

The Texas Lawbook

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CDT Roundup: 18 Deals, 15 Law Firms, 99 Lawyers, \$6.74B

By Claire Poole

Merger and acquisition activity usually starts out the year slowly and then builds. But if a report by Bloomberg is to be believed, last month was the best January for deals globally since 2000 with \$275 billion worth of transactions.

North American deals were up 40 percent in the month hitting \$187 billion, according to the news and data provider, followed by Asia at \$47 billion, which represented an increase of 10 percent. In Europe, however, M&A volumes fell about 24 percent to \$30.5 billion.

How did Texas fare? Not so well. Deals involving Texas lawyers for the first four weeks of January amounted to \$14.4 billion, a 58 percent drop over the same four weeks last year, according to the Corporate Deal Tracker. Volume was up, however, with 56 deals versus 51 in January 2018.

This past week wasn't any better on a value basis, with 18 deals worth \$6.74 billion, versus 11 deals valued at \$12.6 billion in the same period last year. However, activity was up over the previous week, which saw only 13 transactions valued at \$2.77 billion.

Fifteen firms and 99 Texas attorneys were involved in the action, with 16 M&A, private equity or venture capital transactions worth \$5.72 billion and two capital markets transactions worth \$950 million. Better luck this week.

M&A, PRIVATE EQUITY AND VENTURE CAPITAL

Winston advises ADF/IDF on sale to Symrise for \$900M

Winston & Strawn said it advised American Dehydrated Foods/International Dehydrated Foods, known as ADF/IDF, on its sale to German flavor, nutrition and fragrance provider Symrise for \$900 million.

The team was led by M&A partner **Christina Tate** and associate **Melissa Kalka**. Real estate partner Jeff Smith in Houston also was part of the group.

Clifford Chance counseled Symrise with a team

out of Germany and New York.

BNP Paribas provided financial advice to Symrise with BNP Paribas and UniCredit providing bridge financing, which will be refinanced with equity and debt. Houlihan Lokey was ADF/IDF's financial advisor.

Winston's Tate told The Texas Lawbook that she won the assignment given her experience working on M&A transactions in the food and beverage space, including for food ingredient makers such as IDF/ADF. She also has worked with the Houlihan team on the deal, including lead Tim Larsen in Chicago, on previous transactions.

Founded in 1978, ADF/IDF claims to be a leading meat- and egg-based protein specialist and pioneer in all natural nutrition ingredients and the top natural ingredient provider to pet food makers.

The Springfield, Missouri-based company has 11 manufacturing sites and 2 technical centers throughout North America and 470 employees and generates annual sales of \$220 million.

Symrise said the target's nutrition and taste solutions for the pet food and food segments are complementary to its own offerings, which include the Diana brand.

Symrise CEO Heinz-Jürgen Bertram said the deal also will broaden the company's global presence, especially in the U.S., which is a strategically important growth market.

The buyer expects the transaction to add to its earnings per share starting the first year after closing, noting that the target has an EBITDA margin of 23 percent.

ADF/IDF founder William Darr said the company will benefit from Symrise's scientific know-how to further improve its products and its wide global presence and broad customer base to expand its business faster.

Symrise had \$3.4 billion in sales in 2017 and is represented by 100 sites in Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, the U.S. and Latin America.