

## Agents interested in being acquired urged to act now

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The latest analysis by [Atomic Consultancy](#), the acquisition specialists founded by Lucy Noonan, has highlighted how those in the property industry who may be considering an exit should be looking to get the wheels in motion this side of Christmas, as Q1 is traditionally the busiest period of the year with respect to business acquisitions.

Atomic Consultancy has analysed the total number of domestic, inward, and outward acquisitions of UK businesses over the past decade (Q1 2014 - Q4 2023)\*, with a particular focus on the time of year in which they occurred, in order to reveal when the UK acquisition market is at its hottest and, therefore, provides businesses owners with the best chance of securing a sale.

The analysis reveals that across all sectors of UK business, Q1 is the hottest time for acquisitions.

Over the past decade, Q1 has seen an average of 3,675 acquisitions, a total which accounts for domestic (1,751), inward (1,272), and outward (652) activity.

Q4 represents the second busiest time of year with an average total of 3,518 acquisitions across the decade. This is followed by Q3 (3,402) and finally Q2 (3,383).

Acquisition preparations should start today

Any property business owners who want to take advantage of Q1's hot acquisition market need to be setting the wheels in motion this side of Christmas because the selling process takes an average of 16 weeks\* providing everything is in order.

Of course, there are a number of issues that can extend this timeline and so those eyeing an exit should be aware of the following: –

- *A shortage of good corporate solicitors*

As the hottest time of the year for acquisitions approaches, corporate solicitors will be in high demand, so making initial contact with one before the Christmas break is essential.

- *Finances out of place*

If a company's finances aren't properly in place, the acquisition timeline extends significantly. This includes accurate accounts, such as cash flow, forecasting and financial analysis; detailed records of assets and liabilities; and complete corporation tax figure.

Founder and CEO of Atomic Consultancy, Lucy Noonan, commented:

"As we approach another year end, there will be many business owners who may be considering what the future holds and if now is the time to start that next chapter in life.

Of course, like many things at this time of year, it's easy to postpone any actual actions required until the dust has settled on the festive period.

However, if an exit is a high priority, now is the time to act and that's because, historically the new year often brings a flurry of activity with respect to business acquisitions, with the most deals done during the first three months.

If you get the wheels in motion before Christmas, such as engaging a great solicitor and top acquisition advisers, you can then take the festive break to really think carefully about the decision. If you decide to proceed, you're in a good position to move forward, and if you decide to hold off, you can simply press pause and wait for the time when you are ready.

"Acquisition is a moment of real pride and success for business owners, but it's a mammoth undertaking involving all sorts of rules, regulations, and pitfalls. At Atomic Consultancy, we are here to provide leading independent acquisition management to everyone in the property industry and help ensure that the outcome of an acquisition is ideal for everyone involved."

Data tables

- [\*\\*UK acquisition totals Q1 2014 – Q4 2023 sourced from the Office for National Statistics.\*](#)
- [\*\\*Average acquisition timeframe sourced from Atomic Consultancy.\*](#)
- [\*Full data tables, definitions, and sources can be viewed online, here.\*](#)