



# Deals proliferate in IR space

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Players pair up and bolster their related competencies

Global M&A activity has been way off this year and predictions are for an additional 35 percent decline in 2009. But there is still deal-making going on in the IR industry.

**Sage Holdings**, a private equity backed firm, has added a market intelligence provider, Capital Precision, as part of its strategic roll-up of IR-related service firms. Sage has also just acquired financial communications firm Taylor Rafferty from Xinhua Finance.

The deals mark a logical cross-pollination. Sage already offers proxy solicitation via its recent acquisition of DF King. Now, with Capital Precision, Sage has a shareholder ID capability that could be central to an investor outreach effort, says Enzo Villani, Sage's executive vice president and chief strategy officer.

The players are already acquainted. 'This isn't the start to us working together,' says Mark Simms, CEO of London-based Capital Precision. 'It is putting it under a much more coordinated umbrella.'

Sage, led by president and CEO Oliver Niedermaier, amassed \$200 mn in private funds to acquire a range of proxy, IR and PR service providers. Also in its stable are Hallvarsson & Halvarsson, a Scandinavian communications firm, UK-based financial communications firm M:Communications, and Broadgate Consultants, a New York-based IR firm. Villani says Sage has access to additional capital and is considering more deals.

As a new partner, Simms says he is looking forward to building on the competencies of others on the Sage team. 'The next stage is developing offerings utilizing our different skill sets that have never been attempted before,' he says.

By [Anna Snider](#)