

Houlihan Lokey

The Social Premium

How Social Media Presence Shapes M&A in Beauty, Personal Care, and Household

October 2026



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The New Brand-Building Playbook and the Economics That Make It Defensible

01

Brand Building Has Shifted to an Experience-Led, Community-Driven Model

Social platforms are evolving from pure engagement environments into fully integrated, transaction-enabled ecosystems rather than just top-of-funnel awareness.

Phase I: Traditional Marketing

TV, Print, Radio

- Broad-reach, not targeted
- Gatekeeper-controlled
- One-way, no direct engagement
- High up-front cost

Phase II: Digital Marketing

Web, Paid Search and Banner Ads, Retargeting

- Targeted but still one-way, performance analytics and conversion-focused
- Limited direct engagement

Phase III: Social-Native Marketing

- Community-embedded content
- D2C access
- Real-time engagement
- Content across the entire customer journey

Customer Journey



Bars indicate how strongly each marketing model reaches consumers directly at different stages of the customer journey.

Selected KPIs

$220B
Global social media ad spend in 2025.

~33%
Social as a share of global ad budgets, up from ~12% in 2017.

43%
of consumers discovered a brand on social media in the past year.

45%
of consumers buy at least one item per month based on creator recommendations.

Sources: Statista/eMarketer for the budget-shift KPI; McKinsey State of the Consumer 2025 for the customer-journey framing; Creator Impact Report 2026 by NeoReach.

TikTok: The New Category Creator for Beauty and Household

Major social platforms, particularly TikTok, are where brands are now discovered, validated, and transacted—and the platforms themselves have become the category leaders for how consumers engage with beauty and household products.

Why This Matters For Brand Owners

TikTok Shop is now the fourth-largest beauty retailer in the U.S. and the U.K., with U.S. beauty sales of $1.55 billion in 2025, up 84%.[4]

New revenue stream. A channel most brands did not sell through five years ago. 72% of consumers discovered a small brand there, against 33% for large brands.

Higher conversion. 55% buy what they discover. Beauty converts at 53.4%, the platform's highest rate, at $59.84 per order, compared with $38.54 off-platform.

Direct reach. 67% of U.S. consumers find new products on TikTok Shop, ahead of Amazon—mostly younger, mobile-first shoppers who tune out conventional advertising.

AI search visibility. Traffic from AI assistants to U.S. retail sites grew 393% in the year to Q1 2026, and it converts 42% better than other channels. AI tools learn from creator videos and reviews—the more creators talk about a brand, the more likely an AI is to recommend it.

Short-form content is the ideal format for beauty and household, addressing key consumer purchasing criteria directly.

#BeautyTok



Problem-and-solution-led content effectively demonstrates the outcome and teaches the routine behind it.

+53%
K-Beauty Global Sales Growth, Last 12 Months

350B+
Cumulative #BeautyTok Views

95 Min/Day
Average Time per User, per Day

>1.6B
Monthly Active TikTok Users Globally

#CleanTok



Before-and-after short-form video as a powerful tool to demonstrate efficacy in seconds.

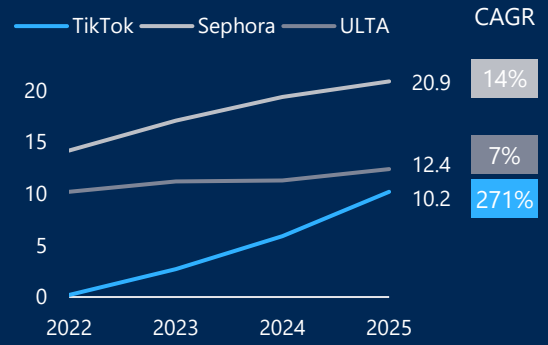
+200%
Cleaning Sales YoY on TikTok Shop, U.S. 2024

100B+
Cumulative #CleanTok Views

Social Commerce Build-Out

TikTok Shop generated more than **$30 billion GMV** in 2024; Southeast Asia GMV grew at **125% CAGR 2022–2024.**[1]

Global Beauty Sales in $B[3]



TikTok has significantly lowered barriers to entry in the sector, where supply is commoditised and reach at scale no longer requires a large media budget.

Social platforms are the new category shelves—and a strong social presence unlocks omnichannel growth, pulling retail listings forward and lifting sell-out across every channel.

~12 Months vs. ~3 Years

Time from a product trending on social media to landing on retail shelves.

Social-native brands get there within a year, versus traditional brands, which take 3–5 years.

Sources: (1) Bain, "Is Your Brand Ready for TikTok Shop?", August 2025; (2) Deloitte Consumer Industry Briefing, May 2025; (3) Charm.io. (4) Forbes, "Has TikTok Shop Become Beauty's Most Important Channel?", July 2026; GlobalData.

The Economics of the Playbook

Why Social-Native Brands Run Differently

From content engine to margin engine: How creator-led marketing translates into structurally superior unit economics.

Creator-led marketing and user-generated content (UGC) shift the work out of paid media and into earned trust...

Creator Economy	$250 billion total addressable market, doubling over the past 5 years.
User-Generated Content Trust	65% of consumers trust UGC more than influencer posts.
Investment Intensity	High-ROI brands[1] allocate ~42% of social budget to creators (versus ~20% for low-ROI brands).
Paid Marketing as a Percent of Revenue	Social-native brands' ~3%–8% versus incumbent brands' ~12%–18%.

The channel has become more disciplined. Spend has shifted from flat fees for big influencers to affiliate deals paid only on sales delivered.

...driving structurally better unit economics, with growth that compounds rather than scaling with spend.

The Micro-Influencer Advantage	3.2x engagement at a 60% lower cost per post.
Higher Average Order Value (AOV)	Beauty shoppers spend up to ~50% more per transaction on TikTok Shop than off-platform.
Lower Churn Rate	Brands deploying UGC community platforms report 38% lower churn versus brands relying solely on paid media channels.
Lifetime Value to Customer Acquisition Cost Ratio (LTV:CAC)	For top social-native home, beauty, personal care, and household brands: 4:1, versus 2–3:1 typical for incumbent peers.

Sources: GlobalData; The Creator Economy; PR Newswire; Collabstr; Amplitude—Ecommerce Retention Benchmarks, Andreessen Horowitz consumer benchmarks; Forerunner Venture DTC report; EightX; market insights.
(1) Brands generate a strong return on investment by efficiently converting marketing spend into revenue, customer loyalty, and long-term profitability.



Why It Matters—Moats, Multiples, and Recent Transactions

02

Why This Playbook Has Won

The compounding moats that command investor premiums.

Owned Data Asset



Customer Data the Brands Own

Every purchase, click, and comment feeds back to the brand directly. Incumbent peers see most of their customers only through retailer data they do not control.

83%

of revenue overachievers use first-party data.

5x–10x

Customer data points per buyer versus incumbent peers.

Speed



Trend Velocity and NPD Speed Incumbents Cannot Match

Social-native brands compress go-to market from months to weeks, turning cultural moments into revenue while the trend is still live. Incumbent's product development cycles still run in months, often longer than the trend itself.

60–90 Day

Social-native NPD cycle versus 18–24 months incumbents.

~12 Months

From social signal to retailer pull versus 3–5 years traditional.

Target Group Access



Reach Any Audience, and Test a New One at a Fraction of the Cost

Gen Z is already on these platforms—and so are 35% of Boomers and 33% of Gen X. Social-native is no longer a youth play.

A creator post costs a fraction of a listing, plus a media budget, so new audiences and new products can be tried, measured, and dropped within weeks instead of committing a full launch budget.

$8.9T

Added to global economy by Gen Z by 2035.

<$300

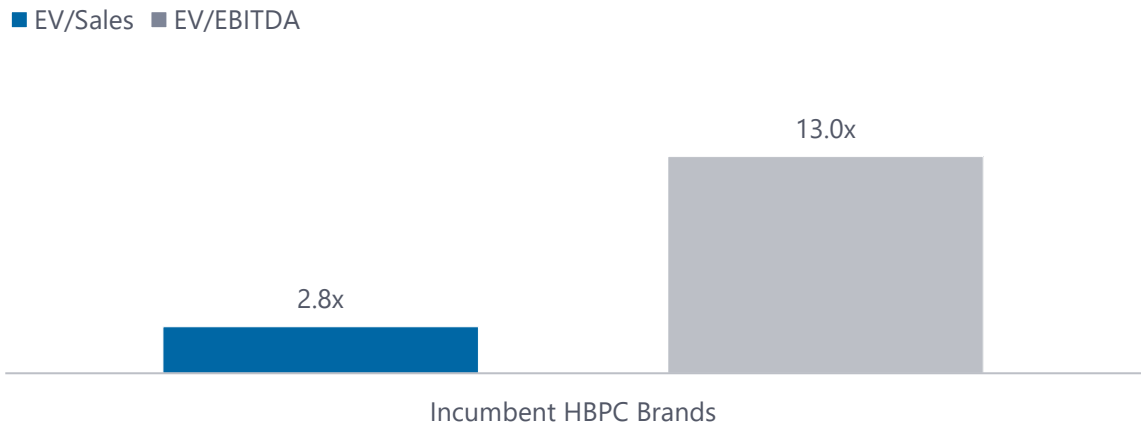
Costs for 80% of brand-creator deals.

Sources: McKinsey State of the Consumer 2025; Deloitte Creator Economy in 3D; Collabstr, 2026 Influencer Marketing Report.

The Social Premium Is Measurable

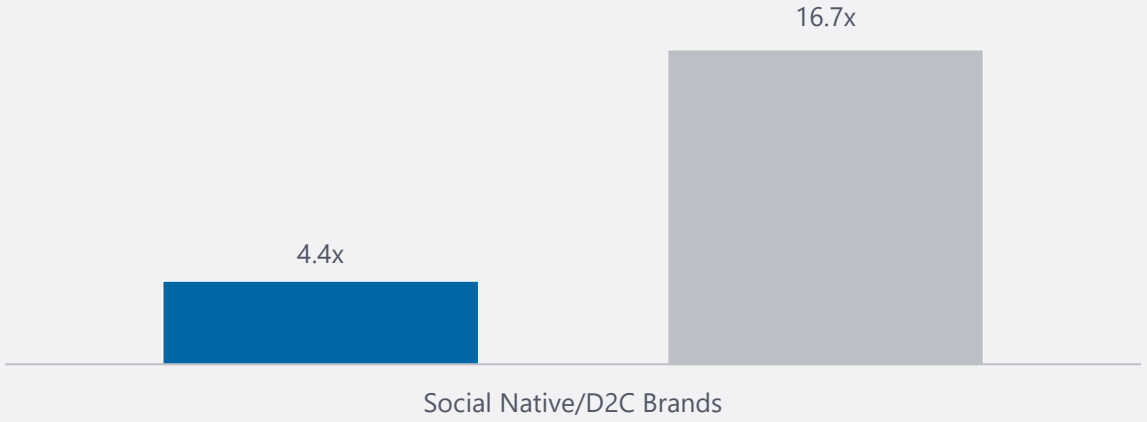
The valuation gap between social-native and incumbent household, beauty, and personal care brands (HBPC) is consistently reflected in deal multiples.

Illustrative, Non-Exhaustive Overview



- Audience is rented, not owned (focus on paid marketing/media and retail/shelf space)
- Lack a real-time feedback loop/slower innovation cycle
- CAC scale with growth

Social-native brands aren't valued on **what they sell**; they're valued on the **audience they own**.



- Direct and owned access to consumers across multiple platforms via UGC creates strong loyalty through engagement
- Structurally better unit economies as user-generated content drives lower CAC and community-driven retention lifts LTV
- Data-rich asset as a defensible moat

Sources: Mergermarket; market insights.

Case Study
Color Wow

Salon-born haircare brand that turned stylist credibility into mainstream demand.

COLOR WOW
L'ORÉAL

Color Wow has been acquired by L'Oréal

Sellside Advisor

>13M
Total user engagement on TikTok.(1)

>2x
Amount of TikTok followers versus next closest competitor.

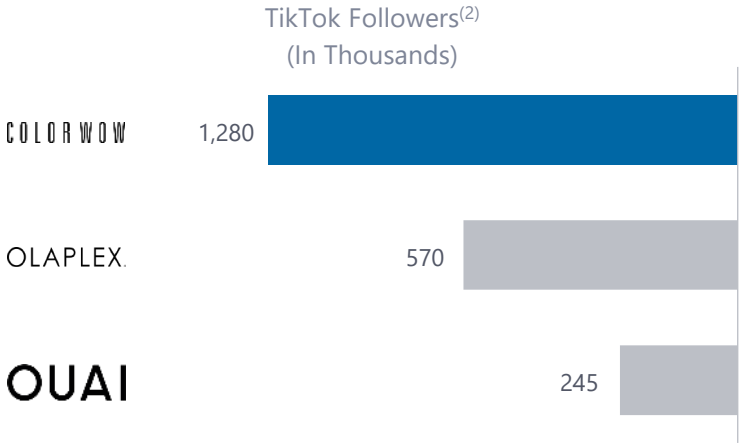
Key Brand Highlights

Headquartered in the U.S., Color Wow is the world's fastest-growing haircare brand, built on science-driven formulations that solve previously unaddressed hair problems.

Omnichannel business built on professional salon credibility, successfully expanded across DTC, Amazon, Sephora, and international markets.

Revenue (FY 2024)	c. €275M
TikTok Video Views(2)	c. 1B

Social Media Performance





Social Media Buyer Attraction

Stylist-led content carried professional credibility.
Partnerships with stylists, including endorsement from Chris Appleton, gave the content salon authority rather than influencer polish, which is what set it apart in a saturated feed.

UGC model delivers leading marketing ROI.
Product seeding and affiliate-led amplification drive sales without high influencer fees.

Social equity pulls premium retailers inbound.
Unsolicited approach from Sephora in 2020 because consumer search volume, driven by TikTok virality, had already created measurable in-store demand.

Social-to-retail playbook validated twice.
U.K. business replicated the U.S. model sequentially, social first, then retail, with strong growth in sales in two years, while the EU and Nordic markets are compounding too.

Decade of earned media and >130 awards.
More than 13 million TikTok interactions and 9 consecutive Allure Best of Beauty Awards wins represent credibility that is structurally inaccessible to competitors.

Sources: TikTok; Socialblade; Exolyt.
(1) Sum of likes, comments, and video shares.
(2) As of 8 October 2026.

Case Study

The Pink Stuff

Powerful before-and-after content in a high-efficacy category drove strong engagement.

The Pink Stuff - Star Brands, a portfolio company of Mobeus Equity Partners LLP, has been acquired by RPM International, Inc.

Sellside Advisor

>4M
Total user engagement on Instagram.(1)

5x
Instagram engagement versus the category average.

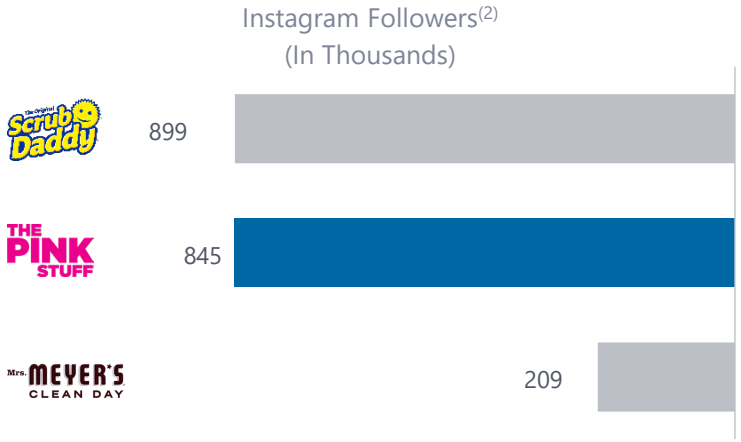
Key Brand Highlights

Headquartered in the U.K., The Pink Stuff is a leading provider of natural cleaning products intended to give customers the right stuff for indoor and outdoor cleaning.

The Pink Stuff engages consumers through carefully curated social media content designed to resonate emotionally with a broad audience, driving brand awareness, customer acquisition, and repeat purchases.

Revenue (FY 2024)	c. €130M
No. of Distribution Points(1)	c. 25,000

Social Media Performance





Social Media Buyer Attraction

UGC-driven model with genuine brand equity.
Unpaid influencers and a self-sustaining fan community generate a huge number of monthly views, with an immense organic content replacement value.

Defensible community moat, hard to replicate.
Follower growth and a strong Instagram engagement rate reflect a loyal fanbase built over years of consumer advocacy.

Social traction directly converts to retail wins.
Retailers cite the brand's social resonance as the trigger for their listing decisions, validating the link between digital presence and distribution growth.

Structurally low customer acquisition costs.
Low spend, organic content, and a data-driven playbook underpin an EBITDA margin that is rare in the category.

Social reach pre-validates regional expansion.
A more than 80% international TikTok audience and over 25 local-language pages demonstrate consumer demand ahead of formal retail entry.

Source: Instagram; Socialblade.
(1) Sum of likes and comments.
(2) As of 8 October 2026.



How Buyers Test the Premium and What to Address Before a Process

03

How Social Equity Shows Up in Deal Value

Buyers translate engagement and community into measurable KPIs and moat—but a potential premium only holds when the social capability is institutionalised and can transfer with the brand.

Growth
Driving Awareness and Sales

Scalable Reach
Creator networks deliver unique audience reach that compounds rather than scales with media spend.

Forward Revenue Visibility
Engagement, sentiment, and earned media value (EMV) lead reported revenue by several months.

Cross-Category Extension
A high-trust community is portable across stock-keeping units (SKUs) and adjacent subcategories.

International Expansion Credibility
Organic international audiences pre-validate market entry before shelf space exists.

Profitability
Proving Brand Potency

Organic UGC Drives Lower CAC
Trust transfers from creator to brand at conversion rates 5x–10x cold paid traffic.(1)

Higher Retention and Repurchase Rates Drive Higher LTV
Community-led brands retain customers at category-leading rates.

Margin Expansion
Margin expands as the brand scales—paid marketing falls as a share of revenue.

Premium Pricing Durability
Community reinforcement of price point resists the discount-and-volume spiral.

Risk
Minimise Dependency and Transferable Risk

Platform Diversification
Single-platform exposure is treated as a discount in diligence.

Institutional vs. Founder-Locked Capability
Buyer's diligence on whether the social capability is transferable and survives founder departure.

Owned Customer Data
The brand needs to own customer data and prove it drives decisions, from retention and cross-sell to targeting and range planning.

Keyman Risk
Creator/influencer relationship risk; lack of diversification.

(1) Emplifi, "UGC Delivers 10x Higher Conversion Rates", October 2025.

The Key Pillars Buyers Will Score Brands On

A social premium is only awarded when brand strength is provable, commercially measurable, and transferable beyond the founding team.

Value Driver	Description	Valuation Impact	Base vs. Premium Valuation (Illustrative)	
Commercial Fitness	LTV:CAC ratio, cohort retention, margin structure at scale.		<3x LTV:CAC	>4x LTV:CAC
Community Depth	Not follower count, but engagement quality and sentiment (e.g. UGC-to-brand content ratio) versus category peers drive brand potency.		Below category average engagement rate	Above category average engagement rate
Conversion Proof	Revenue traceability (e.g. source-coded attribution), repeatable ROAS.(1)		<3x ROAS	>5x ROAS
Audience Ownership	Share of audience on owned channels (email, SMS, app) versus platforms.		<25% of audience reached via own channels	>35% of audience reached via own channels
Transferable Skill	Key-person dependency resulting from creator relationship risk and platform concentration.		>50% of revenue from single creator	<10% of revenue from single creator

Sources: Andreessen Horowitz; Buffer; IQfluence.
(1) Return on advertising spend.



About Houlihan Lokey

04

About **Our Firm**

Houlihan Lokey is a leading global investment bank recognised for delivering independent strategic and financial advice to corporations, financial sponsors, and governments.

Houlihan Lokey is the trusted advisor to more top decision-makers than any other independent global investment bank.

CORPORATE FINANCE

2025 M&A Advisory Rankings
All Global Transactions

	Advisor	Deals
1	**Houlihan Lokey**	**458**
2	Goldman Sachs & Co	441
3	Rothschild & Co	400
4	JP Morgan	364
5	Morgan Stanley	357

Source: LSEG.
Excludes accounting firms and brokers.

No. 1
Global M&A Advisor

Leading
Capital Solutions Group

FINANCIAL RESTRUCTURING

2025 Global Distressed Debt &
Bankruptcy Restructuring Rankings

	Advisor	Deals
1	**Houlihan Lokey**	**83**
2	PJT Partners Inc	55
3	Lazard	50
4	Rothschild & Co	44
5	Evercore Inc	33

Source: LSEG.

No. 1
Global Restructuring Advisor

1,900+
Transactions Completed Valued at More Than $4 Trillion Collectively

FINANCIAL AND VALUATION ADVISORY

2001–2025 Global M&A
Fairness Advisory Rankings

	Advisor	Deals
1	**Houlihan Lokey**	**1,170**
2	Duff & Phelps, A Kroll Business	1,069
3	JP Morgan	1,034
4	UBS	769
5	Morgan Stanley	716

Source: LSEG.
Announced or completed transactions.

No. 1
Global M&A Fairness Opinion Advisor Over the Past 25 Years

2,500+
Annual Valuation Engagements



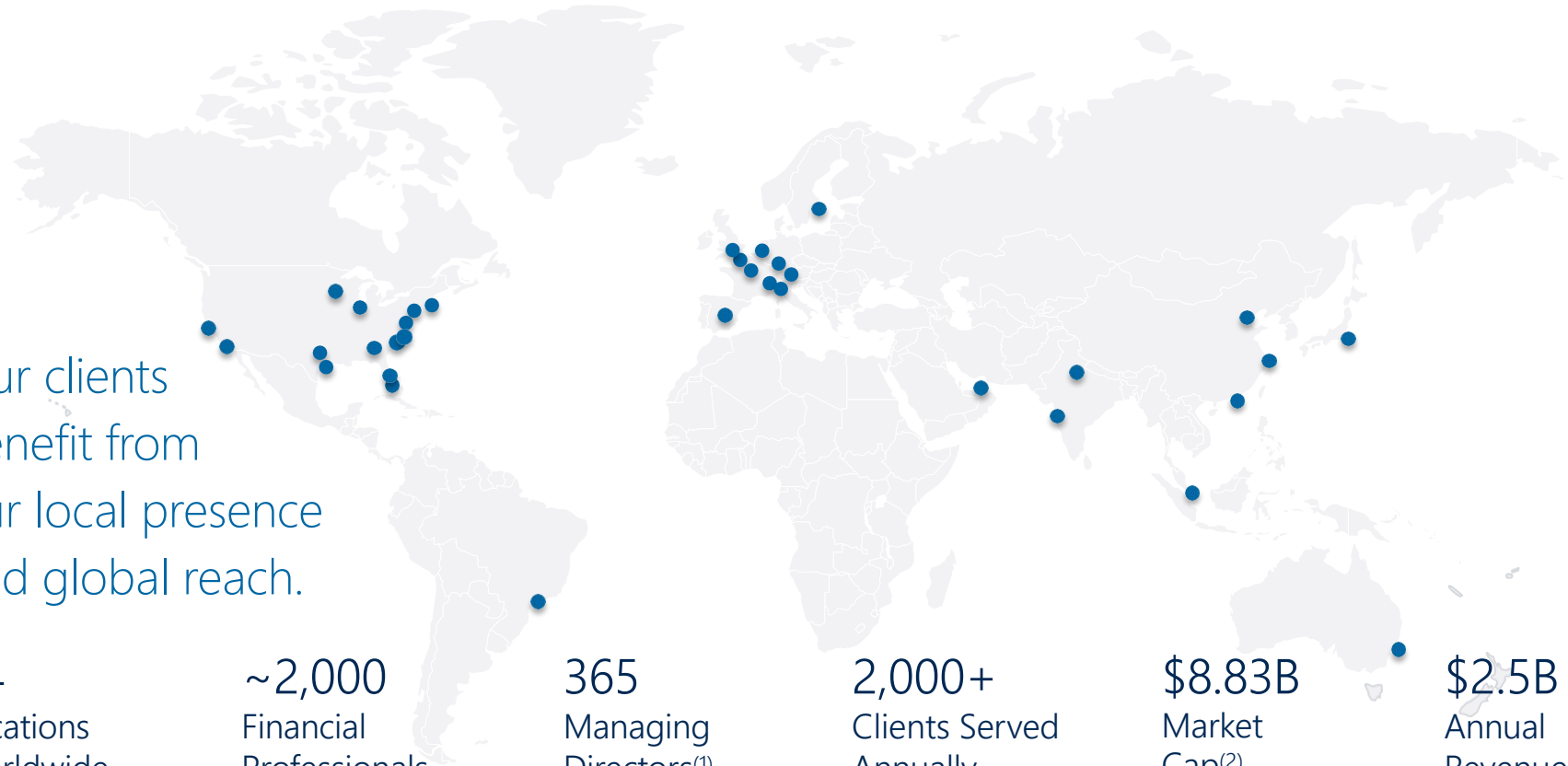
Learn more about how our advisors can serve your needs

Corporate Finance →

Financial Restructuring →

Financial and Valuation Advisory →

Our Industry Coverage →



Our clients benefit from our local presence and global reach.

34 Locations Worldwide

~2,000 Financial Professionals

365 Managing Directors(1)

2,000+ Clients Served Annually

$8.83B Market Cap(2)

$2.5B Annual Revenue(3)

AMERICAS
Atlanta
Baltimore
Boston
Charlotte
Chicago
Dallas
Houston
Los Angeles
Miami
Minneapolis
New York
San Francisco
São Paulo
Washington, D.C.
West Palm Beach

EUROPE AND MIDDLE EAST
Amsterdam
Dubai
Frankfurt
London
Madrid
Manchester
Milan
Munich
Paris
Stockholm
Zurich

ASIA-PACIFIC
Beijing
Gurugram
Hong Kong SAR
Mumbai
Shanghai
Singapore
Sydney
Tokyo

(1) As of June 30, 2026. (2) As of September 30, 2026. (3) LTM ended June 30, 2026.

Fully Integrated Financial Sponsor Coverage

33
Senior officers dedicated to the sponsor community in the Americas and Europe.

2,000+
Sponsors covered, providing market insights and knowledge of buyer behaviour.

850+
Companies sold to financial sponsors over the past five years.

HLI LISTED NYSE

About **Our Consumer Group**

Houlihan Lokey's Consumer Group has earned a reputation for providing superior service and achieving outstanding results in M&A advisory, capital-raising, restructuring, and financial and valuation advisory services.

We have built a reputation as a trusted advisor to companies in the consumer industry. We do this by combining our extensive market capabilities with our in-depth industry knowledge to help maximise shareholder value for our clients.

NO. 1 FOR GLOBAL CONSUMER TRANSACTIONS UNDER $1 BILLION

2025 M&A Advisory Rankings
Global Consumer Transactions Under $1 Billion

	Advisor	Deals
1	**Houlihan Lokey**	**58**
1	Rothschild & Co	58
3	Oaklins	40
4	Mizuho Financial Group	30
5	Goldman Sachs & Co	29
5	Lincoln International	29

Source: LSEG.
Excludes accounting firms and brokers.

Based on number of transactions and according to data provided by LSEG, Houlihan Lokey was ranked the

No. 1

investment bank for global consumer M&A transactions under $1 billion in 2025.

Consumer Industry Coverage

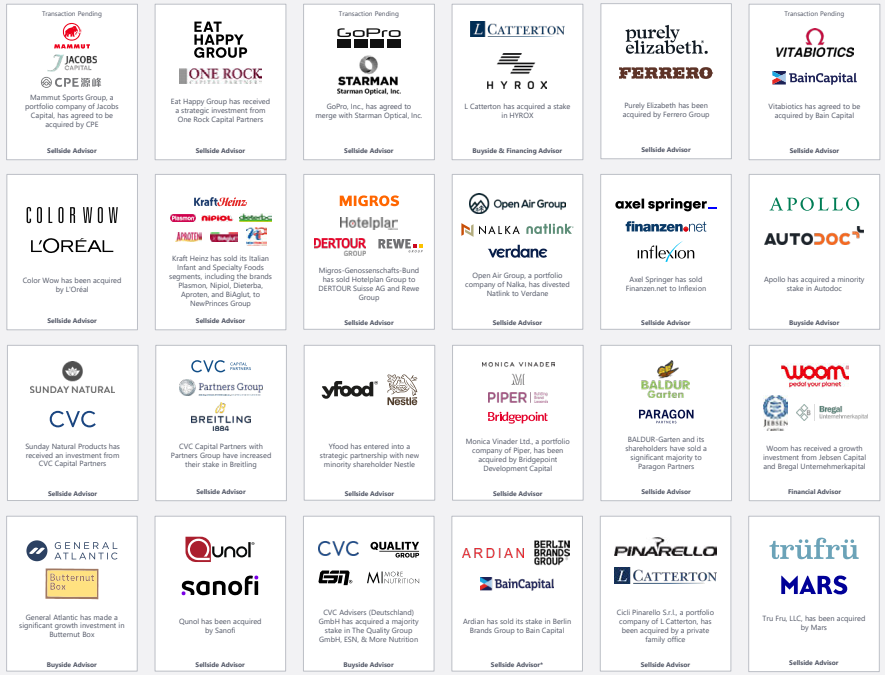
Tombstones included herein represent transactions closed from 2021 forward.
**Selected transactions were executed by Houlihan Lokey professionals while at other firms acquired by Houlihan Lokey or by professionals from a Houlihan Lokey joint venture company.*

Industry Sector Coverage

We cover a broad array of sectors, with financial professionals dedicated to each of our primary coverage areas.

- Consumer Products
- Food and Beverage
- Consumer Channels and Leisure

Featured Consumer Transactions



Key Facts and Figures

~140

Dedicated Consumer Group Financial Professionals

79

Completed Industry Transactions in CY25

Unparalleled Experience in Beauty, Personal Care, and Household

Featured Beauty, Personal Care, and Household Transactions

Borletti Group has acquired Pinalli, a portfolio company of H.I.G. Capital Buyside Advisor	Trajan has sold its portfolio company, Essences & Parfums, to Sagard Sellside Advisor	Color Wow has been acquired by L'Oréal Sellside Advisor	Zep, a portfolio company of New Mountain Capital, has been acquired by Truelink Capital Sellside Advisor	fit GmbH has been acquired by BlueSun Consumer Brands GmbH, a portfolio company of Phi Industrial Sellside Advisor	The Pink Stuff - Star Brands, a portfolio company of Mobeus Equity Partners LLP, has been acquired by RPM International, Inc. Sellside Advisor	Artdeco has been acquired by Sodalis Group Sellside Advisor	Avon Products, Inc., a subsidiary of Natura & Co, has completed a tender for $216mm Senior Notes due 2043 Ad Hoc Group Advisor
Beauty Biosciences, a portfolio company of Kainos, has been acquired by Nu Skin Enterprises Sellside Advisor	Revlon, Inc. has confirmed a joint Chapter 11 Plan of Reorganization Creditors Committee Advisor	Yellow Wood Partners, LLC has acquired the Suave brand in North America from Unilever PLC Buyside Advisor	Diadermine, a portfolio company of Henkel, has been acquired by Labori International B.V. Sellside Advisor	LifeStyles Healthcare & Skyn, a portfolio company of Trustar Capital, has been acquired by Linden Sellside Advisor	NAK Hair has been acquired by Adamantem Capital Sellside Advisor	A controlling interest in Thinx, Inc. has been acquired by Kimberly-Clark Corporation Special Committee Advisor	IsaDora AB has confirmed an out-of-court restructuring Creditor Advisor
Hair Styling Applications (HSA) has been acquired by The Equity Club Sellside Advisor*	White Bridge Investments has sold its minority stake of Ancorotti Cosmetics Group to L-GAM Sellside Advisor	Sagely Naturals has been acquired by HempFusion Sellside Advisor	DECIEM has sold a minority stake to Estee Lauder Sellside Advisor*	Think Operations has been acquired by Topix, a portfolio company of New Mountain Capital Sellside Advisor	Duke Cannon Supply Co. has been acquired by Main Post Partners Sellside Advisor	PerfectHair has been acquired by Storskogen Sellside Advisor*	Invincible Brands has sold premium DTC brands: Banana, Hello Body, and Mermaid and Me to Henkel Sellside Advisor*
Ustraa Series C financing from IIFL Financial Advisor*	Ludovico Martelli, Proraso, and Marvis minority stake has been acquired by Nuo Capital Sellside Advisor*	EPIC has acquired a minority stake in La Bottega Buyside Advisor*	Swallowfield has sold its manufacturing business to KDC One Sellside Advisor*	eSalon has been acquired by Henkel Sellside Advisor*	This Works has been acquired by Canopy Growth Sellside Advisor*	The Organic Pharmacy has been acquired by Ganassini Sellside Advisor*	Acheson and Acheson has been acquired by THG Sellside Advisor*

Tombstones included herein represent transactions closed from 2017 forward.
**Selected transactions were executed by Houlihan Lokey professionals while at other firms acquired by Houlihan Lokey or by professionals from a Houlihan Lokey joint venture company.*

Leadership



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Contact Us

Please reach out to us to schedule a call to discuss this report or to explore how we can serve your business needs.

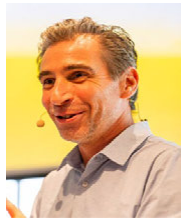
Request a Meeting

Learn More About Us

Understand Families and Founders and Support Them in the Best Way

Track record of advising family-owned and founder-led brands on a tailor-made process to find the best partner.

2026



EAT HAPPY GROUP
ONE ROCK
Eat Happy Group has a strategic investment from One Rock Capital
Sellside Advisor
EAT HAPPY GROUP
HANA GROUP
PERMIRA
Eat Happy Group has combined with the European operations of Hana Group, a portfolio asset of Permira
Buyside Advisor

2026



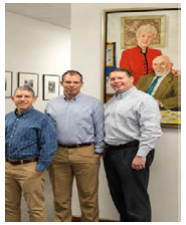
Tractive
BENDING SPOONS
Tractive has been acquired by Bending Spoons
Sellside Advisor

2026



BALDUR Garten
PARAGON PARTNERS
BALDUR-Garten and its shareholders have sold a significant majority to Paragon Partners
Sellside Advisor

2025



UNGER
BISSELL
Unger Enterprises has been acquired by Bissell
Sellside Advisor

2025



COLOR WOW
L'ORÉAL
Color Wow has been acquired by L'Oréal
Sellside Advisor

2024



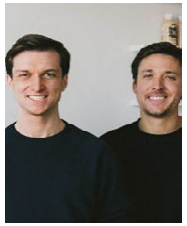
SUNDAY NATURAL
CVC
Sunday Natural Products has received an investment from CVC Capital Partners
Sellside Advisor

2023



PINARELLO
L CATTERTON
Cicli Pinarello S.r.l., a portfolio company of L Catterton, has been acquired by a private family office
Sellside Advisor

2023



yfood
Nestlé
Yfood has entered into a strategic partnership with new minority shareholder Nestlé
Sellside Advisor

2017/2021/2023



CVC
BREITLING
CVC CAPITAL PARTNERS
Breitling 80% majority stake sold to CVC Capital Partners
Sellside Advisor*

2022



planted.
L CATTERTON
Planted Foods AG has completed a series B financing led by L Catterton
Financial Advisor

2020/2023



Bregal Unternehmerkapital
woom
Bregal Unternehmerkapital has acquired a majority stake in woom
Buyside Advisor
woom
pedal your planet
JENSEN CAPITAL
Bregal Unternehmerkapital
Woom has received a growth investment from Jebsen Capital and Bregal Unternehmerkapital
Financial Advisor

2022



SENNHEISER
Consumer Business
sonova
HEAR THE WORLD
Sennheiser Consumer Business has entered a partnership with Sonova
Sellside Advisor*

2021



KAPTEN & SON
ARDIAN GROWTH
Kapten & Son has entered into a partnership with Ardian Growth
Sellside Advisor*

2021



MOTEL A
miio
MAXBURG CAPITAL PARTNERS
Motel a Miio has entered into a partnership with Maxburg Capital Partners
Sellside Advisor*

2019



tonies
Armira
Tonies has sold to Armira
Sellside Advisor*

Tombstones included herein represent transactions closed from 2017 forward.
**Selected transactions were executed by Houlihan Lokey professionals while at other firms acquired by Houlihan Lokey or by professionals from a Houlihan Lokey joint venture company.*

ONE HOULIHAN LOKEY

GLOBAL CONFERENCE

Announcing ONE Houlihan Lokey London 2026

17–19 November 2026

London Hilton on Park Lane

T Consumer | Healthcare

W Business Services | Industrials | Infrastructure

Th Financial Services | FinTech | Technology

Unable to attend?
Join us in Spring 2027 in New York.

Following a series of standout global conferences, we are delighted to welcome you back to London for our flagship event in Europe. Join us as we bring together leading minds from across industries for an unparalleled opportunity to connect, collaborate, and gain valuable insights. This event will showcase a broad spectrum of sectors and services across various industries, while exploring key themes, including:

- Mergers and Acquisitions
- Capital Solutions
- Financial Restructuring
- Financial Sponsors
- Financial and Valuation Advisory

ONE Houlihan Lokey is designed to connect decision-makers, highlight cutting-edge insights, and enable meaningful discussions amid evolving market dynamics. Across all three days, we look forward to welcoming you for:

- **Powerful Insights:** Hear from a multitude of companies spearheading change in their respective industries.
- **Unparalleled Networking Opportunities:** Engage with thousands of attendees from across global markets.
- **Meaningful Engagement:** Targeted 1x1 meetings will offer exclusive opportunities for connecting with senior capital providers.







ONE HOULIHAN LOKEY

ONE London 2025 Conference Highlights

2,700+
Conference Attendees

~50%
Capital Providers

~50%
Operating Companies*

220+
Participating Companies

8 to 10
1x1 Meetings per Presenting Company

40+
Panels and Presentations

65+
Sectors Represented

**Includes participating companies.*

Houlihan Lokey Has the Most Active Financial Sponsors Coverage Team on Wall Street

By the Numbers

35
Coverage officers globally, including 22 senior coverage officers in the U.S., 11 in Europe, 1 in Japan, 1 in Hong Kong SAR.

850+
Number of companies that Houlihan Lokey has sold to financial sponsors over the past five years.

2,000+
Financial Sponsor firms covered across private equity, credit, family offices and other institutional investors.

691
Number of discrete financial sponsors that have hired Houlihan Lokey as a sellside advisor over the past five years.

Most Active Advisor to Private Equity

No. 1 Global Private Equity Advisor

2025 Global Private Equity Financial Advisors Rankings

	Advisor	Deals
1	**Houlihan Lokey**	**286**
2	Rothschild & Co	232
3	Jefferies	196
4	Goldman Sachs & Co	164
5	JPMorgan Chase & Co	162

Source: The Deal.

2024 Global Private Equity Financial Advisors Rankings

	Advisor	Deals
1	**Houlihan Lokey**	**232**
2	Rothschild & Co	189
3	Jefferies	175
4	William Blair & Co	150
5	Morgan Stanley	147

Source: The Deal.

Benefits of Working With Houlihan Lokey

Access

- Unparalleled access to deal flow information via our extensive network of senior financial professionals and sponsor clients.
- We know the right firms, fund strategies, contacts, and decision-makers.

Insight

- We have entrenched relationships throughout the sponsor community, with deep knowledge of sponsor behaviour.
- Culturally, we understand who will make a good partner to management on any given transaction.

Influence

- We sell more companies both to and for sponsors than any other investment bank.
- We use the importance of the Houlihan Lokey brand and relationship to drive better outcomes for our clients.

Why Houlihan Lokey Is the Ideal M&A Partner

Unique capabilities enable an outstanding record of success.

01

Ability to 'Emotionally' Position Our Clients

02

Strong Expertise in the Consumer Sector

03

Extensive Coverage in Beauty, Personal Care, and Household as well as D2C/ E-Commerce Platforms

04

Direct Personal Access to Key Decision-Makers and Investors Globally

05

A Leading M&A Advisor for Consumer Transactions

06

A Leading Advisor for Growth Companies on a Global Scale

07

Strong Sellside Brand Signalling a Quality Asset

08

Profound Value Realisation Track Record, Even in Challenging Times



Appendix

05

The Diligence Lens: Community Quality and Authenticity

Due diligence on social media capabilities should be treated with the same rigour as traditional financial due diligence, with community-side checks, such as authenticity, dependency, and transferability, being particularly important.

Metrics	Description	Analytical Frameworks
Unique Reach	Real size of the audience a brand reaches across its own channels and its creator network	Cross-Platform Reach and Audience Overlap Analysis
Engagement Rate	Distinguishes genuine community interest from inflated follower counts	Social Listening and Benchmarking vs. Peers
Follower Authenticity Score (Bot Detection)	Bot-heavy followings signal manufactured rather than organic equity	Influencer Vetting and Network Analysis
Creator Dependency Score	When equity concentrates in one individual, it becomes nontransferable	Content Ownership and Creator Audit
Platform Concentration Risk	Single-platform brands exposed to algorithm changes and regulatory risk	Platform Diversification Analysis
Brand Voice Consistency/Transferability	Community trust must survive change of ownership	Tone and Aesthetic Audit
Share of Voice	Competitive positioning signal	Share of Voice and Benchmarking vs. Peers
In-House vs. Outsourced Capability	Externally managed social may not scale cleanly under new ownership	Team and Capability Assessment
Volume of User-Generated Content	Unprompted user-generated content indicates genuine engagement	UGC Audit and Sentiment Analysis

Sources: Deloitte Creator Economy in 3D; Emplifi Social Pulse 2025; NielsenIQ Global Beauty Views 2026.

The Diligence Lens: Commercial Value

Community quality is necessary but not sufficient—what commands a premium is proving it converts into robust commercial metrics.

Metrics	Description	Analytical Frameworks
Social Media ROI	Quantifies engagement-to-revenue conversion	Marketing Mix Modelling
Customer Acquisition Cost	Organic communities have structurally lower CAC; direct margin improvement	Attribution Analysis
Customer Lifetime Value	High-engagement audiences show stronger retention and purchase frequency	Cohort/Retention Analysis
First-Party Data Ownership	CRM depth, email/SMS lists; what the brand actually owns versus rents from platforms	Digital Asset Valuation
Click-Through and Conversion Rates	Direct content-to-sales link	Customer Journey Mapping
Audience Demographics	Strategic fit with acquiror's target geography, age, income profile	Demographic Alignment Assessment
Net Promoter Score	Measures whether engagement translates to durable advocacy	Customer Satisfaction Benchmarking
Volume of Negative Mentions	Unresolved sentiment risk erodes post-close brand value	Reputational Risk Assessment

Sources: Emplifi Social Pulse 2025; Kantar Media Reactions 2025.

Score Card for D2C/E-Commerce Companies and Importance for Potential Buyers

Main buyers focus on top-line growth, gross and EBITDA margins, and customer economics, and are only interested if these KPIs look attractive.

Market Trends

- % Market Growth
- % Online-Share Growth
- % Market Share

Traffic

- % Paid vs. Unpaid Traffic
- CPCs for Paid Channels
- % Organic Traffic
- Net Promoter Score
- % Mobile Traffic Share

Shop/Front-End

- % Brand Awareness
- Load Times
- Scalability
- Convenience
- Mobile Friendliness

Conversion

- % Conversion Rate
- % Cancellation Rate
- Drop-Out Rate
- Response Times

Customers

- Repurchase Rate
- Split Existing and New Customers/Orders
- AOV
- CAC
- Churn Rate/ Customer Cohorts

After Sales

- Delivery Time
- # of SKUs and % on Stock
- Handling Time
- Return Rate

Financials

- % Top-Line Growth
- % Gross Margin
- % EBITDA Margin
- % Cash Conversion
- % Recurring Sales

Importance of Criteria (Full = High; Empty = Low)

Key Topics We Have Seen in Recent Processes

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