CANADIAN PRIVATE COMPANY INTELLIGENCE

Canadian Middle Market Q3 2026 Quarterly Intelligence Report

July 1 to September 30, 2026

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Tech & industrials

98 deals centered on software, distribution and services. See what buyers are building.

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140 bolt-ons led activity. Five leading acquirors reveal different routes to scale and new markets.

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Sector and regional themes. Thomas Bevilacqua on sale preparation, buyer fit and execution.

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Notable deals

OVO, the Barrie Colts and three other deals show what made this quarter distinctive.

CMM

186

transactions tracked by CMM in Q3

Recorded Q3 activity



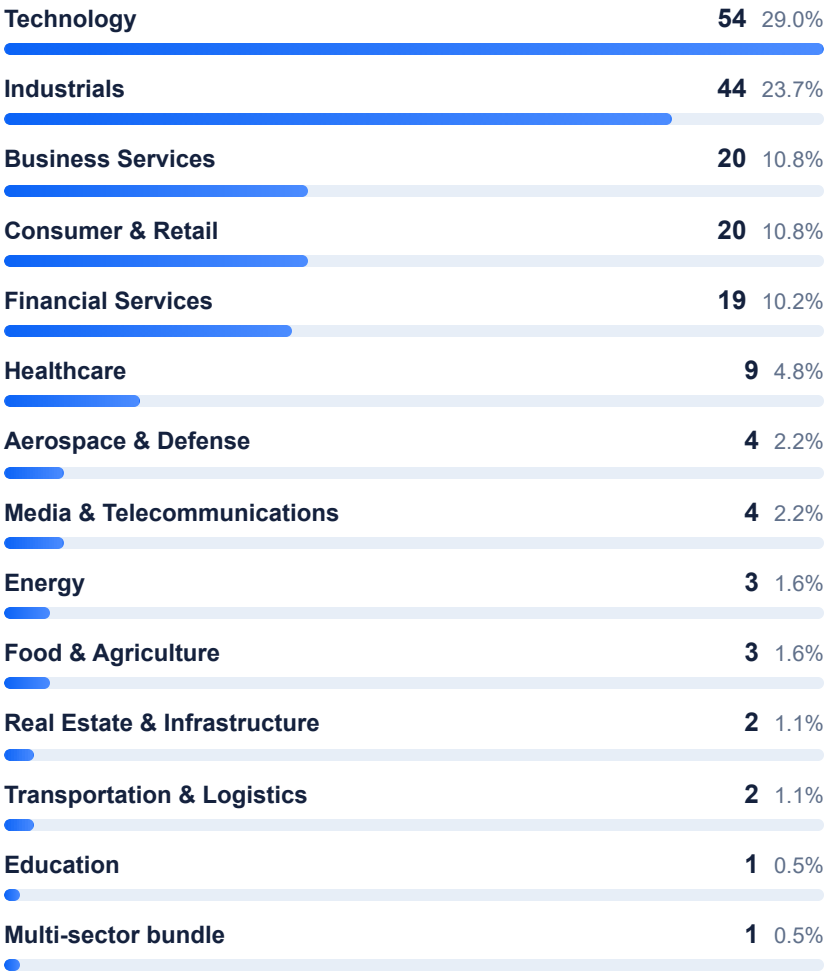
Canadian buyers or targets, including cross-border and larger transactions. Figures describe CMM's coverage, not total market activity or a size-screened middle-market universe.

SECTOR CONCENTRATION

Technology and industrials drive 53% of activity

Deals by sector

Transactions and share of the 186-deal sample



Technology and Industrials contribute 98 transactions (52.7%). Categories use CMM's normalized sector taxonomy.

Technology

54 deals

34 software deals · 44 bolt-ons

Repeat platforms set the pace. Constellation (11), ZenaTech (5), Valsoft (4) and Descartes (3) account for 23 tech deals, or 43% of the sector.

Specialist workflows lead. Constellation's Matrix Booking adds public-sector workplace software; Valsoft's Medicalistics adds correctional-health records and compliance. Descartes extends logistics from freight brokerage to warehouses.

A concentrated software core. Constellation, Valsoft and Descartes account for 17 of 34 software deals. Repeat platforms are buying niche applications with established customers.

Beyond software: ZenaTech's four surveying and engineering acquisitions add licensed teams and customer access for its drone-services rollout.

Industrials

44 deals

26 in services + distribution · 34 bolt-ons

More operating capacity, closer to customers. Services (14) and distribution (12) account for 59% of industrial activity. Buyers are adding field delivery, local branches and aftermarket access.

Three specific routes: EllisDon adds power engineering and high-voltage field services; Beijer Ref enters Canada through Enertrak's seven HVAC branches; Thermogenics adds Halmar's boiler-parts inventory and distribution.

Beyond services and distribution: Construction and engineering add six deals; manufacturing adds five. TerraVest's Superior Pressure Vessels purchase illustrates demand for specialized fabrication capacity.

The common test: Retain skilled people and customer relationships while linking the acquired capacity to the buyer's existing operation.

TRANSACTION STRATEGY

What buyers are building through acquisitions

140 75.3%

BOLT-ON · EXTEND AN EXISTING OPERATION

38 20.4%

PLATFORM · ESTABLISH A STARTING POSITION

8 4.3%

OTHER · REMAINING TRANSACTION TYPES

Buyer category × transaction type

Each transaction appears in one cell. Both dimensions cover the same 186 deals.

Buyer category	Bolt-on	Platform	Other
Strategic 162 total	137	19	6
Financial Investor 22 total	3	19	0
Other 2 total	0	0	2

98% of bolt-ons have a Strategic buyer. The sample is dominated by businesses acquiring capabilities they can use, rather than standalone financial ownership changes.

50:50 Platforms split evenly between Strategic and Financial Investor buyers. A corporate entry into a new market can be a platform, too.

Three acquisition routes in the quarter

BOLT-ON · PRODUCT BREADTH

Descartes → Tai

Tai's freight-brokerage software broadens Descartes' transportation workflow. The opportunity is to connect execution software and network data across the customer's daily work.

PLATFORM · GEOGRAPHIC ENTRY

Beijer Ref → Enertrak

An 80% acquisition provides entry into Canada through seven HVAC branches, with local management and branding retained. The deal establishes a Canadian base for the group's distribution network.

OTHER · OWNERSHIP CONTINUITY

Qube → management buyout

An internal ownership transition in wealth management shows a different objective: continuity for clients and the team as ownership passes to management.

Transaction type describes how the deal fits; buyer category identifies who acquires. The dimensions overlap and cannot be added together.

MOST ACQUISITIVE COMPANIES

Repeat acquirors, different expansion paths

Top corporate acquiring platforms

Transactions in the CMM tracked sample



Constellation Software — 11



ZenaTech, Inc. — 5



Valsoft Corporation — 4



Go Lime Inc. — 3



The Descartes Systems Group — 3

26 transactions, or 14.0% of the sample. Go Lime and Descartes tie at three. Constellation's 11 span five operating groups; Valsoft's four span three.

Next at two each: Arthur J. Gallagher, Duliban, EllisDon, Environmental 360 Solutions and PE Gate. Confirmed controlling-parent relationships are combined; common financial sponsors alone are not.

Constellation · Deepen Specialist Software

Volaris' Matrix Booking adds UK public-sector workplace customers, including the NHS. Its stated approach preserves the business's independence while supporting investment in AI and automation.

ZenaTech · Acquire a Service Footprint

Four surveying and engineering businesses bring licensed teams and clients in energy, construction, solar and rail. They support drone-service expansion; ESM separately adds enterprise strategy and compliance software.

Valsoft · Enter a Defined Healthcare Vertical

Edelweiss' Medicalistics acquisition enters US correctional and public-health technology, combining clinical records, medication management and compliance in a specialized customer workflow.

Go Lime · Expand Ontario Service Coverage

Comfort Zone, Services Plus and A-Plus extend Northumberland and Simcoe County coverage. Retaining local brands and staff while adding trucks, technicians and training supports the service-capacity case.

Descartes · Connect Logistics Workflows

Drivin adds Latin American last-mile delivery, Tai adds freight brokerage, and Extensiv adds 3PL warehouse and omnichannel tools. The three deals broaden the workflow around its logistics network.

Vertical-market software platforms kept buying: Constellation and Valsoft recorded 15 deals. HVAC was another active consolidation lane, spanning Go Lime's three service acquisitions and Beijer Ref's Canadian distribution entry.

ADVISOR ACTIVITY AND CMM CONVERSATIONS

Advisor patterns and sale readiness

Recorded advisory activity reveals different sector and regional patterns. Our first CMM Conversation adds the owner's perspective on preparing for the buyer's scrutiny.

Leading recorded financial advisors



RBC · finance-linked businesses. Filogix, Moneris and Inovatec connect lending infrastructure, payments and software. RBC's other credits span industrial, consumer and healthcare businesses.

BMO · cross-sector ownership changes. Consumer health, payments and commercial mechanical services feature in BMO's three credits. The sample is too broad to support a single sector specialization.

MNP · technical businesses. Two Québec targets, Alphacasting and Groupe Tremblay, combine manufacturing and construction. Ontario's Element Forensic adds a specialist engineering business.

Valuepath · an Alberta cluster. All three targets are Alberta-based: two power-engineering/services additions for EllisDon and Qube's wealth-management succession.

Transaction credits, not engagement counts. Themes describe this quarter's disclosed sample. Only 63 of 186 transactions name an eligible financial advisor.

CMM CONVERSATIONS LAUNCHED SEPTEMBER 20, 2026

Thomas Bevilacqua on preparing for a sale

Partner and Co-Founder
Harmony Succession Partners

Bevilacqua distinguishes an owner's desire to exit from a business that is ready to sell. Buyers assess whether earnings can transfer, including owner dependence, customer concentration and management depth.

- **Preparation starts early.** Begin two to three years ahead where possible. The business needs to operate without its owner.
- **The best offer can differ from the highest.** Financing certainty, transaction structure and buyer fit influence the outcome.
- **Execution continues after the LOI.** Missed forecasts and diligence surprises can reopen pricing. Realistic projections and continued operating focus matter through closing.

Implication for a sale process: Readiness and buyer selection help protect value through diligence. A headline bid alone cannot establish likely proceeds or certainty of closing.

Read the full Thomas Bevilacqua conversation:
https://canadianmiddlemarket.com/cmm-conversations/selling-a-business-in-canadas-middle-market-with-thomas-bevilacqua/

NOTABLE MENTIONS

Notable mentions and unique deals

From cultural brands and hockey to space-based intelligence, power delivery and national payments.



CULTURE · AUG 27

OVO → Authentic + Vince

Authentic acquired 51% of the Drake-co-founded brand's IP; Vince acquired the operating business and 5% of the IP. Drake retained 44%. The split pairs cultural reach with licensing scale and retail execution.



SPORT · JUL 31

Barrie Colts → John Careri / JONVIC

John Careri acquired majority ownership of Horsepower Sports & Entertainment, including the Barrie Colts. The OHL club joins a sports portfolio alongside the Toronto Patriots and Everest Academy; Howie Campbell retained a stake and advisory role.

SPACE + GEOSPATIAL AI · JUL 8

CLS → MDA Space

MDA Space made a €567 million (about C$920 million) firm offer for approximately 70% of CLS. The combination would connect satellites and near-real-time data with AI-driven analytics and distribution to 14,000-plus customers. France’s space agency would retain roughly 30%.

POWER INFRASTRUCTURE · SEP 1

Hardline + Firefly → EllisDon

Two additions connect power engineering with high-voltage construction, operations and maintenance. EllisDon gains a broader role across the power-project lifecycle, with specialist teams in each part of delivery.

PAYMENTS INFRASTRUCTURE · AUG 10

Moneris → Francisco Partners

Francisco Partners agreed to acquire Moneris from RBC and BMO for approximately C$2.0 billion in cash. The banks retain exclusive, long-term referral relationships. The structure separates ownership from distribution, bringing specialist private equity capital to infrastructure supporting more than 325,000 points of commerce across Canada.