Capturing new growth opportunities

Global Consumer and Retail M&A trends 2018

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Introduction

The Consumer & Retail (C&R) industry is growing amid strong global economic growth. The C&R sector contributed 13 percent and 10 percent to global deal volume and value, respectively, in 2017 and remained resilient over 2016. Ongoing disruption and the sheer amount of technology-based innovations to get closer to customers are driving major trends in the industry.

Last year kept the market waiting for a big, game-changing M&A transaction but the players remained silent. This seems to be a 'calm before the storm' and a wave of big deals in 2018 should be expected.

The industry may see major benchmark deal announcements that could change the major players as we have known them.

In 2017, the US led the way in deals with about 40 percent of the deal value and landmark transactions such as Amazon's acquisition of Whole Foods. On the flipside, the country was also experiencing a 'shake up' in retail where many retailers filed for insolvency. However, in light of corporate-friendly US tax reform, US-headquartered businesses are expected to see increased deal activity in 2018.

In the East, amid high manufacturing costs in China and Japan's aging population, Asian investors are exploring Europe and the US for assets and eyeing neighbors with high-growth emerging economies.

Activist investors may keep board rooms tense and continue to pressure the who's who of the industry to slice and dice businesses.

The consumer sector is undergoing fundamental changes. Consumers are more aware and clear on their preferences for a 'healthy me' and a 'healthy environment.' Traditional players are striving to meet high customer expectations and looking to place unconventional bets to win customer loyalty. Companies will continue replacing R&D and innovation with M&A and strategic partnerships to cater to customer demands immediately via investing in technology companies that offer artificial intelligence, access to new channels, improved products and services and enhanced customer experience.

Whether developed in-house or acquired through external partnerships or M&A, it is vital that firms continue to develop and evolve in the face of disruptive technologies. This is especially notable in the food-and-beverage sector, where we will see producers further recast portfolios and actively adjust to new market realities.

Overall, the market in 2018 seems to be favorable for the C&R deal environment. We are expecting another year of consolidation and strategic acquisitions and divestures in the sector as global players continue to look for new revenue streams and increase their market share in growing economies through acquisitions. Despite geo-political uncertainty, improving global economic outlook and some relaxation of regulations are anticipated to support market confidence for the year ahead.

The top 10 M&A trends discussed in this report represent a summary of what KPMG C&R sector specialists across KPMG global network believe will shape the global industry in 2018.

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Top 10 trends

01	Improving global outlook to boost M&A in Consumer & Retail sector
02	Consolidation in the sector to continue in 2018: Corporates will target businesses and markets with sustainable growth
03	With Health and Wellness on top of the agenda, players pushed to diversify
04	Large players continuing to rethink portfolios; transformative big-ticket deals may be in store
05	Disruption and market pressures are pushing retailers to react quickly and rethink their operating models and consider strategic corporate actions
06	China to continue exploring cross border, Americas and Europe remain favorites
07	Japanese firms to eye attractive targets in Europe and the US and shift attention to Asian neighbors for growth
08	Foreign investors find India attractive as government introduces investor-friendly regulatory reforms
09	Many European countries to see an upside in M&A
10	Casual dining: another M&A surge in the US and Asia expected

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01 Improving global outlook to boost M&A in consumer & retail sector

"The global M&A market in 2018 looks promising. Expected GDP growth and relaxing of regulation combined with shifting consumer preferences and healthy balance sheets should all contribute to growth going forward.

Nicola Longfield, KPMG Global C&R Deal Advisory Lead

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There are indicators of continued strong US M&A activity in the C&R sector, including increased CEO and consumer confidence, positive expected impacts from tax reform, stable balance sheets, relatively friendly financing and stakeholder pressure to grow, offset by perceived high multiples for good assets creating buyer apprehension and difficulties bridging the bid and ask spread.

Rob Ernst, Partner, C&R, Deal Advisory, KPMG in the US

The global C&R industry is expected to stay dynamic and see positive growth against the backdrop of a favorable global economic environment. Global GDP is forecast to grow by 3.1 percent in 2018 after a strong 2017 (3.0 percent)[1] — along with an increase in consumer spending, giving investors a promising business environment.

While geopolitical uncertainty and rising levels of consumer debt remain key business concerns globally, positive economic growth witnessed in 2016-17 is expected to continue, encouraging optimism for the year ahead and driving corporate performance. Investor confidence is set to increase, with emerging economies such as India's (estimated 7.5 percent GDP growth) relaxing of foreign investment regulations, signaling a high value investment in pursuit of growth. China has also welcomed investments by offering tax exemptions on profits used for re-investment.

After a stable 2017, the European economy is set for a positive year, with rising employment, a boost in investor sentiments and a relaxed monetary policy stance. All these levers are expected to push domestic demand. The low borrowing rates in Europe are expected to be attractive for foreign investors, despite uncertainty around the political situation in Spain (Catalan situation), Italy's elections and Brexit trade regulations.

After a 30-year dry spell, a major tax overhaul was implemented that has brought a big smile to US corporates. The US-headquartered consumer corporates may be looking at major investments in 2018 as the bottom line improves and cash flows increase. The companies are likely to invest in technology to make the domestic supply chain robust and could seek assets with a focus on the health and wellness and beauty sectors. The change in the tax law is also expected to increase the investment attractiveness of the country, with more domestic and inbound deals happening in 2018.

In Latin America, Brazil started to recover in 2017, turning around from a turbulent political environment. The Bacen (Brazilian Central Bank) is projecting GDP growth of 2.7 percent, with sharp reduction of inflation and interest rates. The economy is showing signs of gradual recovery and the market is optimistic about the reforms that may continue in 2018 and 2019.

The US C&R industry can potentially benefit significantly from US tax reform. A lower corporate tax rate should enable domestic companies to compete more effectively with non-US competitors. Lower individual tax rates should generate more discretionary income which should, in turn, lead to increased consumption. The move towards a territorial system is expected to bring a significant amount of off-shore cash back to the US, spurring additional M&A activity.

Curtis Ottley, Partner, M&A Tax, KPMG in the US

1. *World Bank Press Release, "Global Economy to Edge Up to 3.1 percent in 2018 but Future Potential Growth a Concern", 9 Jan 2018, www.worldbank.org*

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02 Consolidation in the sector to continue in 2018:

Corporates will target businesses and markets with sustainable growth

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In light of recent mergers and acquisitions, corporates of all sizes continue to evaluate their competitive position within a dynamic and ever-consolidating marketplace — driven by strategic objectives that include capturing growth and cost synergies, increasing geographic footprints and rethinking their portfolios. The healthy balance sheets hint at increased corporate appetite for big-ticket deals. Companies are looking at cost reductions and see scope in mergers that will also drive geographic growth.

Consolidations accounted for a significant portion of all megadeals by value since the beginning of the decade, including two of the four biggest megadeals in the era: SABMiller–Anheuser-Busch, Kraft Foods–H.J. Heinz.

The personal care and beauty sector has also been consolidating significantly as players look to inorganic growth to tap market share. Big players such as Unilever have pursued growth in emerging markets through acquisitions. The company acquired South Korean beauty firm Carver for US$2.7 billion in 2017. The move follows the announcement of the purchase of brands such as Savital shampoo from Latin American consumer goods giant Quala in May 2017, and Dollar Shave Club in 2016, indicating the corporate pursuing growth and market share in the personal care sector.

The consolidation has been evident in the tobacco sector as well with the multibillion merger of Reynolds American and Lorillard Inc in 2015 and the subsequent acquisition of Reynolds by British American Tobacco in 2017.

Corporate balance sheets are strong and access to capital is available but that has not encouraged impulsive buying of assets. We are seeing analysis and careful evaluation in assessing deals and waiting for the right strategic partner.

The wave of consolidation also means that large conglomerates may find themselves as targets as well. Lastly, the sector expects to see divestments because of consolidation and scrutiny from competition authorities.

"In 2018, we expect to see a continuation of consolidation in the C&R sector, with corporates looking to reshape portfolios, capture profitable growth by entering new markets and driving costs out of synergies.

Nicola Longfield, KPMG Global C&R Deal Advisory Lead

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03 With health and wellness on the top of agenda, players pushed to diversify

Companies will continue to respond to consumer behavior through inorganic growth, seeking new streams of products to stay relevant, particularly in health and wellness offerings.

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As evident from recent M&A activity, companies are not necessarily looking at an attractive P&L while buying firms, preferring instead to pay a premium for new revenue streams that would allow them to capture sales growth.

In 2017, ABInBev, for example, made an unconventional small purchase of Hitball, a provider of organic energy drinks and energy waters, with 20 employees. The conventional alcohol players' continuous interest in 'no- and low-alcohol' drinks is noteworthy as it shifts to serving consumers looking for a healthier lifestyle from its vast beer portfolio. In a similar pursuit, Nestlé has continued to shift its portfolio towards a greater health and wellness-oriented organization. The food giant recently announced the disposal of its confectionary businesses, while making acquisitions in consumer healthcare (Canadian vitamin maker Atrium Innovations for US$2.3 billion). This comes after buying Sweet Earth, a US-based maker of vegan and plant-based foods.

Several soft drinks players, in major need of diversification, have been seeking companies offering healthy alternatives to sugar-based drinks. Unilever also bought Pukka Herbs, a British organic herbal tea company founded in 2001, to capitalize on the fast-growing organic tea market. Such product-focused companies possessing strong consumer presence and operating in a high-margin category provide an opportunity for larger food-and-beverage companies with established low-growth brands.

The consumer giants are losing market share for their established brands to niche players offering premium and customized solutions that meet evolving customer preferences. This trend is compelling them to look for acquisitions to capture growth in new categories.

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Large CPG companies are finding that with the increasing pace of change there is simply not enough time to innovate their way to higher growth, so they're turning to M&A as the new R&D.

Mark Belford, Managing Director, C&R Banking, Corporate Finance, KPMG in the US

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We expect consumer demand for healthier and organic products to continue to be a driver of M&A activity into 2018, with major consumer groups reshaping their portfolios to expand into these fast growing segments.

Josh Martin, Partner, C&R, Deal Advisory, KPMG in Switzerland

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04 Large players continuing to rethink portfolios; transformative big-ticket deals may be in store

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The large conglomerates have realized the need to be part of the emerging growth ecosystem, in stark contrast to their traditional model favoring size and scale. Changing consumer preferences and behaviors, coupled with the need to generate undivided customer loyalty, has brought the large-cap players into a rivalry zone with smaller players who were not competitors the last time we checked. The conglomerates are preparing to compete head-on by rethinking their vast portfolios. The need to reorganize and evaluate portfolio relevance could result in numerous large- and mid-cap M&A transactions in 2018 and beyond.

The year 2017 was noteworthy for non-core disposals, with players such as Unilever announcing the sale of its spreads portfolio to concentrate on faster-growing products. Similarly, RB sold its 'non-core' food assets and acquired baby formula manufacturer Mead Johnson as part of their strategy to grow in the 'health' space.

In addition, Nestlé created a buzz in the industry by acquiring a majority stake in Blue Bottle Coffee, a US-based, high-end specialty coffee roaster and retailer, and Chameleon Cold-Brew, a US based cold-coffee and other packaged drinks chain. The food giant is acting on changing consumer tastes and expanding its presence across the value chain for coffee, aiming to find synergies with its long history of coffee expertise.

The very need to pursue growth either through geographic or portfolio expansion or trimming is expected to push consumer industry giants to go for transformative deals.

In 2018, we may also witness Kraft-Heinz looking to invest heavily in multiple assets or players with wide portfolios in order to expand to emerging markets, as currently it is primarily invested in North America.

"Consumer players are looking to shift their portfolios to respond to changing consumer preferences — whether this is our changing tastes or how we want to shop (and when). M&A is expected to play a pivotal role in this, providing a substitute for innovation (at pace) or new market entry, plus providing a mechanism for perhaps exiting sub-scale categories and allowing a focus on core areas.

Nicola Longfield, KPMG Global C&R Deal Advisory Lead

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05 Disruption and market pressures are pushing retailers to react quickly and rethink their operating models and consider strategic corporate actions

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Increasingly rapid shifts in consumer behaviour, pressurized retail P&Ls and the need to enhance the buying experience is expected to drive M&A in the retail space.

Many traditional retailers are facing an increasingly urgent choice: be relevant or go out of business as pressure mounts in the face of innovative online, omni-channel and specialty competitors, coupled with mounting costs from store-led operations.

In recent years, online retailers and platforms have been able to gratify customer demands for speed and convenience. Previously considered as premium service, fast delivery and exchange/return options are now standard offerings. Emerging online success drivers now involve: competitive pricing, the creation of content/community, advanced supply-chain processes and leveraging data analytics to understand customer demand and profitability at a granular level.

Amazon encapsulates this winning business model — while pricing is an important part of its operational excellence, its real differentiators are the results of investment in supply chain, content and data analytics. With the recent acquisition of Whole Foods, the online giant is likely to gain even better visibility of consumers' preferences and enhance its online grocery proposition. There are strong indications that Amazon may buy other competitors and enter new streams of business, representing a threat to other retail verticals.

The retailers who fail to respond to this rapidly changing environment are likely to face store closures, as witnessed in 2017, in particular in the US (where store closures numbered about 7000[2]) — the most since 2009) and the UK (with more than 1,300[3]) closed stores last year). Many retailers filed for bankruptcy due to reducing margins and a declining top line. The sector may witness attempts of 'defensive consolidation' and more retailers to file for insolvency in 2018.

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Whilst disruption in retail is not a new topic, 2018 looks set to differentiate more clearly those retailers that have had the available funding and foresight to invest in infrastructure, IT and in optimising their store portfolios and those that have been unable to take these steps. We expect a range of corporate action including insolvencies, defensive consolidation and retailers rethinking their operating models.

Rob Baxter, Partner, C&R, Deal Advisory, KPMG in the UK

2. *Article 'Store closures rocked retail in 2017. Now 2018 is set to bring another round of them by CNBC', published on 26 Dec 2017, www.cnbc.com*

3. *Article ' Who's Gone Bust in Retailing 2010-18?', by retailresearch.com published in Jan 2018, www. retailresearch.com*

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06 China to keep exploring cross borders, America and Europe remain favorites

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With ever-increasing interest in cross-border deals, China is expected to keep exploring assets cross-border for sustainable growth. The Chinese companies are expected to seek investments in food and beverage as well as textile and apparel manufacturing assets in the Americas and Europe to optimize logistics costs and increase margins. In addition, many Chinese companies are looking to acquire brands and bring them to the Chinese market, leveraging existing distribution channels.

The domestic deals market in China is going to be active as well, due to market consolidation as buyers seek synergies in the areas of branding, channels, technologies and cost savings. To further encourage foreign investment into China, recent tax regulations were introduced. Instead of normally treating profits from Chinese subsidiaries repatriated to foreign shareholders as dividends (which would normally attract withholding taxes), the money can be used to reinvest in new projects in China within encouraged sectors and the withholding taxes may be deferred until a later stage.

Chinese firms are investing heavily in technology and adopting digitalization in retail. The country has seen venture capitalist (VC) investments in small start-up firms that combine robotics and mobile apps, to open a domestic version of an online giant's prototype where customers purchase products without interacting with a cashier or checkout station. US companies are showing much interest in this technology and are expected to invest heavily in this area over the next few years.

"I would expect China outbound investment to continue but to be more selective in nature — for example, acquisitions of specific apparel brands which buyers believe to be well adapted to the Chinese market. Inbound and domestic investment is likely to be heavily focused towards businesses with strong e-commerce and digital propositions, in particular as multinational companies seek to enter these fast-growing channels.

Mark Harrison, Partner, C&R, Deal Advisory, KPMG in China

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07 Japanese firms to eye attractive targets in Europe and the US and shift attention to Asian neighbors for growth

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Japan is one of the fastest-aging societies and so Japanese companies must find the answer to achieve their sustainable business growth. In light of this, the trend for outbound investments by Japanese companies will continue in order to compensate for stagnated domestic growth.

Yoshinobu Nakamura, Partner, C&R, Deal Advisory, KPMG in Japan

Japan's declining population and slowing economy have created a greater sense of urgency among corporations to pursue outbound acquisitions, enter new markets and gain new products and capabilities in order to have a sustainable future. The low borrowing costs and supportive government policies have also helped Japanese firms to explore opportunities cross border. However, Japanese board rooms have constantly been discussing the success of cross-border transactions. The success rate of historical deals is poor when it comes to synergies and governance. Hence, in 2018, Japanese firms are expected to be careful while venturing out for assets.

While cross border still remains an opportunity for a mature market like Japan, its favorite will remain Europe and the US, given Japanese firms' preference for mature companies with stable cash flow and strong brand recognition. Their focus will also be shifting to Asian markets, such as the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam, offering high-growth opportunities.

Major distributors are entering into private label products, which are more price competitive than national branded products and recently gaining more market share.

Department stores are the declining industry while convenience stores are on the rise. Convenience stores used to sell fewer SKUs at higher prices but are evolving toward more SKUs and cheaper prices.

While the food-and-beverage and consumer products firms are expected to keep eyeing cross-border assets in 2018, the domestic retailers may look at restructuring to increase margins.

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08 Foreign investors find India attractive as government introduces investor friendly regulatory reforms

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The consumer market is one of the key sectors in India to witness significant traction among the Private Equity (PE) community. PE investments in consumer companies accounted for about a quarter of all 2017 investments.

Recent landmark reforms, such as the introduction of GST (Goods and Service Tax) and replacement of high-value currencies with new currencies, are indicative measures undertaken by the government to enhance transparency and stability. These measures will lead to further formalization of the economy, stimulating both consumption and investment.

A key investment theme that can be seen specific to the C&R sector is international retailers considering India in their expansion strategies. Global high street brands such as Zara[4] and Hennes & Mauritz (H&M) striking a chord with the Indian consumer are recent examples of this trend. Global retailers may continue gaining entry through acquisitions in 2018. Notable examples include IKEA[5], assumed to be in advanced stages of negotiation to commence operations in India. Esprit[6] and Mango, which exited India after a lukewarm reception, have also returned through partnerships with eRetailers. On the flip side, lack of relevant real estate space, complexity in supply chain processes and understanding nuances with regard to the shopping patterns of the Indian consumer are among the many challenges that global brands face.

Some international players are also making a foray into India's casual dining segment. Many casual dining players from the US and Asian markets are expected to enter India through the franchise model to capture booming growth this country has to offer.

In addition, there is a potential for outbound acquisitions as Indian companies, especially those with strong balance sheets, are expected to continue to scout for opportunities overseas, particularly in the emerging markets of Africa and South East Asia.

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The Indian market offers a huge opportunity for C&R players, with improvements in infrastructure and increasing disposable incomes. Expansion of consumer coverage beyond urban areas, bringing in play Tier II cities, will lead to enhanced footprint/increase in share of wallet. Consolidation among the online as well as offline retailers and enhanced appetite for fundraising will drive the investment themes this year.

Nishesh Dalal, Partner, C&R, Deal Advisory, KPMG in India

4. *Zara to sell online in India later this year, published on 17 Mar 2017 in in The Mint, www.livemint.com*
5. *IKEA to set up first Indian store, published on 9 Jan 2018 in The Hindu Business Line, www.thehindubusinessline.com*
6. *Press Release: Myntra Wins Master Distribution Rights for Esprit in India, published on 29 Sep 2017, www.ptinews.com*

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09 Many European countries to see an upside in M&A

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Europe is a center for cross-border investment right now, with interest from the US and Asia. Some major European markets, such as France, Germany and the Netherlands, experienced a decline in domestic deal activity in 2017 but have been on investor radars across the globe. The UK and Italy demonstrated moderate to strong M&A growth.

The UK remains among the top investment destinations for international investors. The country has moved past its first spell of uncertainty over the EU divorce, where sellers were cautious, but favorable FX rates made inbound UK investments more appealing to overseas buyers. Business confidence has also recently seen an uptick since the Brexit vote, which is expected to have a positive impact on M&A activity.

In France, a favorable environment of economic growth and structural reforms is paving the way for M&A, driven by the new political agenda following the 2017 election of President Emmanuel Macron. The country is being promoted strongly on the international stage to invest and grow and is already seeing a marked improvement in investor response globally. France is expected to witness an increase in interest from the US and Asian investors in 2018.

Switzerland's M&A activity is expected to come mainly from cross-border, outbound deals that will see continued momentum into 2018, while a more stable Swiss Franc may encourage more inbound investment. We expect continued consolidation and portfolio optimization in the traditional retail segment amid increasing competition from online rivals.

Many German players have been struggling to find assets domestically and will continue looking for outbound targets. The US has topped the chart as the preferred destination. In the domestic market, more technology asset acquisitions by German businesses are expected, to try to keep pace with digitalization.

The 2018 outlook for the Italian economy appears positive and more robust relative to prior years, with consumer markets enjoying a continuously smooth recovery. Most recent transaction pipelines suggest a strong interest from foreign investors (mainly Asian and US players). In the longer run, however, Italy might witness a decline in foreign investment in light of the political uncertainty amid general elections due in March 2018 and their impact on economic and social reforms which commenced in recent years.

Consumer companies in Spain have been forced to become more efficient, diversifying their businesses and branching out geographically in a bid to navigate the severe downturn which did not ease until 2015. The macroeconomic outlook for 2018 (projected economic growth of 2.4 percent) combined with strong consumption growth over the past two years is expected to attract foreign investors and continue driving a robust domestic M&A activity.

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10 Casual dining: another M&A surge expected

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The global casual dining sector is expected to see continued strength in M&A volumes in 2018.

The sector will likely see interest from both corporate and PE players as it offers strong cash generation and high returns on capital. In part, buyers have been lured to the space because it is exposed to limited disruption.

The sector has been struggling with new competition in the form of home delivery models driven by digital payments technology. Similar to the retail sector, traditional players have been facing immense cost pressures as labor and real estate costs continue to rise. As in the retail sector, these cost pressures and increased competition are likely to generate consolidation in the sector over the next two to three years.

The US casual dining segment, which witnessed a surge in M&A over 2016-17, may continue to receive interest for cross-border partnerships as the macroeconomic environment in the country improves — with higher wages and lower unemployment. The casual dining space will also benefit from lower corporate taxes introduced by the Trump administration and having a positive impact on P&Ls.

We expect further interest in the US market from UK and other European players experiencing low growth opportunities in their domestic markets. The sector may see another tough year in the UK due to cost headwinds from wage and employment regulation, an unfavorable foreign exchange position and consumer uncertainty.

Asian players may look at partnerships with American family dining franchises/chains to take the brands home.

"Casual dining has been a very active M&A segment in the last few years — a lot is going on in the market. Consolidation and restructuring might be the theme for the next few years as the growth hubs shift to the US and Asia.

Richard Sharman, Partner, C&R, Deal Advisory, KPMG in the UK

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Key considerations

Some of the key considerations impacting the M&A landscape

1. Further consolidation in the C&R sector seems inevitable. This is likely to be more evident in the Food and Beverages, Personal Care, Consumer Health and Retail sectors.

   How can you reshape strategic plans accordingly?

2. With the market moving towards health and wellness, many businesses are pushed to diversify — M&A will keep replacing in-house innovations. To be relevant and competitive in the market, players will have to act fast to increase their exposure to high-growth categories/assets.

   Have you considered an M&A deal to further diversify your portfolio and increase its value?

3. The market is likely to see a growing power of activist investors shaking up big players by encouraging acceleration of portfolio changes and monetization of non-core assets — this will drive more deals in the market.

   Have you considered a strategic review of your corporate assets to assess vulnerabilities and identify new options for success?

4. Large, transformational and complex deals driven by macro and structural factors should be expected in the sector. We may also see companies doing asset swaps and secondary divestments in order to meet strategic priorities and address anti-trust issues.

   Have divestments and asset swaps been properly considered as a part of your strategy?

5. Businesses, in particular in the Retail sector, have to respond to rapidly changing consumer demands in order to remain competitive. More acquisitions in the tech/online space and strategic consumer-tech partnerships and alliances should be expected in 2018.

   Have you fully assessed how the right partnership can help you respond to changing consumer demands?

6. The regulatory environment will continue to factor highly in inorganic growth decisions.

   How are you keeping up with the regulatory environment in key markets and new challenges that emerge?

7. The sector will see a continued increase in deal activity in Asia driven by the economic growth and positive regulatory changes. Investors are likely to look for expansion/entry opportunities in this region.

   Have you considered Asia or other geographies for growth or expansion?

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Keeping a sharp lens on the future

As many organizations are discovering, the right deal can dramatically accelerate transformation, drive growth and increase portfolio value. Strategic, well-executed transactions are in many cases enabling faster growth — through access to new markets, sales and distribution channels and/or new capabilities, or by simplifying and optimizing infrastructure, operations and costs.

To help companies navigate the complex, fast-changing environments they are competing in today, KPMG member firm specialists continue to provide on-the-ground deal support, combining a global mindset and local experience with deep sector knowledge and analytic tools. KPMG professionals' guidance is helping businesses seeking to buy, sell, fund, partner or transform, by examining questions that are critical to their success, including:

— How will the transaction really enable new, sustainable growth?

— What are the steps to ensure value is extracted from every phase of a transaction?

— How do I ensure the value thesis becomes reality?

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