



British Companies Need to Create Global Champions

Through Effective Use of M&A and Capital Markets

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Akseki & Co.
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British Companies Must Wake Up: Seizing Global Opportunities Through M&A and Capital Markets

As the world order shifts, Britain stands at a crossroads. The global economic map is being redrawn with seismic changes: the rise of emerging markets, the fracturing of old alliances, the reconfiguration of supply chains, and the explosive growth of technology sectors across borders. Yet, while American, European, and increasingly Asian companies aggressively pursue international expansion through mergers, acquisitions, and capital market strategies, British firms appear hesitant, even complacent. This needs to change — and fast.

Akseki & Co

We are an independent investment banking firm, dedicated to helping companies and institutional clients worldwide navigate complex strategic and financial challenges. We partner with business leaders and design fully integrated reorganisation plans that align the interests of all stakeholders, including lenders, debt holders, shareholders, management, employees, and customers.

We assist business owners, senior management teams, and institutional investors in executing corporate reorganisations, including mergers, acquisitions, divestitures, recapitalisations, and shareholder exits. We also advise senior management and key stakeholders on complex financing transactions, including leveraged and project financing, restructurings, and multi-layer financings.

The New Global Landscape: An Era of Boldness

The post-pandemic era has ushered in a world that rewards boldness and punishes caution. American companies, flush with capital and supported by deep capital markets, are snapping up assets worldwide. Chinese and Indian firms, backed by nationalist strategies and enormous internal markets, are aggressively expanding beyond their borders. In this environment, size matters: global champions can better withstand geopolitical shocks, influence standards and regulations, and access diverse talent and innovation ecosystems.

British businesses, by contrast, often play defence rather than offense. Since Brexit, there has been a persistent inward focus — dealing with regulatory divergence, trade frictions, and domestic political uncertainty. But these challenges should not be an excuse for inertia. Instead, they underline the necessity for UK companies to build scale and resilience through strategic M&A and smarter use of the capital markets.

Why M&A Is No Longer Optional

Mergers and acquisitions are no longer just a growth lever — they are a survival strategy. In sectors ranging from financial services to biotech, green energy to advanced manufacturing, leadership increasingly belongs to firms that act first and think globally. British firms have the expertise, networks, and credibility to compete at this level, but too often they shy away from transformative deals, deterred by perceived risks or cultural caution.

Boardrooms must embrace a new mindset: calculated ambition. This means:

- Consolidating domestically to create stronger platforms for international expansion.

- Identifying and executing cross-border acquisitions to expand into high-growth regions.
- Using M&A to accelerate technological capabilities and future-proof business models.

Unlocking the Power of Capital Markets

The UK capital markets — notably the London Stock Exchange — face increasing competition and challenges around liquidity and valuations. Nevertheless, they still offer significant opportunities for British firms willing to think creatively. Particularly, there are meaningful opportunities for combinations and recapitalisations involving public companies — whether to create scale, unlock value, or reposition businesses for global growth.

Too few British companies take full advantage of these avenues. Many prefer private capital or hesitate to go public at all, fearing regulatory scrutiny or undervaluation. This hesitation is short-sighted.

Accessing public markets can provide the war chest needed to pursue global acquisitions, fund R&D at scale, and build visibility with international customers and partners. Moreover, secondary offerings, bond issuances, and innovative structures like SPACs (special purpose acquisition companies) remain underutilized tools in the British arsenal.

A Call to Action for Leaders

The new world order will not wait for British companies to find their footing. Competitors in the U.S., Europe, Asia, and the Middle East are moving decisively. The UK government, with initiatives like the Mansion House Reforms, is trying to stimulate a more dynamic corporate

culture, but the real initiative must come from within business leadership itself.

It is time for British CEOs, CFOs, and boards to:

- Think beyond the domestic market.
- Develop bold M&A strategies aligned to long-term global trends.
- Harness capital markets creatively to finance ambition.
- Build alliances across geographies and sectors.

Britain has a proud history of global leadership in trade, finance, and innovation. That legacy should not be one of nostalgia but of inspiration. To thrive in the 21st-century economy, British companies must rediscover their ambition, their appetite for risk, and their place at the head of the global table.

The world is not waiting. Nor should we.



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