DEAL LEADERS
INTERNATIONAL

CASE STUDY:

Strategic Investment Unlocks the Next Phase of Growth

Protecting What Was Built While Enabling What Comes Next

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Not all transactions are about exiting a business. Some are about protecting what has been built while unlocking the next phase of growth.

In this case study, Deal Leaders International (DLI) acted as sell-side advisor to a leading Southern African industrial group, guiding a strategic investment that balanced shareholder liquidity, long-term growth and brand preservation. The outcome was a carefully structured partnership that delivered immediate value realisation while positioning the business for sustainable expansion, without compromising its entrepreneurial culture or operating model.

THE BUSINESS

A Trusted Brand with National Reach

Sector: Equipment rental and services, servicing multiple industries through a national footprint.

Ownership: Founder-led business supported by an owner-operated franchise network, combining central brand strength with local entrepreneurial ownership. The structure of each franchise/franchisee relationship differed from case to case. This made the initial structure of the Group complicated. Illustrating the structure as it stood, and highlighting the opportunity in cleaning the structure and streamlining business areas played a significant role in attracting the right partner.

Need: A partial exit to provide shareholder liquidity and de-risk personal exposure, while securing a strategic partner capable of supporting the next phase of growth without disrupting the existing operating model.

Headwinds: Founder concentration risk, combined with the need to scale systems, governance and capital support for future growth, while ensuring cultural and brand alignment when introducing external investment.

Strengths: A well-established, trusted brand supported by a scalable, franchise-led model with national reach, strong local relationships and consistent performance driven by service excellence and repeat demand.

OUR STRATEGY

Alignment Over Price Alone

At DLI, every transaction begins with a deep understanding. Before engaging the market, we invested time in unpacking the shareholder vision, organisational culture and future growth potential of the business.

Our strategy focused on three core priorities:

1 Strategic Positioning & Value Reframing

We reviewed the business to identify its true USP, undertook a Gap analysis, prepared mitigants for high-risk areas and then positioned the business opportunity as a step-change opportunity for an investor to participate in through a strong, reputable business in a growing industry.

2 Targeted Buyer Engagement

We engaged a carefully qualified pool of local and international investors with relevant experience in multi-site, franchise and distributed business models, rather than pursuing a broad, unfocused outreach.

3 Creating Competitive Tension

Through a structured and disciplined process, we generated four competitive offers. Each differed in structure, growth philosophy and strategic intent, not just valuation.

4 Evaluating Fit Through a Strategic Lens

This transaction was not decided on price alone. Each offer was assessed against the shareholder's priorities: growth ambition, cultural preservation, governance stability and long-term alignment.

THE OUTCOME:
A STRATEGIC PARTNER BRINGING BOTH CAPITAL AND TRACK RECORD.

The final transaction delivered on both primary objectives:

- Immediate liquidity and risk reduction for the founder and shareholders.
- A strategic investment that provides the resources, expertise and support to accelerate growth.

Crucially, the deal was structured to preserve the business's entrepreneurial culture, founder-led stability and the integrity of its national franchise network.

Rather than disrupting what worked, the investment strengthened the platform, creating a clear pathway for the next phase of expansion while safeguarding the legacy of the business.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Many business owners believe selling means stepping away entirely or losing control to a buyer who does not share their values.

This transaction demonstrates a different outcome:

- You can de-risk without exiting completely.
- You can secure liquidity while remaining invested in future growth.
- You can protect your brand, culture and people while unlocking scale.

The difference lies in preparation, positioning and selecting the right partner, not just accepting the first offer.

OUR ROLE

Finding the Right Fit, Not Just a Buyer

At DLI, our focus is always on alignment between vision, values and value creation.

In this transaction, our role was to:

- Translate the shareholder vision into a compelling investment narrative
- Create competitive tension while maintaining control and confidentiality
- Evaluate offers beyond headline price
- Structure a transaction that balanced certainty today with opportunity tomorrow

This is how lasting success is built: by finding the right fit, not just closing a deal.