

M&A Australian digest: ZOOM ON RECENT DEALS



AUGUST 2019

Zoom on 7 Deals in ANZ on the professional services sector: IT, Microsoft, analytics, DevOps, data, marketing, software...

1. **Sydney-based cloud tech investor MOQ (ASX: MOQ) has entered a binding agreement to acquire data analytics and training specialist Wardy IT Solutions.** Founded in Brisbane by Peter Ward in 2004, Wardy IT is a market-leading provider of **Microsoft** specialist services and solutions in data platforms and data analytics. The company has four offices and 60 staff across Australia and New Zealand and is a multi award-winning Australian Microsoft Gold partner. Ward, who last year won the technology category at the Australian Young Entrepreneur Awards, will become MOQ's

general manager for data analytics after the acquisition. "The acquisition of Wardy IT is an excellent strategic fit for MOQ and aligns with our vision to develop, build and acquire cloud-centric complementary technology businesses," says MOQ CEO Joe D'Addio.

2. **Global investment firm EQT has bought a majority stake in Sydney-headquartered MSP Nixon Asia Pacific.** Founded in 2000, Nixon is an end-to-end managed IT provider with services ranging from cloud, secure networks, unified communications, managed security, business solutions and digital workspace solutions. The company focuses on the mid-market and government sectors, and has over 400 customers including high-profile brands such as Lowes, Oporto and Red Rooster. The company didn't disclose the terms of the acquisition, other than to say Nixon's co-founder and CEO Barry Assaf will remain a "significant shareholder" and the existing management team will stay on.
3. **Data analytics consultancy Servian has acquired DevOps specialist Vibrato.** As part of the deal, Sydney-based Servian has also



taken a 40 per cent stake in Vibrato's sister company Hava, a cloud visibility software business. Peter Gatt, who founded the Melbourne-based Vibrato in 2014, will now join Servian as a partner, while Hava CEO James Martelletti will remain in his current role. Vibrato's entire team of 50 staff members will join Servian, taking its total headcount to approximately 400 people. Servian and Vibrato both partner with Amazon Web Services, Google Cloud and Microsoft Azure and expect the deal will help make customer migrations "more efficient". Founded by Nicol in 2008, Servian now has offices in six Australian cities, plus ones in Auckland, London and Bangalore. In addition to the public cloud vendors, it also has technology partnerships with IBM, Tableau and Cloudera.

4. **Accenture to acquire Analytics8:** **Accenture** (NYSE: ACN) is to acquire Analytics8, an Australian big data and analytics consultancy that specialises in data management, reporting and visualisation, data science and analytics services. The acquisition will strengthen Accenture's capabilities to deliver AI-powered data and advanced analytics services to clients. Founded in Melbourne in 2002 and led by Hedde Schuitemaker, Jean-Christophe Richard, and Alexander Brown, Analytics8 is a professional services company providing data and analytics solutions to some of

Australia's largest organisations, across multiple industries, from healthcare to financial services. It provides its clients with an end-to-end service spanning the complete data and analytics life cycle: data management; data reporting and visualisation; data science; and advanced analytics. Analytics8's Melbourne and Sydney-based team of 70 professionals will join Accenture Applied Intelligence.

5. **Publicis Groupe ANZ has acquired New Zealand's largest independent agency, MBM,** expanding the ad giant's Kiwi footprint with a local full-service media business with offices in Auckland and Wellington. MBM will retain its branding and all services, with the managing partners, Matt Bale, Sean McCready and Alysha Delany, to work collaboratively with Publicis Media New Zealand CEO, Alistair Jamison. MBM was founded in 2010 and has won over 30 local awards, including being named CAANZ Media Agency of the Year in 2014 and 2015. In a joint statement, MGM managing partners said they are looking forward to growing MBM as a data-led communications agency.
6. **Experian Australia & New Zealand announced its acquisition of Look Who's Charging,** the Australian fintech start-up which has solved the everyday frustrating problem of unrecognised bank transactions by providing instant clarification on the merchant behind a transaction.



Look Who's Charging is integrated with a number of Australian banks, with their data available to millions of Australians directly within existing digital banking applications. The move will combine Experian's global open data solutions with Look Who's Charging's advanced enrichment capabilities. Following the recent legislation of Open banking as the first stage of the Consumer Data Right (CDR), the deal will create a market leading open data platform in the Australian market that will have wide ranging benefits for consumers, businesses and financial institutions.

7. **Australian software vendor Bravura Solutions has acquired financial planning software vendor Midwinter Financial Services** in a deal that is expected to close by the end of August. Bravura expects that Sydney-headquartered Midwinter's software AdviceOS will complement its wealth management and life insurance solutions, according to Bravura CEO Tony Klim. AdviceOS, described as a "cloud-based financial advice solutions platform" by Midwinter, can generate financial advice while assisting with financial compliance and reporting obligations.

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