



**DEAL
LEADERS**
INTERNATIONAL

CASE STUDY:

Too Late to Sell

Missed Timing Cost
a High-Performing
Business Its Value



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What happens when your product is in high demand, but only for a short period?

This case study examines the journey of a South African business that experienced extraordinary growth during the COVID-19 pandemic with a timely, in-demand product. At its peak, it could have sold for a significant premium.

But instead of capitalising on the moment, the owners waited, believing there was more growth to come. By the time they approached Deal Leaders

International (DLI), the opportunity had passed. Demand had normalised, they had lost their first mover advantage, and second movers were entering the market hard and fast.

This story serves as a critical reminder: Timing your exit is as important as building the business in the first place. Engage an experienced M&A advisor like DLI early (before you think you need us) so you're ready when the right time comes to sell.

RIDING THE COVID WAVE FOR TOO LONG

During the pandemic, this product exploded in popularity. Revenue surged, margins were strong and the market was hungry.

At that point, a sale could have delivered a life-changing outcome. But the owners decided to wait 12-18 months in the hope of even greater returns. "Why sell now when we're doing so well?"

The surge in new entrants quickly diluted the market, and as competition increased, demand for their product declined. Revenue fell, and the exceptional buyer appetite that might have existed at the peak was gone.

STRATEGIC INSIGHT

The Cost of Waiting Too Long

This wasn't just a case of bad luck. It was a case of missed timing.

When reviewing and making the decision to sell your business, some key factors should be considered:

- Assess market conditions and buyer appetite immediately.
- Prepare the business for a sale while the numbers were at their strongest.
- Move quickly to capture value before the market shifts.

THE BUSINESS

High Performer in a Temporary Market

At its peak, the business boasted:

- Strong year-on-year revenue growth
- High EBITDA margins
- A scalable product with low overheads
- Widespread market adoption
- Dominated market share

But the fundamentals were tied to a specific moment in time and were temporary. They also didn't build up specific barriers to entry.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

If your business is performing exceptionally well (especially due to unique market timing or external events), that may be your moment to sell.

Waiting for "just one more good year" can mean missing the peak entirely. Value is driven not only by performance, but also by buyer appetite and market conditions.

The only way to be truly ready is to engage with us early, so we can guide you on the right timing and ensure you're ready when it arrives.

OUR ROLE

Helping You Exit at the Right Time

At DLI, we help business owners see what's coming, assess when the time is right and act before the window closes.

In this case, we were approached too late to make a difference. The business remains a good operation, but the exceptional value that was once possible is now out of reach.

Don't let this be your story.

This case study is based on a real engagement. Business and buyer names withheld for confidentiality. Results speak for themselves.

If you're ready to explore your options, we're here to help. One 20-minute conversation can change how you see your future. Contact us to get the conversation going