

M&A Trends to Watch For in 2018

January 24, 2018

Based on our review of the trends evident from 2017's deal environment and what we have seen so far in 2018, we expect M&A in 2018 to be influenced by the following:

- **Valuations— Interest rates have been low for a long time and asset values reflect this**, with the record highs in the U.S. stock markets being one example. With central banks signalling their desire to hike interest rates, there is potential for both increased M&A activity as buyers borrow ahead of rising rates, and tougher deal-making as sellers seek to realize record prices. As a result, the trend toward mega-deals with eye-popping price-tags seems likely to continue.
- **Shareholder Activism— The trend of shareholders pro-actively pushing for change shows no sign of abating in 2018**. Even the current take-over battle for CanniMed (where BLG is acting for the target) is the result, in part, of shareholders willing to sign hard lock-up agreements in order to effect change.
- **Technology Companies— Technology emerged as a major driver of M&A in 2017. Amazon's purchase of Whole Foods is one example of how technology-based companies can change the dynamics of an industry through M&A**. The desire to not be left behind will drive some companies to acquire other businesses for their technology or talent, and see others becoming targets of technology-based giants.
- **Politics— While stock markets have powered ahead despite uncertainties on the political front, some of these uncertainties are starting to come into focus. For example, the U.S. tax legislation finally went through and its effects on M&A – for buyers and targets alike – is now being assessed. For Canada, the fate of NAFTA remains unclear, but the risk of the U.S. terminating the agreement certainly seems higher now than a year ago, making M&A risks more difficult to quantify. Many other political events could affect M&A generally or in certain industries, from legalization of cannabis in Canada and conflicting regulation in the U.S., elections in Ontario and the U.S., the progress of Brexit, and geopolitical tensions.**

For further information about BLG's [Mergers and Acquisitions team](#) and to access our bulletins and our [M&A Building Blocks series](#), visit blg.com/ma.

Expertise

[Mergers & Acquisitions](#)

BLG | Canada's Law Firm

As the largest, truly full-service Canadian law firm, Borden Ladner Gervais LLP (BLG) delivers practical legal advice for domestic and international clients across more practices and industries than any Canadian firm. With over 725 lawyers, intellectual property agents and other professionals, BLG serves the legal needs of businesses and institutions across Canada and beyond – from M&A and capital markets, to disputes, financing, and trademark & patent registration.

blg.com

BLG Offices

Calgary

Centennial Place, East Tower
520 3rd Avenue S.W.
Calgary, AB, Canada
T2P 0R3

T 403.232.9500
F 403.266.1395

Ottawa

World Exchange Plaza
100 Queen Street
Ottawa, ON, Canada
K1P 1J9

T 613.237.5160
F 613.230.8842

Vancouver

1200 Waterfront Centre
200 Burrard Street
Vancouver, BC, Canada
V7X 1T2

T 604.687.5744
F 604.687.1415

Montréal

1000 De La Gauchetière Street West
Suite 900
Montréal, QC, Canada
H3B 5H4

T 514.954.2555
F 514.879.9015

Toronto

Bay Adelaide Centre, East Tower
22 Adelaide Street West
Toronto, ON, Canada
M5H 4E3

T 416.367.6000
F 416.367.6749

The information contained herein is of a general nature and is not intended to constitute legal advice, a complete statement of the law, or an opinion on any subject. No one should act upon it or refrain from acting without a thorough examination of the law after the facts of a specific situation are considered. You are urged to consult your legal adviser in cases of specific questions or concerns. BLG does not warrant or guarantee the accuracy, currency or completeness of this publication. No part of this publication may be reproduced without prior written permission of Borden Ladner Gervais LLP. If this publication was sent to you by BLG and you do not wish to receive further publications from BLG, you may ask to remove your contact information from our mailing lists by emailing unsubscribe@blg.com or manage your subscription preferences at blg.com/MyPreferences. If you feel you have received this message in error please contact communications@blg.com. BLG's privacy policy for publications may be found at blg.com/en/privacy.

© 2024 Borden Ladner Gervais LLP. Borden Ladner Gervais LLP is an Ontario Limited Liability Partnership.