

Case study:

Leading a Complex Cross-Border Integration Following Strategic Acquisition

Overview

Hunter Adams supported a client through its first international acquisition, leading the post-deal integration of a UK-listed business into a dual-listed African organisation. Through structured planning, strong stakeholder alignment, and pragmatic delivery, the client successfully integrated operations, strengthened capability, and demonstrated its ability to execute on future growth ambitions.

The Challenge

The client had successfully acquired a UK-listed business as part of its global expansion strategy. However, no formal integration planning had been undertaken during the acquisition phase.

This created an urgent need to define and deliver a comprehensive post-acquisition integration plan - critical to unlocking value, ensuring operational continuity, and maintaining confidence with shareholders and the wider market.

The stakes were high. As the organisation's first acquisition of this kind, success was essential not only for immediate business performance but also for future growth and reputation.

The Underlying Complexity

While the immediate requirement was integration, the complexity ran much deeper. The project involved:

- Integrating two organisations with significantly different cultural, geographic, and operational contexts
- Aligning UK and African operations across multiple jurisdictions with differing employment regulations
- Managing a three-way integration between the acquiring company, the acquired business, and a joint venture
- Transitioning the acquired UK office into a technical and training centre, fundamentally changing its purpose and workforce focus

These factors created a highly sensitive environment, requiring careful balance between integration, autonomy, and long-term strategic intent.

The Approach

Hunter Adams led the end-to-end integration programme, establishing structure, clarity, and momentum from the outset.

The approach focused on alignment and execution:

- **Defining clear objectives:** Establishing integration goals aligned with business strategy
- **Leadership alignment:** Securing agreement and sponsorship from senior stakeholders across all organisations
- **Multi-disciplinary delivery:** Building integrated workstreams with representatives from across functions and geographies
- **Structured planning:** Setting clear milestones, timelines, and reporting mechanisms
- **Ongoing tracking:** Ensuring visibility of progress and accountability across all areas

This created a shared framework that enabled coordinated delivery across a complex stakeholder landscape.

Overcoming Challenges

The integration was delivered under particularly challenging conditions:

- No prior integration experience within the acquiring organisation
- Cultural differences across organisations and geographies
- Resistance to fully collaborative integration approaches
- Delivery during COVID-19, requiring all engagement to be conducted remotely

These challenges were navigated through:

- **Strong relationship-building**, despite remote working constraints
- **Active senior leadership engagement**, ensuring alignment and sponsorship
- **Inclusive communication**, ensuring all parties felt heard and involved
- **Demonstrating value early**, highlighting tangible benefits of integration to build momentum and buy-in

This approach helped overcome initial resistance and foster greater collaboration.

The Outcome

The programme delivered a successfully integrated operating model, including:

- Alignment of business operations across geographies and entities
- Creation of a focused technical and training centre within the UK business
- Integration of complementary capabilities across the group
- Greater clarity around shared objectives and ways of working

The organisation was able to move forward as a more cohesive, aligned entity.

The Impact

The integration delivered tangible business benefits:

- **Streamlined cost base and organisational structure**
- **Enhanced technical capability**, leveraging combined expertise
- **Better alignment of business lines and strategic objectives**
- **Stronger market confidence**, demonstrating the ability to execute complex acquisitions

The success of the integration positioned the organisation as a credible player in future expansion and acquisition activity.

Key Lessons

This engagement highlights several critical lessons:

- **Focus on clear objectives:** Even in complex integrations, clarity of purpose is essential
- **Engage stakeholders continuously:** Alignment and buy-in drive delivery success
- **Build the right team:** Diverse, cross-functional expertise is key
- **Demonstrate progress early:** Tangible wins help build confidence and momentum

Why Hunter Adams

This project demonstrates Hunter Adams' ability to lead complex, cross-border integrations in high-stakes environments.

By combining structured programme leadership, cultural awareness, and practical execution, Hunter Adams enabled the client to successfully integrate operations and realise the value of its acquisition.

Planning an acquisition or navigating post-deal integration?

Partner with Hunter Adams to ensure your organisation delivers value quickly, confidently, and sustainably.

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