

Business Collaboration - Would now be a good time to collaborate?

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It takes a brave management team to actively seek out potentially competitive companies and strike up a relationship. However the results can be surprisingly positive, we have noticed an increasing trend in collaboration amongst our clients over the last six months.

Indeed there was even speculation in the press, albeit it hotly denied, about the MOD's 'plans' to share equipment with the French Navy, in particular naval aircraft carriers. As shocking as this revelation was it had tremendous merits for a cash-strapped MOD. Wasn't a shared aircraft carrier better than none at all? Nevertheless I cannot imagine what Nelson would have said?

The new economy is driving a new pragmatism. With the newly formed ConLibs (or is it the ConDems?) old enmities have been dropped. Without this collaboration the effective governing of this country was under serious doubt. While there were policy disagreements between the Tories and the LibDems there are many areas of common ground upon which they are beginning to build a strong and effective government. Inevitably this collaboration will require compromises on both side but this whole is definitely greater than the sum of the parts.



In business very few companies are identical, few have the same technical strengths, the same scale and geography of operation. Likewise rarely does one supplier have the perfect solution to its customer's requirements.

Back in the 'good old days' when credit was easy, collaboration was achieved in part through [acquisition](#). Now more imaginative means of achieving economies of scale and broadening product offering must be sought.

Collaboration at its simplest level may just involve referring business in a different geography to another supplier or partnering with a services provider who can fill a skills gap in your own offering. In its more complex form collaboration may result in a full blown [merger](#), where economies of scale can be achieved. We haven't seen too many of these yet, but we expect to see more over the next 12 months.

We have certainly been encouraging our client base to accelerate their collaborative activities and to identify complementary product and service providers. If nothing else it has increased our client's market awareness.

The evidence is that collaboration is well underway so if you are not doing it perhaps you risk being left behind?

In the words of Charles Darwin *"It is the long history of humankind (and animalkind, too) those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed."*