



## BIRTH OF AN INTERNATIONAL INDUSTRY 4.0 LEADER

### Deal snapshot

- Lenny and Sébastien Vercruysse, the founders of AvenAo Industrie (AvenAo), have sold most of the group (the SolidWorks distribution and integration activity) to Prodways Group.
- AvenAo, an expert in industrial innovative solutions, offers global support to professionals for their innovation projects. The group specializes in advising and integrating technological solutions throughout the industrial manufacturing value chain, including conception, production management and additive manufacturing. AvenAo has 130 employees, 12 agencies in France and Belgium, 5 entities (A-S3D, 3DSERVICAD, CREATIX3D, LDM FACTORY) and 15 years of experience serving 3,000 customers.
- Prodways is a specialist in industrial and professional 3D printing with a unique position as an integrated European player in printers, materials, parts and services, with substantial value-added technological industrial solutions.
- Sébastien Vercruysse will have a key management role at Prodways. Both Lenny and Sébastien will become significant shareholders of the company.



### What our client said



**Sébastien Vercruysse**, Co-founder, AvenAo Industrie, France

“Participating in the development of an international Industry 4.0 leader is a very exciting project which I am proud to sign up to for the long term. We needed to be accompanied in this transaction to highlight the activities of AvenAo, explain the potential synergies and especially to structure an operation that allows us to start off our collaboration with our new partner on the right foot. Oaklins’ team in France proved to be up to this challenge and, at the same time, helped us to preserve the relationship we built with Raphaël Gorgé, the CEO of Prodways, throughout the transaction.”

### Our role in the transaction

Oaklins’ French team advised the seller and structured the deal, complying with challenging price and timing requirements.



## Market trends and deal drivers

- Industrial manufacturing processes are entering into a new era driven by the Industry 4.0 revolution, introduced for the first time during the “Hannover Messe” (Germany) in 2011. This revolution relies on three major pillars: digitalization (through CAD software, 3D printing and advanced logistics), simulation (permitting the creation of virtual environments for testing) and the effective use of resources (less waste and less inventory).
- The 3D printing industry global market is projected to reach US\$17 billion by 2022, driven by declining printer prices, new materials and additional applications. 3D printing solutions offer many benefits: faster time-to-market, cost savings, risk mitigation of faulty design, the ability to mass customize component solutions, reduced complexity and higher design flexibility. Successful competitors should be able to bring value throughout the 3D printing value chain, from design to manufacturing.
- The acquisition of AvenAo meets this specific need and will allow Prodways to assert its position in the global market, especially in the US, the principal market for 3D printing solutions.

## M&A valuation aspects

One of the key challenges was managing the deal structure and valuation in such a way to strike a balance between the initial cash payment and the payment in shares, taking into account the future management role of the sellers in the combined entities. The carveout of non-core assets and the need to preserve consistent KPIs underlying the valuation also added financial complexity to the transaction.

## Oaklins industry specialist



✉ **Eric Félix-Faure**, Co-founder and Managing Partner, Oaklins, France

Eric has extensive experience in the TMT industry and has advised many clients over the last 10 years. He advised on the sale of 750g.com to Webmedia, the fundraising of Fitnext, the LBOs of LTI Telecom and JVS Group, and the sale of Prod-IG to 1Life, among others. “I am particularly pleased to have been able to support this highly synergistic deal between two pioneering players in the design and 3D printing world. The unique combination of hardware, software and services will undoubtedly serve an industry in full revolution. Beyond the respective business strengths of these two companies, this transaction is fuelled by the alliance of two entrepreneurial visions, serving the emergence of a French ETI known worldwide in a sector of the future.”

# OAKLINS HAS CLOSED 257 DEALS IN TMT IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS

Oaklins is the world's most experienced mid-market M&A advisor, with 700 professionals globally and dedicated industry teams in 40 countries worldwide. We have closed over 1,500 transactions in the past five years.