

OUR CLIENTS - THEIR WORDS

SAM PEMBERTON | SOFTEL LTD

“WE LOOKED AT VARIOUS ADVISORS...
BCMS WAS ALWAYS THE FRONT RUNNER”

The company had been through a long-term change programme, and I was brought in as CEO in 2007.

It was always a long-term vision that we would have a good, strong, company. The natural next step was to respond to the companies which had shown interest in acquiring our business, and we wanted to respond using a professional brokerage.

We wanted to make sure things were done properly and represented our shareholders well: getting maximum value and avoiding any traps or pitfalls in the process. We had been approached by a number of companies that were interested in purchasing Softel and it was at that point that we looked at BCMS seriously.

We looked at various advisors, but BCMS always seemed to be the front runner.

We met with Howard Dingley, Business Manager who talked us through the BCMS process. We started out quite cynical. We didn't think that in an industry like ours the researchers would be able to identify a large number of potential purchasers.

The research team certainly lived up to their reputation and the BCMS process did create a competitive environment around the business. It was clear from the outset that we had done the right thing in choosing BCMS.

Our industry is relatively small and niche. We knew two of the three formal bidders fairly well, but the third was a company that we had never come across before. BCMS certainly added to the competition around the business.

As part of the process we received a number of informal proposals and advanced conversations that were indicative of the level of interest in the company.

MEETINGS ACROSS CONTINENTS...

The meetings with potential buyers went very well both in Kingsclere, UK and the USA when we were attending a trade show.

The BCMS team were able to anticipate the questions they would be asked. Whilst we had nothing to hide, it was nonetheless useful to put our message across in a particular way.

STATS

THE SELLER

SOFTEL LTD

- A key provider of technology solutions to the global media industry
- Staff: 40

THE BUYER

MIRANDA TECHNOLOGIES
(BELDEN INC)

- Canadian manufacturer of cable-TV and networking products, and a subsidiary of Belden – global leader in high quality, end-to-end signal transmission solutions

THE FACTS

Companies researched: 78

Meetings held: 6

Interested parties included:

US leading provider of broadband optical networking systems, US leading media localisation provider



“CONFIDENTIALITY WAS CRITICAL”

Confidentiality was critical. We were aware that if any news of the sale leaked out it could affect customer relationships.

Before any party was approached we were given a list of potential buyers to review. We were also able to advise BCMS on specific individuals within some of those businesses. Confidentiality was impeccably handled by BCMS. There was not a single instance of a leak.

The buyer was a multi-billion dollar company, and had a legal team of 16 full-time lawyers. This generated a huge amount of questions, which I and the other directors had to field with BCMS' help.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL FIT

We took it upon ourselves to decide we would only share the news when we really needed to. Everyone within the business was already working hard. It was critically important that whichever company purchased us shared our values, respected our staff and understood our rationale for why we were investing in certain things – our basic strategy.

In Miranda Technologies, a Belden Brand, we found a company that understood all of that. A year on, much of the staff are still there, they have invested into products and carried out launches of products that we had planned to do.

“WE WANTED TO BE PROUD OF THE DEAL...”

I was very happy and delighted to be involved in the initial integration, and was able to finish on my birthday.

We attended the industry's annual trade show in Las Vegas and I was able to announce to the industry my retirement from the business, which meant I was able to do a hand over with customers and partners. At the end of the show I got on my flight as CEO and got off in London as a free man.

Now I spend my time working on charity work and coaching sports. I'm now the sports coordinator at my kids' school, something that I am enjoying tremendously, as well as spending more time with my wife. It's really wonderful and I'm very content now.

I was enormously satisfied with the sale price and terms. We also wanted to be proud of the deal, and for the directors to walk away with our heads held high, knowing that we had left the company going from strength to strength.

CALL US

+44 (0)1635 296193

EMAIL US

info@bcms.co.uk

TO REQUEST IDEAL

www.bcms.co.uk/ideal

TO ATTEND A SEMINAR

seminars@bcms.co.uk

