



Investment Banking Firm of the Year

Baird recognized by *The M&A Advisor*

Baird Investment Banking caps off another remarkable year with top honors from *The M&A Advisor*. Named the 2011 “Investment Banking Firm of the Year,” Baird was recognized for its team-oriented approach that differentiates the firm from middle-market peers and drives its delivery of high-quality M&A advice and equity financing services.

“Our strategy is to deliver high quality, innovative M&A advice and equity financing services to middle market companies in select industry verticals,” said Steve Booth, Director of Investment Banking. “We’ve fostered a high degree of teamwork by removing barriers within different geographic and sector groups, allowing us to leverage our collective expertise to achieve better outcomes for our clients. I strongly believe this is a key reason why we’ve seen such tremendous success over the past two years.”

Baird has more than 200 bankers in the United States, Europe and Asia who specialize in serving middle-market companies in select industry sectors covered by the firm’s internationally recognized equity research team.

Citing the April sale of U.S.-based Summit Energy Services, Inc. to France-based Schneider Electric SA as a key international transaction for the firm and an important example of the value of this distinction, Baird was recognized by *The M&A Advisor* for developing innovative and creative solutions for clients.

“Energy Deal of the Year”

The sale of Summit Energy, which was also honored as the 2011 “Energy Deal of the Year” by *The M&A Advisor*, presented a number of challenges that the Baird team successfully overcame in advising Summit and its private equity owner, Weston Presidio. Weston Presidio and Summit were open to pursuing either an initial public offering (IPO) or a sale, and were interested in hiring an advisor that could properly articulate the story of Summit’s recent substantial growth to potential buyers.

Utilizing senior bankers to coordinate a global calling program to identify potential strategic buyers in key sectors, Baird designed a very creative and efficient process to screen potential buyers and ultimately negotiated a sale that addressed the valuation expectations of Summit Energy and Weston Presidio. The transaction was a win-win-win for Schneider Electric, Summit Energy and the company’s shareholders.

“Equity Financing Deal of the Year”

In addition to these two M&A Advisor awards, Baird’s successful Vera Bradley IPO in October 2010 was recognized in June as the “Equity Financing Deal of the Year” by *The M&A Advisor*.

The \$202.4 million transaction for which Baird acted as lead bookrunner ranked No. 6 among all U.S. common stock IPOs for performance in 2010, according to Dealogic. Baird also served as lead bookrunner for a successful follow-on stock offering for Vera Bradley in April 2011. ►

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Other Deal Recognition

In addition to *The M&A Advisor* deals awards, the Dutch publication *Financieel Management* recently recognized one of Baird's European deals, the sale of Netherlands-based product certification company ACTA B.V. to NPM Capital N.V., as "Best Deal MidMarket." Commenting on the recognition, David Silver, Head of European Investment Banking, said, "We are immensely proud of this recognition in what has been a record year for Baird in Europe and around the world. Such individual deal awards are testament to the strength of the team and our assiduous approach to client service." ■