



Beyond the Capital: How an Outside Investor Can Help Your Company

At some point in every business owner's journey, there will be a question about bringing in an outside investor or staying bootstrapped.

The immediate benefits of taking chips off the table and accessing growth capital are always a top consideration. But looking past the capital infusion, there are many value-add capabilities an investor can provide to accelerate enterprise value in the next chapter of growth.

The following article outlines three types of those capabilities that business owners should consider:

- Growth Acceleration
- Operational Improvement
- Talent and Networks

Growth Acceleration

1

Developing an M&A Growth Engine: Investors can partner with a business owner to create an M&A playbook to rapidly scale the business. They can identify strategic acquisition targets that drive value in several ways, including enhancing operational capabilities, entering new markets, adding new products or services, and accessing new sales channels. Investors can then help companies coordinate outreach, evaluate targets, conduct effective due diligence, and assist with post-close integration.

2

Improving Organic Growth: Driving topline revenue is critical, and investors can help assess wallet-share growth potential within the existing customer base and recommend proven strategies to cross-sell additional products and services. Investors can be thoughtful in proposing new products and services that complement the company's current offering and identifying attractive end-markets to sell into.

A Premier Advisor for Nine Decades

Since 1935, William Blair has guided owners of closely held businesses and their trusted advisors through monumental decisions. Our relationship-driven approach empowers owners to maximize the value of their businesses—and turn that capital into an enduring legacy. We invite you to contact us to discuss the ways we support and advise business owners and help our clients capitalize on the tremendous opportunities available to them today.

3

Refining the Revenue Model: Investors often can help transition or increase the company's current revenue mix into a more repeat and reoccurring model—i.e., moving from a one-time project or product sales approach to more service oriented. Also, investors have extensive experience improving pricing strategies to elevate the gross margin profile. These steps can create a more profitable and predictable stream of revenue, accelerating the company's enterprise value.

4

Beefing Up Product Strategy, Sales & Marketing: Improving product roadmaps is common for investors, as is professionalizing CRM systems, lead-generation techniques, sales team incentives, account management, and customer-feedback gathering to improve conversion and retention. Investors will help conduct detailed market analyses, identifying high-growth end-markets and aligning product development with evolving customer demand trends.

Operational Improvement

1

Optimizing the Organizational Structure: Reviewing employee performance within the context of company operations is a common early step. Rather than just focusing on eliminating positions, investors aim to identify opportunities for role optimization, addressing skill gaps and supporting existing employees with new resources. The goal is to build a cohesive team that drives long-term growth in enterprise value.

2

Improving the Supply Chain: Especially if investors bring previous industry experience, they can help identify new suppliers, negotiate better terms with existing suppliers, leverage procurement programs to lower costs, and recommend methods to decrease shipping times.

3

Modernizing Data Analysis and Integration: Investors often introduce new ERP systems and financial reporting processes to unearth and better visualize key operating metrics. The upgraded systems and new technology can help a company have a more unified view of performance and enhance its go-to-market strategy. Investors also provide best practices on how to effectively monitor real-time company performance and improve the leadership team's attention on value-driving activities.

4

Getting Ahead of Governance and Legal Considerations: Regulatory and legal matters are top-of-mind for many businesses, especially ones that are growing and entering new markets. Investors can help navigate evolving regulatory landscapes and introduce best-in-class legal advisors and frameworks that mitigate risks during rapid growth periods. They can also assist in managing intellectual property protections, implementing robust compliance programs, and addressing cross-border legal complexities, which are critical for scaling internationally.

Talent and Networks

1

Developing Emerging Leaders: As part of strengthening the executive talent, investors mentor existing leaders and connect them with experts from other portfolio companies to receive advice on specific issues related to technology systems, workforce management, or margin improvement strategies. Also, investors improve corporate governance by assembling a board of directors with diverse expertise and act as a sounding board to management for guidance on the current strategic plan.

2

Accessing Best-in-Class Talent: Investors can tap into their networks (including former portfolio company executives), enabling businesses to recruit top-tier talent for critical leadership roles (e.g., CFOs, CMOs, or COOs). Many investors provide in-house resource management teams and operating partners that can be especially useful if a company needs an industry executive who is experienced with launching new products/services or expanding into new geographies.

3

Identifying Potential Partnerships: Investors also likely know of potential partners who can work with the company to create additional revenue streams by developing new products/services, tapping referral networks, and expanding into new sales channels. For example, they may help a company shift from being entirely a direct-to-consumer (DTC) model to a hybrid approach involving B2B partnerships.

This is far from an exhaustive list of investors' value-added capabilities—and not all investors are created equal—but it provides an overview of the top nonfinancial considerations. Please don't hesitate to reach out about specific considerations, and benefits, an investor might have for your business.

**For more information,
please contact:**

Andrew Hansen

Founder-Owned
Business Advisory
+1 312 364 5439
ahansen@williamblair.com

Sam Longenecker

Founder-Owned
Business Advisory
+1 312 364 5237
slongenecker@williamblair.com

June 2025

"William Blair" is a trade name for William Blair & Company, L.L.C., William Blair Investment Management, LLC and William Blair International, Ltd. William Blair & Company, L.L.C. and William Blair Investment Management, LLC are each a Delaware company and regulated by the Securities and Exchange Commission. William Blair & Company, L.L.C. is also regulated by The Financial Industry Regulatory Authority and other principal exchanges. William Blair International, Ltd is authorized and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority ("FCA") in the United Kingdom. William Blair only offers products and services where it is permitted to do so. Some of these products and services are only offered to persons or institutions situated in the United States and are not offered to persons or institutions outside the United States. This material has been approved for distribution in the United Kingdom by William Blair International, Ltd. Regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), and is directed only at, and is only made available to, persons falling within COB 3.5 and 3.6 of the FCA Handbook (being "Eligible Counterparties" and Professional Clients). This Document is not to be distributed or passed on at any "Retail Clients." No persons other than persons to whom this document is directed should rely on it or its contents or use it as the basis to make an investment decision.