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Best Mid-Market Media M&A Adviser 2016

Kingston Smith

Kingston Smith Corporate Finance has a proven track record of advising the owners and managers of media, marketing services, publishing and media tech businesses that are looking to expand, raise finance, acquire other businesses or realise shareholder value through a sale, flotation or management buyout. We caught up with Nicola Horton to find out more.

As specialists in the media sector, Kingston Smith know what the market is looking for and are able to provide it, as Nicola explains.

“Through our active relationships with potential buyers and our international connections, we are able to source buyers with the right strategic fit for our clients’ businesses. We also have the contacts, credibility and experience to secure finance from our extensive network of specialist lenders and investors in the sector.

“As part of a top 20 UK multi-disciplinary advisory and accountancy firm, we are able to offer a holistic, integrated service; providing transaction tax advice and accountancy support, as well as personal tax guidance, alongside our full range of corporate finance services.

“Our clients tell us they value our **sector-knowledge**, our **pragmatic approach**, and our **desire to help** them achieve the best outcome for their business.”

“While we are UK-based, we are a member of Morison KSi, a large global professional services association with 375 offices in 88 countries. We have a partner-led team focused on the key international markets looking to invest in the UK with a media sector focus – US, China, India, Latin America.”

Working within such a competitive market, Nicola stresses that the firm is keen to differentiate itself from other similar firms by focusing on a client centred approach.

“As media and marketing services specialists, we compete with a number of corporate finance boutiques that also specialise in the sector. However, because we are part of a multi-disciplinary professional services firm, we are able to draw

on our wider resources to provide our clients with an all-encompassing solution for their M&A requirements. So, as well as providing corporate finance advisory services, we offer tax guidance, transaction accounting support, due diligence services and valuation advice.

“Our clients tell us they value our sector-knowledge, our pragmatic approach, and our desire to help them achieve the best outcome for their business.

“In addition, our sector-specialist approach means we have developed a number of proprietary software tools which allow us to benchmark our clients against their peers and provide them with detailed feedback on operational improvements that might be desirable in the run-up to a sale. We also utilise technology to gain access and insight into deals undertaken in the sector to allow for more accurate valuation and pricing advice.”

Looking to the future, Nicola explains that the firm and the market as a whole is weighing up the effects of the Brexit vote, but that overall the future is bright for Kingston Smith.

“The UK market is currently digesting the outcome of the recent referendum and the vote in favour of Brexit. We may see a relatively quiet period for M&A over the summer, while market participants take time to assess the implications.

“However, we know that UK SMEs are flexible and robust in the face of change. This change brings opportunity as well as risk, and our role as advisers is to support our clients through this period of uncertainty, by being agile and ingenious against a backdrop of change.

“Despite these challenges we are positive about the future of our firm. Kingston Smith Corporate Finance has undergone considerable growth in the past few years, and expects that growth to continue. As well as advising on M&A, we have broadened our advisory offering to include the raising of growth capital for SMEs.”