

Firmex helps Kurmann Partners deliver exceptional service to its security-conscious pharma clients

KURMANN PARTNERS

COMPANY

Kurmann Partners AG

WHAT THEY DO

Sell-Side, Buy-Side & Strategic M&A Advisory

MARKET FOCUS

Pharma and MedTech

RECENT COMPLETED TRANSACTIONS

- Sale of LUZ Inc to RWS Plc
- Sale of Pro Farma AG to Recordati SpA
- Sale of Alcon's manufacturing site in Kaysersberg to Recipharm
- Advised on Novartis' sale of their plant in Taboa da Serra (Brazil)

HOW THEY USE FIRMEX

Due diligence

ABOUT KURMANN PARTNERS AG

Based in Basel, Switzerland, Kurmann Partners AG (KP) is a global M&A advisory boutique for mid-market transactions in

the pharmaceutical and MedTech industry. Since 1987, KP has closed over 100 transactions.

INTENSE M&A ACTIVITY

"The Pharma and MedTech industries are large and globally integrated," explains Dr. Christoph Bieri, Managing Partner, Kurmann Partners. "They are driven by innovation and shaped by regulation. It's a complex market characterized by intense M&A activity. M&A is intrinsic to the business model of large companies, and is in many cases the most efficient tool to implement strategies."

"Kurmann Partners has developed a reputation as a knowledgeable and discrete advisor to the industry," Bieri continues. "One of our specialties is working on transactions of Pharma manufacturing sites. There are very few advisories who have the knowledge and depth to advise on the sale of a pharma manufacturing plant. You need to intimately understand the constraints that govern these kinds of transactions."

DISCRETION ASSURED

"At KP, we run our process with very tight confidentiality," Bieri says. "Typically, our auctions are limited to a relatively small number of potential buyers. We don't often travel to our clients during the course of a transaction because frankly they don't want anyone to see us and infer that a deal is in the works."

This focus on confidentiality extends to KP's use of the Firmex virtual data room. KP's sell-side services include preparing virtual data rooms for clients and handling due diligence questions. The firm relies on Firmex to securely support all of its sell-side transactions.



Q/A

What business problems are you solving?

Christoph Bieri: “Our clients place a high value on confidentiality. They want their M&A process to run under the radar and they don’t want consultants conspicuously running around their offices collecting documents. Firmex makes it easy for clients to upload documents directly to a secure online environment. With clients’ sensitive documents and intellectual property at stake, we trust the Firmex virtual data room to keep the information safe and secure.”

What do you like best about Firmex?

CB: “Firmex always works, and the platform has become easier to use with each new release. Our clients don’t need a big introduction to Firmex or extensive training or onboarding. With Firmex’s drag-and-drop functionality, our clients have no problem using the platform and can start uploading documents immediately.”

THE SOLUTION

“When you’re selling a pharma company or product, there’s a large amount of sensitive clinical and manufacturing documentation that must be securely shared,” says Bieri, who was CEO of a biopharma startup prior to joining KP. “Pharma product dossiers may include a variety of technical documents describing a product using a common technical document standard (CTD) defined by the regulator. Thousands of documents are organized in intricate file structures that cannot be changed because the specialists involved in the process have to know exactly where to look for the information they need.”

Kurmann’s clients are very sensitive about what information they disclose, which means the process of preparing a data room is highly structured.

“One of the biggest advantages of having a Firmex unlimited-use subscription is that we can open as many data rooms as we want,” explains Bieri. “This allows us to collect information in a ‘cold’ data room that is only accessible by our client. Once we’ve accepted a mandate, we can open a new ‘cold’ data room straightaway and enable our client to upload their documents themselves in a structure that is not particularly detailed or burdensome.”

“We’ll then go through all the documents and redact any sensitive information such as personal information

and signatures, salary and HR data, and specific terms of supplier contracts that the client doesn’t want to disclose to potential buyers,” continues Bieri. “Once we’ve reviewed, organized and sanitized the documents, we’ll put them into what we call a ‘hot’ data room. The contents of this room must then be validated by different entities including the seller’s internal and external legal counsel before we can invite counterparties into the data room.”

“Once the virtual data room is live, we typically permit counterparties to download documents for their convenience, but we use Firmex to apply dynamic watermarks,” Bieri says. “The ability to enforce watermarks and track all activity in the data room provides the level of document protection that our clients demand.”

“We work with some of the world’s biggest pharma companies, says Bieri. “That they consent to our use of Firmex for their projects is a testimony that they believe in Firmex’s security standards and certifications.”

“Another advantage of Firmex is that we can tell a client where their data resides,” says Bieri. “Some clients don’t want their information hosted by a US company where that provider could be compelled to disclose information to US regulators.”

A BETTER WAY TO Q&A

“One of the challenges you have as a sell-side advisor is you’re running the due diligence process with a small team of 2-3 people,” Bieri explains, “and then you have 50-60 people coming into the data room asking a barrage of questions, many of

which are redundant. With the Firmex Q&A tool, we can coordinate and control the process much more efficiently. Firmex’s Q&A functionality saves us a lot of time and has made a significant improvement to our processes.”





Typically, we work on 10-12 projects per year and we close between 4-8 deals in a given year. Our Firmex unlimited-use subscription allows us to work on many different projects at a reasonable cost. Firmex offers a virtual data room platform that is optimal for the due diligence work that needs to be done. Our clients are pleasantly surprised when we tell them that no extra costs apply for the data room. It shows them that we care about the cost of implementation for their transaction.

— Dr. Christoph Bieri, Managing Partner
Kurmann Partners AG

SUPPORT THAT STANDS ABOVE

“Firmex’s support team is very responsive and that’s a big plus when you’re in the midst of a transaction,” says Bieri. “Our clients operate globally and so do we.

When we’re managing transactions across continents, borders and time zones, the ability for us and our clients

to access Firmex support 24/7/365 provides peace of mind that any issues will be resolved without delays.”

“My interactions with Firmex have always been very positive,” Bieri continues, and my team has had good things to say about Firmex’s training and video tutorials.”

QUALITY AND VALUE

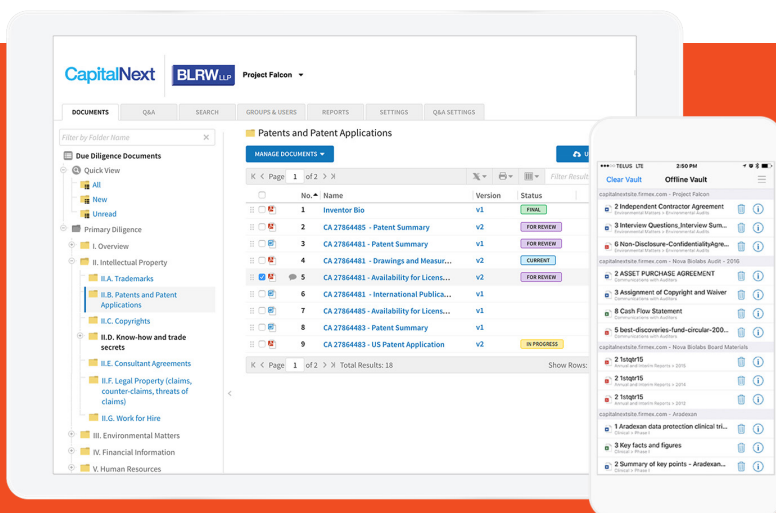
KP has been a Firmex client since 2011 and this continuity of service has its advantages.

“We have clients or counterparties who come to us 5 or 6 years after a transaction has closed urgently asking for a specific document in the data room,” says Bieri. “The ability to maintain all our historical data rooms on a single platform means we can quickly accommodate these requests.”

“With Firmex’s unlimited-use subscription, we get a high quality virtual data room service at a fair

price,” Bieri adds. “I once got a quote for a project from another data room provider and their per-page pricing was prohibitive. Given the volume and size of the documents we needed to share, the cost would have been unreasonable.”

“Unlike other M&A advisories, we don’t bill our clients for the cost of the data room,” says Bieri. “For us, Firmex is a strategic investment. Having a dedicated virtual data room on standby makes life much easier for our clients, and for us as well.”



The world’s most trusted virtual data room.

As one of the most widely used virtual data rooms, Firmex supports complex processes for organizations of all sizes including diligence, compliance, and litigation. Since 2006, Firmex has helped professionals take control of their confidential documents.

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