,041
3/31/2022	Eaton Vance WaterOak	CI Financial Corp	Strategic or Consolidator	11,400
3/3/2022	Taylor Advisors	Hub International Limited	Other	8,300
1/10/2022	Wetherby Asset Management	Laird Norton Wealth Management	RIA	6,572

1. "Seller Assets" includes AUM and retirement planning assets the seller also advises on.

Source: Company Reports, SEC IARD, ECHELON Partners Analysis

**Exhibit 6** outlines the top transactions of 1Q22 ranked by assets. The buyer makeup for the industry's largest deals continues to be notably different than that of the broader wealth management industry with more activity by banks, insurance companies, and private equity firms. Overall, interest in the industry from private equity firms remains high. However, only two of the quarter's top ten transactions represent direct investments by private equity firms. This may indicate that private equity firms face a lack of large investment targets in early 2022 due to the fact that many of the largest platforms received fresh investments from private equity partners in 2021.

The quarter's top transactions also highlight wealth management firms' continued push into the retirement planning sector. CAPTRUST's acquisition of Portfolio Evaluations Inc. was the largest acquisition of the quarter by assets and represents CAPTRUST's second investment in a \$100 BN+ retirement planning firm. Morgan Stanley's acquisition of Cook Street Consulting was the quarter's second major investment in the retirement planning sector. The deal will allow Morgan Stanley to build on its 2021 acquisition of Hyas Group.

World Insurance Associates' acquisition of Pensionmark Financial Group is another example of increased deal activity in the retirement sector. This deal also highlights the continued integration between the wealth and insurance industries, with World Insurance Associates a leading insurance brokerage firm. Insurance brokers, like Hub International Limited, and related marketing organizations, like Integrity Marketing Group, are becoming increasingly active acquirers in the wealth management sector as demand increases for holistic financial planning that includes wealth management and insurance offerings.

**Exhibit 7. The List of Largest Direct PE Transactions Shows Lack of Large Investment Targets**

Date	Seller	Buyer	Seller AUM (\$ MM)	% Acquired
1/5/2022	RSM US Wealth Management	Parthenon Capital	12,000	100%
1/25/2022	Southwestern Investment Group	Merchant Investment Management	5,800	<50%
2/7/2022	Veris Wealth Partners	Rosemont	2,000	<50%
1/20/2022	New Republic Partners	SkyKnight Capital	1,500	<50%
2/10/2022	Fusion Family Wealth	Merchant Investment Management	1,000	<50%
1/20/2022	Facet Wealth	Warburg Pincus and Others	961	<50%
2/7/2022	Summit Investment Advisory	Merchant Investment Management	490	<50%

Source: Company Reports, SEC IARD, ECHELON Partners Analysis

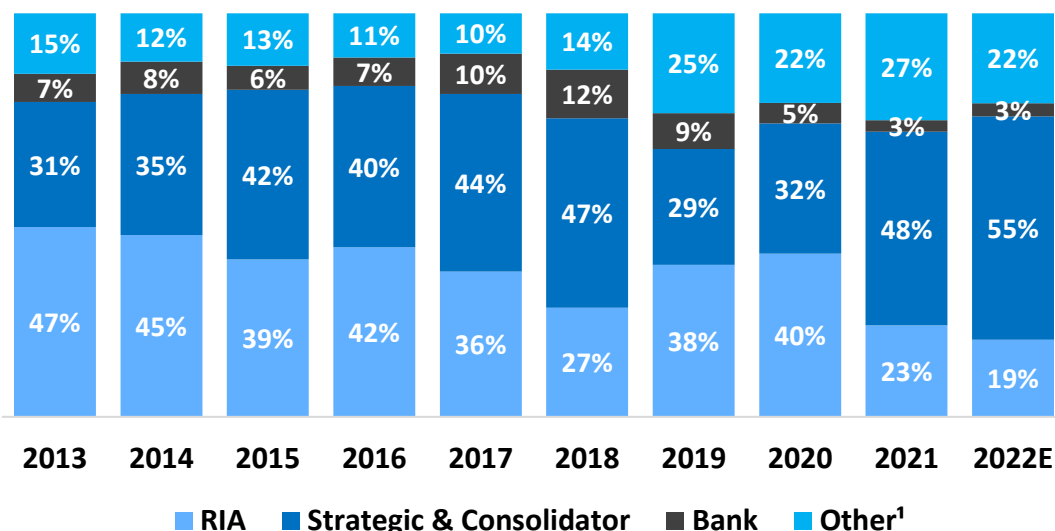
**Exhibit 7** highlights the quarter’s largest direct investments by private equity acquirers. It emphasizes that, while interest from private equity firms remains high, direct investment activity in the largest wealth management firms, has decreased notably from what was observed in 2021. Nearly all of the most active acquirers in today’s market are backed by leading private equity firms (or more). This has likely led to some level of saturation at the very top of the wealth management market, though this may be transitory with ECHELON observing new private entrants weekly who are attracted by the strong fundamentals of the sector.

Parthenon Capital’s acquisition of RSM’s U.S. wealth management business was the only acquisition of \$10+ BN by a private equity firm in 1Q22. They purchased the wealth management business from RSM US, who also offers audit, tax, and consulting services to the middle market. The carve-out of the wealth management business has been renamed “Choreo”, and 20-year wealth management veteran Larry Miles will take the reigns as CEO. Parthenon has a history of successful investments in the wealth management industry.

Merchant Investment Management was of the most active financial acquirers of the quarter, announcing four minority investments in wealth management firms, three of which are shown in the table above. While two of its 1Q22 deals were above the \$1 BN threshold, Merchant differs from most other financial investors in that it will acquire interests in smaller firms whose AUM typically falls below the \$1 BN mark. This and the fact that six of the eight direct private equity investments in 1Q22 were acquisitions involving less than 50% interest in the target highlight the ongoing prevalence of minority investment options that are now available to firms of all sizes, a trend that could benefit entrepreneurs seeking an external investment who wish to maintain a higher level of independence than what could be provided by a strategic acquirer. SkyKnight Capital’s minority investment in New Republic Partners is another example of this recent trend. These partnerships with private equity firms can drive accelerated growth opportunities through capital infusion which allows firms to expand more rapidly. In New Republic’s case, the new capital will be used for technology investments and the hiring of advisors.

## Exhibit 8. Strategics & Consolidators Account for Over Half of All 1Q22 Transactions

Percentage Breakdown of RIA Acquirers by Firm Type



**55%**  
 of 1Q22 Transactions  
 Involved Strategic  
 Acquirers & Consolidators

Strategic Acquirers & Consolidators continue to dominate dealmaking, announcing **52 deals, or 55% of the 1Q22's total.**

Source: Company Reports, SEC IARD, ECHELON Partners Analysis

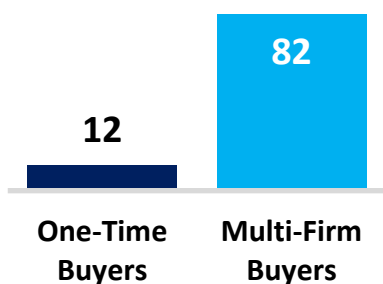
<sup>1</sup>Other: Private Equity Firms, Insurance Firms, Independent Broker Dealers, etc.

**Exhibit 8** reveals that **Strategic Acquirers & Consolidators** continue to complete the most transactions of the groups above, announcing over half of total – 52 of 94 deals – for the first time since ECHELON began tracking this statistic. The total AUM acquired in these transactions totaled \$177.1 BN which is 5.9x the AUM transacted by RIAs this quarter. Since 2019, this buyer category has dramatically increased the share of total transactions from 29% to today's 55.3%. This increase is mostly attributable to the rapid rise of a small group of especially active, mostly private equity-backed platforms.

The rise in activity by Strategics & Consolidators has paralleled the overall decline in **RIA-to-RIA** transactions observed over the same time period. In 1Q22, RIAs announced only 19% of total transactions, the category's lowest total in the observed time frame. These transactions accounted for only 6.4% of the quarter's total transacted AUM, indicating that RIAs continue to engage mostly in smaller acquisitions. The rise in industry valuations in the past 12-18 months may also be having a negative effect on the category's deal volume. Acquirers in the RIA category tend to be smaller than the Strategics & Consolidators. With less capital and without the benefits that come with increased scale that can be shared with a seller in a transaction, some RIAs may find themselves outbid in this competitive M&A environment.

**Banks** have historically been the least active type of acquirer and this has become increasingly true in the last 12-18 months. In 1Q22 they announced only 3.2% of total transactions, a level that is fairly consistent with the group's 2.9% share of total transactions in 2021. Banks do remain competitive players in the industry's largest deals, as evidenced by the fact that they accounted for 21.4% of total 1Q22 AUM transacted despite announcing 3.2% of total transactions. Two of the quarter's top five deals, the acquisitions of Cook Street Consulting and Wealthfront by Morgan Stanley and UBS, respectively, were completed by buyers in this category.

The **Other** category has historically consisted of primarily private equity investors and asset managers, but the industry's attractive elements and improved liquidity options continues to attract new buyers including insurance companies and other large diversified financial service firms. For example, World Insurance Associates LLC acquired Pensionmark Financial Group, an \$80 BN firm in California, which was the quarter's second largest transaction. While buyers in this category accounted for only 22.3% of 1Q22 deals, these transactions involved over \$160 BN in assets or about 34.3% of transacted AUM this quarter. This shows that, despite not making up for a large percentage of the deal count, these firms are consistently in the market for high value sellers.

**Exhibit 9. List of Most Active 1Q22 Acquirers Contains Familiar Names, with Notable Exceptions**

**87%**

of **2022 YTD** deals have been announced by companies that have acquired 2+ firms this year

Buyer	Headquarters	Buyer Type	# of Deals YTD
Creative Planning	Kansas City	Strategic/Consolidator	6
Beacon Pointe Advisors	Newport Beach	Strategic/Consolidator	6
Mercer Advisors	Denver	Strategic/Consolidator	5
Wealth Enhancement Group	Plymouth	Strategic/Consolidator	4
Merchant Investment Management	New York	Other	4
Mariner Wealth	Kansas City	Strategic/Consolidator	4
Stratos Wealth Partners	Cleveland	RIA	3

1. Deals are recorded and tracked on an “as announced basis” and do not consider the timing of internal negotiations.  
2. Acquisitions made through platform firms are not directly counted in the above totals.

Experienced Acquirers – those who have engaged in at least two mergers or acquisitions since 2016 – continue to be the most active acquirers in the industry. These firms have business models centered around scale and use M&A to drive growth. Today, nearly every firm in this category has at least one private equity partner.

As **Exhibit 9** shows, 82 of the 94 deals announced in the first quarter involved an acquirer who had completed at least two acquisitions since 2016, a greater portion than any other quarter since ECHELON began tracking this. It is also another data point illustrating that the industry-wide consolidation is being driven by a small number of incredibly active buyers. Two firms that are notably absent from 1Q22’s list of most active acquirers are CI Financial and Focus Financial Partners who both ranked in the top four most active acquirers of 2020. Together, these companies only announced four wealth management acquisitions in the first quarter of 2022, though Focus did technically announce an additional 3 transactions via its partner firms, Buckingham Strategic Wealth and Connecticut Wealth Advisors.

**Exhibit 10. International Wealth Management M&A Continues as U.S. Market Remains Hot**

Seller	Seller Location	Buyer	Buyer Type	Seller AUM (\$ MM)
<i>ASK Investments</i>	<i>India</i>	<i>Blackstone</i>	<i>Private Equity</i>	10,600
NSC Asesores	Mexico	Stratos Wealth Partners	RIA	4,000
Northwood Family Office	Canada	CI Financial Corp	Strategic or Consolidator	2,200
<i>Cardale Asset Management</i>	<i>United Kingdom</i>	<i>Titan Wealth Holdings</i>	<i>Wealth Manager</i>	1,356
Aim Independent	United Kingdom	Kingswood Group	Other	295

*Italic: Notable international deal, excluded from deal count*

Source: Company Reports, SEC IARD, ECHELON Partners Analysis.

Expansion into international markets via M&A activity has been a key trend in recent years as the U.S. wealth management M&A market has become increasingly competitive and as valuations have increased. Private equity firms led this trend and now strategic acquirers are looking abroad too. **Exhibit 10** depicts a list of the most important acquisitions of wealth managers headquartered outside the U.S.

## Exhibit 11. WealthTECH Deal Market Remains Active as Firms Look to Capitalize on Innovation

Date	Target	Buyer (or Investor)	WealthTECH Trend
1/11/2022	Gamma Investing	RiverFront Investment Holdings, Baird	Proliferation of Direct Indexing
1/11/2022	CAIS	Apollo, Motive Partners	Tech-Enabled Product Distribution
1/25/2022	Ellevest	Envestnet, Bank of Montreal	Robo Advisory Services
1/27/2022	Wealthfront	UBS	Robo Advisory Services
2/9/2022	Newton Crypto Ltd.	CI Financial	Access to Cryptocurrencies
2/11/2022	FNZ	CPP Investments, Motive Partners	Robo Advisory Services
2/23/2022	Pontera	Lightspeed Venture Partners	Retirement Account Management & Customization
3/9/2022	Acorns	TPG, BlackRock, and Others	Robo Advisory Services
3/21/2022	Beta+	Clearlake Capital, Motive Partners	Rise of the Super TAMP
3/29/2022	NextCapital	Goldman Sachs	Retirement Account Management & Customization

Source: Company Reports, SEC IARD, ECHELON Partners Analysis

WealthTECH, which includes FinTech firms that build or assemble technology solutions to serve wealth managers and their clients, is fast becoming one of the most active subsectors of the technology industry. **Exhibit 11** outlines the most important WealthTECH transactions of the first quarter that illustrate important trends for our industry.

Investment into tech-enabled product distribution solutions has been a key trend covered in previous reports. This quarter Apollo and Motive Partners invested \$225 MM into CAIS, a leading alternatives platform for financial advisors seeking access to private equity and hedge funds. The round valued the company at over \$1 BN and will provide capital for further advancements in technology and potential acquisitions. This development comes on the heels of a very active period for capital raises by competitors, such as (1) iCapital who announced ~\$500 MM in funding in 2021 and (2) serial entrepreneur Joe Lonsdale’s estimated \$50 MM seed round for the development of a rival platform.

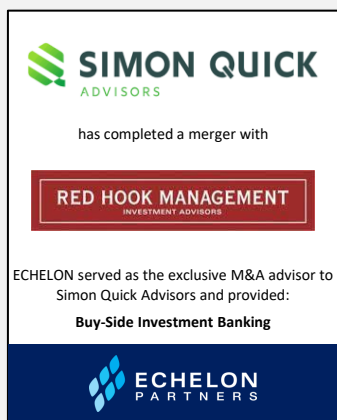
There is also heightened investment activity and demand for firms that provide investing services to mass affluent investors (as well as other client types) via a scalable, technology-driven solution. This trend was spurred, in part, by the surge in retail investing that followed the recent COVID lockdowns. Transactions such as Ellevest’s \$53 MM raise Envestnet and Bank of Montreal, Wealthfront’s \$1.4 BN sale to UBS, FNZ’s \$1 BN plus capital raise from Motive and CPP, and Acorn’s \$300 MM capital raise all are related to this burgeoning trend. Acorns, which announced the capital raise in light of a failed SPAC, specifically stated that the investment will be used to expand its cryptocurrency offering, another key trend affecting wealth managers.

Cryptocurrency has gained enough traction over the past several years that prominent wealth and asset managers like CI Financial are using M&A to bolster their access and strategic positioning within the digital currency marketplace. CI stated that it hopes its February 2022 investment in Newton Crypto will fast-track its efforts to provide cryptocurrency trading capabilities to its wealth management clients.

WealthTECH activity continues to be a leading indicator of trends effecting our industry and we expect another active year in 2022.



## ECHELON Deal Announcement: Simon Quick Advisors merges with Red Hook Management



### Simon Quick Advisors completes a merger with Red Hook Management

**Deal Size:**  
\$420 MM AUM

**Date Announced:**  
April 12, 2022



#### Investment Banking Role:

ECHELON Partners served as the exclusive financial advisor to Simon Quick Advisors, providing buy-side investment banking advisory services. ECHELON's services included valuation, merger analysis, deal process management, diligence, and negotiation of terms.

#### Client Background:

In 2017 The William E. Simon & Sons family office merged with Massey Quick to become Simon Quick Advisors. The firm is a \$4.5 BN AUM RIA based in Morristown, NJ with offices in Denver, Chattanooga, and New York. Simon Quick Advisors offers holistic financial planning solutions including administrative and bill pay services, tax and estate planning, cash flow management, and investment advisory to high-net-worth families, business owners, and executives.

#### Successful Outcome:

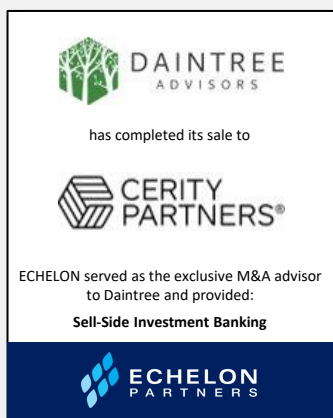
Through this successful merger, Red Hook Management's leadership and advisors will join Simon Quick, increasing the combined entity to 63 employees and expand Simon Quick's footprint in the wealth management industry. The two firm's aligning values and customer centric cultures are set to optimize the mutual success of their advisors and clients and provide Simon Quick an attractive career path that offers new opportunities for growth.



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To the Wealth and Investment Management Industries

## ECHELON Deal Announcement: Daintree Advisors Sale to Cerity Partners



### Investment Banking Role:

ECHELON Partners served as the exclusive financial advisor to Daintree Advisors, providing sell-side investment banking advisory services. The ECHELON team’s unmatched expertise and collaboration with Daintree’s team ultimately ensured a seamless transaction. ECHELON worked hand-in-hand with Daintree’s founder and other partners to identify, evaluate, and negotiate an attractive new business partnership that will provide additional routes for growth. ECHELON’s services included valuation, buyer outreach, communication strategy, marketing material development, process management, offer analysis, succession planning, and negotiating of deal terms.

### Client Background:

Daintree Advisors is a \$1.3 BN AUM RIA based in Boston, MA. The firm was founded in 2010 and provides high-net-worth individuals and families with a full suite of integrated risk management, financial and estate planning, cash flow management, tax planning, and investment advisory services. The partnership will help enhance Daintree’s high-quality services and enable additional growth opportunities for the team.

### Successful Outcome:

This transaction will accelerate the development of Daintree’s long-term vision, provide enhanced professional growth opportunities for their team, and allow them to offer a greater breadth and depth of services for their clients. In addition, all of their clients will benefit from the combined investment intelligence, robust technology infrastructure, enhanced tax and wealth management advice, and greater scale that the combination of both firms provides.

## Daintree Advisors completes sale to Cerity Partners

*Daintree has successfully completed a transaction with Cerity Partners, a portfolio company of Lightyear.*

**Deal Size:**  
\$1.3 BN AUM

**Date Announced:**  
March 1, 2022



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To the Wealth and Investment Management Industries

## ECHELON Deal Announcement: Paradigm Financial Advisors Sale to Creative Planning



### Paradigm Financial Advisors completes sale to Creative Planning

*Paradigm has successfully completed a transaction with Creative Planning, a portfolio company of General Atlantic.*

**Deal Size:**  
\$600 MM AUM

**Date Announced:**  
February 2, 2022



#### Investment Banking Role:

ECHELON Partners served as the exclusive financial advisor to Paradigm Financial Advisors, providing sell-side investment banking advisory services. The ECHELON team's thorough understanding of the RIA M&A landscape accompanied by their deal experience and deep network of established connections enabled a thorough process for Paradigm. ECHELON help facilitated a competitive process which ultimately culminated in finding the perfect fit for Paradigm. ECHELON's services included valuation, buyer outreach, client marketing, deal process management, offer analysis, succession planning, and negotiating of deal terms.

#### Client Background:

Paradigm Financial Advisors is a \$600 MM AUM RIA based in St. Louis, Mo. The firm founded to be a fee only financial advisor that provides high-quality advice to its high-net-worth clientele. The partnership will help contribute to Creative Planning's impressive growth and further strengthen its market presence in the Midwestern U.S. while enhancing PFA's pre-existing quality of services and enabling additional growth opportunities for the PFA team.

#### Successful Outcome:

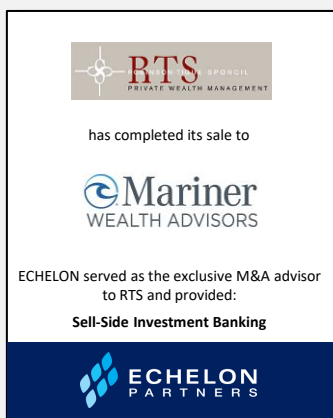
This deal will allow Creative Planning to leverage Paradigm's advanced planning expertise to accelerate growth in the high-net-worth space, and they plan to hire additional Attorneys and CPAs to create a new "hub" in St. Louis that will provide estate planning, tax planning, and tax preparation services for clients in the Midwest region.



INVESTMENT BANKERS | MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS | VALUATION EXPERTS

To the Wealth and Investment Management Industries

## ECHELON Deal Announcement: RTS Sale to Mariner Wealth Advisors



### RTS Private Wealth Management completes sale to Mariner Wealth Advisors

*RTS has successfully completed a transaction with Mariner Wealth Advisors, a portfolio company of Leonard Green.*

**Deal Size:**  
\$390 MM AUM

**Date Announced:**  
December 8, 2021



#### Investment Banking Role:

ECHELON Partners served as the exclusive financial advisor to RTS Private Wealth Management, providing sell-side investment banking advisory services. The ECHELON team is proud to have served as the exclusive financial advisor to RTS in this transaction, which will provide additional support to the growing RTS team and further opportunities for employees and clients. ECHELON worked hand-in-hand with the founding partners of RTS to identify, evaluate, and negotiate an attractive new business partnership which brings together great people with mutually beneficial economics.

#### Client Background:

RTS Private Wealth Management is a \$390 MM AUM wealth management focused RIA based in Phoenix, AZ. The firm specializes in investment consulting, advanced financial planning, relationship management, and other financial services that combine to comprise the holistic RTS fiduciary wealth management approach. RTS is led by CEO & Founder David Robinson and fellow executives Keith Tigue and Lisa Sponcil, who have a combined total of over 100 years in the financial services sector.

#### Successful Outcome:

This deal will contribute to the further growth of Mariner Wealth Advisors (“MWA”) by adding another successful team of wealth managers and a second strategic location for the MWA network in the Phoenix-Scottsdale area. RTS’s unique approach to relationship management and proven record of providing personalized solutions for clients was the perfect fit within MWA’s core mission of client-first wealth advice.



**INVESTMENT BANKERS | MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS | VALUATION EXPERTS**

To the Wealth and Investment Management Industries

## 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:

	<b>RIAs</b>		<b>Broker Dealers</b>		<b>Hybrid RIAs</b>
	<b>WealthTECH Firms</b>		<b>TAMPs</b>		<b>Asset Managers</b>

## How ECHELON Can Help

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

	<b>INVESTMENT BANKING</b> <i>#1 FINRA-registered investment bank serving wealth managers over the past 20 years</i>
	<b>MANAGEMENT CONSULTING</b> <i>Strategy consultants who have advised on over 500 wealth and asset management deals</i>
	<b>VALUATIONS</b> <i>#1 in valuations for wealth managers with more than \$2 MM in revenue or \$200 MM in AUM</i>
	<b>TRACK RECORD</b> <i>A three-time winner of WealthManagement.com's Most Innovative Industry Investment Bank Award</i>



# ECHELON's Leadership

## DAN SEIVERT | CEO AND MANAGING PARTNER



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Dan Seivert is the CEO and founder of ECHOLON Partners. Prior to starting ECHOLON 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.

## MIKE WUNDERLI | MANAGING DIRECTOR



mwunderli@echelon-partners.com

Mike Wunderli is a Managing Director at ECHOLON Partners and is integrally involved in all aspects of the firm's activities. Prior to joining ECHOLON, Mr. Wunderli founded Connect Capital Group (CCG) where he advised private, middle-market companies on pre-transaction planning, growth financing options and the development and execution of exit strategies. Before founding CCG, Mr. Wunderli spent 12 years at Lehman Brothers and UBS as a Senior Vice President in the Private Wealth Management (PWM) division. During his time at Lehman Brothers and UBS, Mr. Wunderli executed over \$2 BN in investment-banking and private-equity transactions for his clients and managed over \$400 MM for high-net-worth investors and their families. Mr. Wunderli received his BA from Brigham Young University and an MBA from The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

## BARNABY AUDSLEY | VICE PRESIDENT



baudsley@echelon-partners.com

Barnaby Audsley is a Vice President at ECHOLON 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 ECHOLON 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. At Occidental College, Barnaby was a Director on the student-run investment portfolio. He is a mentor for Play Rugby USA, a non-profit focused on developing youth through rugby.

## BRETT MULDER | VICE PRESIDENT

















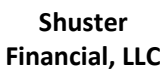










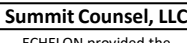




















bmulder@echelon-partners.com

Brett Mulder is a Vice President at ECHOLON Partners and spends time across all of the firm's core activities including M&A advisory, strategic consulting, and thought leadership. Prior to joining ECHOLON, 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.

# Sample Transactions & Advisory Assignments Executed by the ECHELON Team

 <p>has completed a merger with</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Simon Quick</p> <p><b>Buy-Side M&amp;A Advisory</b></p> 	 <p>has completed the acquisition of</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Daintree</p> <p><b>Sell-Side M&amp;A Advisory</b></p> 	 <p>has completed the acquisition of</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Paradigm</p> <p><b>Sell-Side M&amp;A Advisory</b></p> 	 <p>has completed the acquisition of</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to RTS</p> <p><b>Sell-Side M&amp;A Advisory</b></p> 	 <p>has completed the acquisition of</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Sawtooth</p> <p><b>Sell-Side M&amp;A Advisory</b></p> 	 <p>has completed the acquisition of</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Bainco</p> <p><b>Sell-Side M&amp;A Advisory</b></p> 
 <p>has completed the acquisition of</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Pinnacle</p> <p><b>Sell-Side M&amp;A Advisory</b></p> 	 <p>has completed the acquisition of</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Oakwood</p> <p><b>Sell-Side M&amp;A Advisory</b></p> 	 <p>has completed the acquisition of</p>  <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Independence Advisors with:</p> <p><b>Sell-Side M&amp;A Advisory</b></p> 	 <p>has completed the acquisition of</p>  <p>ECHELON served as the exclusive financial advisor to Goss and provided management with:</p> <p><b>Sell-Side M&amp;A Advisory</b></p> 	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Rowling &amp; Associates with:</p> <p><b>Valuation Services and Succession Transaction</b></p> 	 <p>has agreed to a merger with</p>  <p>ECHELON provided the Management of the firms with:</p> <p><b>Merger and Financial Advisory Services</b></p> 
 <p>has completed the acquisition of</p>  <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Sullivan &amp; Serwitz with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Sell-Side Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>has completed the acquisition of</p>  <p>ECHELON provided the Management of OBS Financial with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Sell-Side Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Concentric Wealth Management, LLC with:</p> <p><b>Buy-Side Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Blue Oak Capital, LLC with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Financial Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>has agreed to a merger with</p>  <p>ECHELON provided the Management of FiComm Partners and Nexus Strategy, LLC with:</p> <p><b>M&amp;A and Financial Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Halite Partners with:</p> <p><b>M&amp;A and Financial Advisory Services</b></p> 
 <p>has agreed to a transaction with</p>  <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Lexington Capital Management Inc. with:</p> <p><b>M&amp;A and Financial Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Massey Quick Simon &amp; Co. with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Financial Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Oakworth Capital Bank with:</p> <p><b>M&amp;A Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Retirement Income Solutions with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Financial Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of SignatureFD with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and M&amp;A Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of The Gensler Group with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Financial Advisory Services</b></p> 
 <p>has completed the acquisition of</p>  <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Wealthstream Advisors, Inc. with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Buy-Side Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>has completed the acquisition of</p>  <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Merit Financial Group with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Buy-Side Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Centennial Securities with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Financial Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Bridgeworth, LLC with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Financial Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>has agreed to a merger with</p>  <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Massey Quick with:</p> <p><b>Merger and Financial Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>has completed the acquisition of:</p>  <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Private Ocean with:</p> <p><b>Buy-Side and Financial Advisory Services</b></p> 
 <p>has been sold to</p>  <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Junxure with:</p> <p><b>Sell-Side and Financial Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>has been sold to</p>  <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Total Rebalance Expert with:</p> <p><b>Sell-Side and Financial Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Collins Investment Group with:</p> <p><b>Sell-Side and Financial Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Roof Advisory Group, Inc. with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Financial Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>has completed the acquisition of</p>  <p>ECHELON provided the Management of The Glowacki Group with:</p> <p><b>M&amp;A and Sell-Side Advisory Services</b></p> 	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Baldwin Brothers, Inc. with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Financial Advisory Services</b></p> 

# Sample Transactions & Advisory Assignments Executed by the ECHELON Team

 <p><b>LIVE OAK BANK</b></p> <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Live Oak Bank with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Buy-Side Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p><b>CHAMBERLAIN GROUP</b> FINANCIAL SERVICES <i>Value for Generations</i></p> <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Chamberlain Group with:</p> <p><b>Buy-Side, M&amp;A, and Financial Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p><b>Retirement PROTECTION GROUP</b> <i>A Wealth Management Firm</i></p> <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Retirement Protection Group with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and M&amp;A Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p>has been sold to</p>  <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Old Dominion Capital Management with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and M&amp;A Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p>has been sold to</p>  <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Bordeaux Wealth Advisors with:</p> <p><b>Sell-Side and Financial Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Lawing Financial with:</p> <p><b>Valuation Advisory Services</b></p>
					
 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Private Ocean, LLC with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Financial Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Kinsight, LLC with:</p> <p><b>Valuation, M&amp;A, and Financial Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Shuster Financial, LLC with:</p> <p><b>Buy-Side, Valuation, and M&amp;A Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of FCG Advisors LLC with:</p> <p><b>M&amp;A and Financial Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Palo Capital with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Financial Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of The Sterling Group with:</p> <p><b>M&amp;A and Financial Advisory Services</b></p>
					
 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Filbrandt &amp; Company, Inc. with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Financial Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p>has completed the acquisition of</p>  <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Symmetry Partners, LLC with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Financial Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Signature Estate &amp; Investment Advisors, LLC with:</p> <p><b>M&amp;A and Sell-Side Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Vista Capital Partners, Inc. with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Financial Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Junxure with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Financial Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Trust Company of the South with:</p> <p><b>Valuation Advisory Services</b></p>
					
 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Strategic Partners Investment Advisors, LLC with:</p> <p><b>M&amp;A and Financial Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Phillips &amp; Company Securities, Inc. with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Buy-Side Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Perigon Wealth Management, LLC with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Financial Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Partnervest Financial Group, LLC with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Financial Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Partners In Wealth with:</p> <p><b>Valuation and Financial Advisory Services</b></p>	 <p>ECHELON provided the Management of Schultz Collins Lawson Chambers, Inc. with:</p> <p><b>Valuation Advisory Services</b></p>
					

## 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.**





INVESTMENT BANKERS | MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS | VALUATION EXPERTS

to the Wealth and Investment Management Industries

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