ASCEND
PERSONAL M&A ADVISORY

BUSINESS OWNER TOOL

IS YOUR BUSINESS READY TO ACQUIRE ANOTHER ONE?

ACQUISITION READINESS - PLAIN ENGLISH

Can your existing business carry the extra weight?

- Enough financial headroom to fund and support the transaction.
- Enough management capacity that two businesses do not become one owner's problem.
- Enough operational discipline to integrate without destabilising the company you already own.

THIS TOOL IS FOR YOU IF...

You own a good business and want acquisition to become the next growth lever.

YOU HAVE OUTGROWN ORGANIC GROWTH

You can see a faster route through buying customers, capability, people, geography or market share.

YOU ARE ALREADY LOOKING

Brokers or owners are sending opportunities, but you are not sure whether your current business is genuinely ready.

YOU WANT TO BUILD, NOT JUST BUY

You understand completion is only day one and the value comes from what happens after the acquisition.

Score the next 10 questions honestly. A low score simply shows what needs strengthening before you add complexity.

CAPACITY

READINESS

Can the current business carry more?

CONTROL

READINESS

Can it operate without everything coming back to you?

INTEGRATION

READINESS

Do you know what happens after completion?

PART 1 - CAN YOUR CURRENT BUSINESS CARRY AN ACQUISITION?

Start with the business you already own.

NO = 0 | PARTLY = 1 | YES = 2. Score what is true today - not what you could probably fix once a deal appears.

#	Question	NO	PARTLY	YES
1	FINANCIAL VISIBILITY **Do you know your real monthly cash, profit and working-capital position?** WHY IT MATTERS: If the existing numbers are unclear, adding another company makes capital decisions harder.			
2	CASH HEADROOM **Could your business absorb professional fees, integration costs or a weaker-than-planned first few months?** WHY IT MATTERS: Acquisitions often consume cash before they create it.			
3	MANAGEMENT DEPTH **Can the business operate for a week without every major decision coming back to you?** WHY IT MATTERS: If you are the operating system, you do not yet have spare management capacity.			
4	SYSTEMS & REPORTING **Are the core processes, KPIs and reporting routines already repeatable?** WHY IT MATTERS: You cannot sensibly integrate another business into chaos.			
5	CORE BUSINESS STABILITY **Is the company you already own performing consistently rather than being in rescue mode?** WHY IT MATTERS: Acquisition should accelerate a stable business, not distract from fixing the first one.			

THE SIMPLE RULE

If the first business is fragile, acquisition normally magnifies the fragility rather than hiding it.

PART 2 - CAN YOU ABSORB WHAT HAPPENS AFTER COMPLETION?

The deal is not finished when the money moves.

The second half of readiness is about execution. A target can be attractive and affordable and still damage the group if there is no capacity to integrate it.

6

STRATEGIC REASON

NO | PARTLY | YES

Can you explain in one sentence why acquisition is better than simply growing organically?

WHY IT MATTERS: A clear strategic reason stops you buying a business just because it is available.

7

BUY BOX

NO | PARTLY | YES

Have you defined exactly what type, size, geography and characteristics fit your business?

WHY IT MATTERS: The target should fit the strategy - not rewrite it.

8

FUNDING LANE

NO | PARTLY | YES

Do you broadly know what your company and target could sensibly fund without overleveraging?

WHY IT MATTERS: Debt has to be serviced after completion; the biggest cheque is not always the best outcome.

9

INTEGRATION OWNER

NO | PARTLY | YES

Do you know who will actually own the first 100 days after completion?

WHY IT MATTERS: If the answer is automatically you, check whether your current workload makes that realistic.

10

DAY-ONE PLAN

NO | PARTLY | YES

Could you list the first five things that must happen when the business becomes yours?

WHY IT MATTERS: People, customers, cash, systems and seller handover need attention immediately.

THE BORING BIT IS THE IMPORTANT BIT

Good acquirers repeat the same readiness, screening and integration questions before every deal - not just the exciting ones.

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PART 3 - WHAT DOES YOUR SCORE MEAN?

Add the 10 answers. Maximum score = 20.

This is not a scientific lending or acquisition model. It is a simple way to expose where the existing business needs work before you ask it to carry another one.

MY TOTAL SCORE OUT OF 20

0-7 FIX THE BASE FIRST

Your acquisition ambition is ahead of the current operating platform.

NEXT Focus on cash visibility, management capacity and operational stability before adding another company.

8-12 BUILD READINESS

There is a base to work with, but a live deal could stretch the business quickly.

NEXT Strengthen the weak areas while developing the strategy and funding lane.

13-16 READY TO SEARCH SERIOUSLY

The business has credible foundations for acquisition.

NEXT Now make the buy box, funding and integration plan more disciplined before volume increases.

17-20 READY TO EXECUTE

The current business appears better prepared to absorb another company.

NEXT The focus moves to target quality, deal structure, due diligence and disciplined integration.

WHY THIS MATTERS AFTER COMPLETION

You are not adding one business. You are adding another operating system.

The first 100 days often bring simultaneous pressure across people, customers, cash, reporting, suppliers, systems and the seller handover. If the acquiring business has no spare capacity, the integration can pull attention away from both companies.

PEOPLE	Who stays? Who leads? Who needs reassurance?	SYSTEMS	What stays separate and what integrates?
CASH	What leaves the bank and when?	SELLER	What exactly are they still responsible for?
CUSTOMERS	Who needs contact before uncertainty creates churn?	REPORTING	How will you see problems quickly?

ONE FINAL QUESTION

If the right acquisition appeared tomorrow, would your current business cope?

If the answer is 'yes, but only if I personally work twice as hard' - the operating platform probably needs strengthening first.

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THE ADVANTAGE OF BUILDING AN ACQUISITION CAPABILITY - NOT JUST DOING A DEAL

One acquisition is a transaction. A repeatable process becomes a growth strategy.

Business Ascent is designed for established owners who want acquisition to become a controlled extension of the business they already run - not a second full-time job.

DOING IT ALONE

- React to whatever opportunities brokers send you.
- Build the acquisition process while already trying to close the deal.
- Make funding, valuation and integration decisions in isolation.
- Discover operational gaps only after the target is already yours.

WORKING 1:1 THROUGH BUSINESS ASCENT

- Build acquisition criteria around the strategy and capacity of your existing business.
- Challenge live targets before time, professional fees and emotion become committed.
- Connect funding, valuation, structure and integration into one decision process.
- Create a repeatable acquisition capability rather than starting from zero every time.

WHAT THE PERSONAL PARTNERSHIP ACTUALLY DOES

You still lead the business. I help you build and challenge the M&A route.

We work directly together on the decisions that matter - strategy, buy box, opportunity screening, valuation, funding, deal structure, due diligence preparation and the post-completion plan. The tools are selected around the journey rather than throwing a generic toolkit at you.

WHY WORK DIRECTLY WITH CHARLIE TANNER?

I have sat in the acquirer's chair as well as around the deal table.

My experience combines personal acquisitions and exits with buy-side and sell-side transaction exposure. That matters because acquisition growth has to work commercially before, during and after completion.

6	5	£20m	£9m	38	£75m+
PERSONAL ACQUISITIONS	PERSONAL EXITS	ACQUIRED EV	EXITED EV	TRANSACTIONS	ADVISED VALUE

WHAT YOU ARE REALLY BUILDING

A business capable of acquiring well - repeatedly - without everything relying on you.

Less wasted motion. Better targets. Stronger decisions. A clearer path from strategy through completion and integration.

BUSINESS ASCENT - £1,500/MONTH - 3-MONTH INITIAL COMMITMENT

Build the acquisition capability before you add the next business. ascendbusiness.co.uk | info@ascendbusiness.co.uk