New report shows accounting and advisory firms must step up to win deals

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NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, May 19, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- New report shows accounting and advisory firms must step up to win deals

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> *Julien Villemonteix, UpSlide CEO*

80% of boutique to mid-tier firms now face the Big Four in the majority of their deals due to changing market dynamics, but only 12% see strong win rates

Top four obstacles to winning more business: insufficient resources (headcount), outdated tech/tools, pitches not meeting client expectations and lack of brand equity

Successful software implementation is crucial for success - 98% of firms have an existing tool, yet 25% are getting minimal to no usage

Firms recognise the advantages technology brings, but are holding back from investing

A survey of 400 senior accounting and advisory professionals from the UK and US, undertaken by document automation leader UpSlide, reveals an increasingly competitive landscape with firms looking to capitalise on every opportunity for advantage.

Changing M&A dynamics mean global mega-deal values are still high, but the volume has dropped, pushing the Big Four to pursue smaller, mid-market deals to maintain revenue growth and client engagement. In fact, 80% of boutique to mid-tier firms say they now face the Big Four in the majority of their deals, but only 12% say they uphold a strong win rate (winning 75% of deals).

What's preventing firms from competing effectively?

Operational inefficiency, outdated or underutilised software, subpar deliverables, and branding issues were voted as the biggest barriers by accounting and advisory firms. When asked what their top concern was 32% said outdated or limited technology and tools let them down, 20%

claimed pitches were not meeting client expectations, and 13% cited poor brand equity as a key disadvantage.

More than a third (36%) of respondents from small to mid-tier accounting and advisory firms are concerned about competing against companies with stronger brand recognition, such as the Big Four, whose brand values range from $14bn to $40bn. Yet size is not the only factor affecting brand perception; maintaining a consistent, high-quality customer experience can be a challenge for all firms.

Strong brand identity threatened by acquisitions and mergers

Inconsistent branding across global/regional subsidiaries or departments was voted the primary obstacle (43%) when it comes to brand reputation. Aligning brand identity in fast-growing or post-merger environments can be challenging, and inconsistency creates confusion and weakens credibility, making firms appear less capable.

A fifth of US respondents and 1 in 10 UK firms said acquiring firms was their main strategy to win more business. Maintaining brand cohesion throughout expansion will therefore remain a critical, yet often neglected, issue. If not managed correctly, it can dilute credibility and competitive edge.

Workflow and process weaknesses hamper growth

Only 25% of firms are wholly confident that their deliverable creation processes are efficient and do not harm their ability to compete. Smaller firms are expected to produce the same high-quality deliverables as their larger competitors with fewer resources and leaner teams, so efficiency is front of mind.

Under pressure to demonstrate shareholder value through increased deal volume and faster turnarounds, over half (56%) of C-suites appear most concerned about existing document generation workflows.

Middle management, who oversee the document creation process, are almost as concerned, with 47% agreeing that existing inefficiencies impact their competitive edge.

Strategic technology must be integrated efficiently to level the playing field

Simply buying software doesn’t equal impact. Nearly all (98%) of firms are using a document automation tool, yet only a third are getting maximum usage. A quarter (25%) admit to low or no usage of their automation tool, and the majority of these say the low usage is due to teams not being effectively trained on the tool.

It’s clear that firms must get their tech implementation and strategy right to compete successfully. With the right training, integration, and internal alignment, automation solutions become powerful catalysts for growth rather than an expensive drain on the budget with not enough ROI.

By strategically investing in these tools to streamline manual, time-consuming tasks such as document creation and financial modelling, firms can increase their capacity for higher-value, strategic work, strengthening their ability to compete.

Commenting on the report, UpSlide CEO Julien Villemonteix said:
“Over the past few years, the accounting and advisory sector has undergone significant transformation. From political and economic uncertainty to accelerating technological change, firms are navigating a more complex and competitive landscape than ever before.

In our report, we explore the current state of competition across the sector and the obstacles holding firms back from winning more deals. Challenges like inefficient workflows, inconsistent branding, and underused software are affecting not just productivity but also how firms are perceived in the market and how often they win.

But there’s also a clear path forward; automation and AI, when implemented with purpose and the right partner, can help firms unlock capacity, speed up processes, and deliver consistently high-quality output. The right technology investments can create a more level playing field - and help firms of all sizes compete, grow, and win more consistently.”

Ends -

Notes to editors:

Research for this report was commissioned by UpSlide. The online survey was conducted in March 2025 by research consultant Censuswide and polled 400 senior Accounting and Advisory professionals from UK and US

For more information, please visit https://upslide.net
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