



The Overlooked Power of an M&A Interim Deal Desk

When it comes to mergers and acquisitions, most attention is focused on headline numbers, strategic fit, and the complex dance of diligence and negotiation. In the middle of an M & A ramp-up, it's easy to get caught up in the whirlwind of diligence trackers, endless meetings, and last-minute escalations.

Behind the scenes — and often overlooked — a critical engine influences whether those headline numbers and strategy will ever be realized. It either ensures commercial opportunities progresses smoothly or mires them in complexity. Your actions during diligence and integration planning will determine whether you have a flywheel for post-close growth and cross-sell opportunities, or a bottleneck that slows Sales teams, loses customers, and ultimately limits the M&A value you've targeted.

This engine is the **M&A Interim Deal Desk**.

TL;DR

Objective: Here we explain how an **Interim Deal Desk** is a critical part of successful M&A execution. We highlight how the right structure and governance can reduce risk, improve decision-making, and protect commercial deal value which in turn supports M&A value-capture commitments.

Key Takeaways:

- A missing or poorly structured Deal Desk slows down commercial transactions and introduces material business risk. In acquisition scenarios, the detrimental impacts are exponential. Between Close and full integration, where acquired products aren't yet onboarded onto standard systems and policies, a temporary Deal Desk structure provides a critical bridge.
- Without this, acquirers face decision delays, policy misalignment, and missed revenue opportunities. This traces back to operational gaps: difficulties with contracting, billing, and overall fragmented customer experience prompts attrition and slows growth. Revenue "uplift", across acquirer and target company products, often a key pillar for an acquisition's scaled value, is severely impacted by this type of customer experience breakdown.
- By defining a viable process for contracting, pricing, and approvals as of Day 1, acquirers can drive M&A value by preserving customer experience and sales momentum throughout "interim" post-Close phases.



How Tiger Team M&A Can Help: As part of our solution portfolio, we help companies design, launch, and operationalize interim Deal Desk models. We bring the structure, tools, and experience needed to help you determine the best strategy to avoid deal desk blockers for your acquisitions.

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Safeguarding Value and Driving Commercial Execution at Scale

Many organizations, especially those without a mature, in-house M&A function, the idea of a Deal Desk may seem like unnecessary overhead. It's easy to assume that corporate development, finance, legal, and business leaders can "figure it out" along the way.

But the reality is, without a structured Deal Desk in place, commercial transactions are far more likely to encounter decision bottlenecks, unclear accountability, functional misalignment, which create costly post-close surprises, and impact customer experience.

This becomes even more when the rationale behind the M&A transaction includes immediate post-close revenue targets or customer continuity for acquired products. Without structure, the business risks key operational gaps that directly slow down revenue recognition, creates a disruptive onboarding experience, and undermines strategic objectives.

Think of the Interim Deal Desk as a cross-functional command center purpose-built to drive accountability, speed, and governance throughout the commercial contracting process. It's not just about approvals and paperwork, or an administrative checkpoint. It's a bridge that keeps the business moving by creating visibility, clearing roadblocks, and making timely, informed decisions when the stakes are high and the clock is ticking for the heavy lift of full systems and process alignment.



Challenges of Standing Up (or Operating Without) a Deal Desk

Standing up a Deal Desk especially in the middle of an ongoing M&A transaction is not without its challenges. Ironically, the same pain points that make a Deal Desk necessary are often the very obstacles that make it difficult to establish one.

Whether a company is trying to operate without a Deal Desk or struggling to implement one, we consistently see the following issues:

Unclear Ownership

No single function “owns” the Deal Desk. Without clear roles and accountability, decisions get delayed, diluted, or lost in the noise.

Competing Priorities

The functional leaders that need to support the Deal Desk are also balancing daily operations with the demands of diligence, negotiation, and execution creates bandwidth strain.

Functional Misalignment & Conflicting Incentives

Each team has its own priorities — legal focuses on risk mitigation, finance on value protection, and business on speed, and flexibility. Without structure, those priorities collide rather than align.

Decision Bottlenecks

Without a formal forum for decision-making, small blockers can snowball into major delays.

Process Fatigue

Without a playbook, every sales opportunity feels like starting from scratch, creating friction, duplication, draining time and energy.



Scattered Information & Visibility Gaps

Key information is often fragmented across trackers, spreadsheets, and emails, making coordination difficult and creating risk.

How a Deal Desk Protects M&A Deal Value

At its core, the Interim Deal Desk exists to protect the value of the M&A investment. It brings the structure and coordination needed to keep teams aligned, reduce risk, and ensure execution stays on track especially during the critical interim phase between close and full integration.

When done right, a Deal Desk enables faster, better decisions, increases visibility across functions, and proactively addresses issues before they impact customers or revenue. It also provides a scalable model that can be used for future transactions, reducing post-close chaos and improving integration readiness.

Most importantly, it helps safeguard the investment's strategic intent. Whether the goal is market expansion, product growth, or faster time to revenue, a well-run Deal Desk keeps execution aligned with that vision and prevents the operational gaps that can erode value after closing.

In commercial contracts with near-term customer or revenue targets, it's not a "nice-to-have". It's the mechanism that prevents customer disruptions, supports clean hand-offs, and allows the business to deliver on the investment thesis.



Standing Up an Interim Deal Desk: Where to Start

In the diligence and pre-close integration planning phases, establishing an Interim Deal Desk means setting a focused strategy across a handful of critical areas all aimed at protecting customer continuity, enabling sales execution, and minimizing risk post-close.

This isn't about launching a fully automated or permanent function. As of Day 1, it means implementing a temporary, often semi-manual process that can serve as a bridge until the acquired business is fully integrated into the standard deal desk structure.

Key activities during diligence and pre-close integration planning include:

Understand the Target's Quote-to-Cash process

Map out how the target company handles quoting, contracting, booking, fulfillment, billing, and approvals. Identify gaps, handoffs, and areas that will need support or workarounds.

Set direction for post-Close product pricing and SKUs

Align on how acquired products will be priced, packaged, and quoted post-close including any transitional SKUs or custom pricing rules. This also ties into Sales team's incentivization and campaigns, often defined by SKUs.

Define future-state contracting and approvals

Determine whether the acquired business will use separate contracting templates, fallback language, or conform to the acquirer's standard paper. Identify who owns approval rights for non-standard terms, if that applies to interim phases.

Establish deal booking policy

Clarify systems, processes, and revenue recognition triggers for interim deal booking.



Plan for post-close sales enablement

Target company sales teams and internal cross-functional support teams will need clear guidance on “how to get a deal done” in the post-close interim phase. Training and quick-reference materials should be prepared to support execution before full integration is complete.

Define staffing and support model

If a formal M&A deal desk does not exist, identify a subset of the team to support interim operations.

Alignment is key before Day 1

Work with Deal Desk leadership to align on the interim structure, policies, workflows, and processes that will be activated post-close.

Coordinate with Product and Sales leadership to ensure awareness that the interim model will help mitigate but not eliminate commercial opportunity friction. Set expectations for what will and won't be possible during the interim period.

Establish an escalation path that Sales leaders and frontline teams can use to prioritize and unblock high-impact, non-standard deals during the post-close transition.

By setting this up before closing an M&A transaction, the Interim Deal Desk can operate with enough clarity and support as of Day 1 to support revenue goals while longer-term integration unfolds, reducing confusion, protecting customer momentum, and ensuring that both internal and external teams know what to expect.



Who Should Own the Interim Deal Desk?

Ownership of the Interim Deal Desk depends on how your organization is structured but what's critical is that someone is clearly accountable from Day 1.

In most cases, the Interim Deal Desk should be sponsored by Corporate Development or the M&A Integration Management Office (IMO), with day-to-day execution led by a dedicated deal operations lead or a senior Deal Desk resource with M&A exposure. This person (or small team) becomes the bridge between Corp Dev, functional owners (Legal, Finance, Sales, Product), and frontline teams executing commercial transactions.

The key is not perfection, it's clarity, coordination, and responsiveness. Whoever owns the Interim Deal Desk should have:

- The authority to drive decisions and escalate when needed
- A clear understanding of the acquisition strategy and interim processes
- Direct access to cross-functional leaders who can unblock issues quickly
- Responsibility for documenting and communicating interim policies

Even in organizations with a mature centralized Deal Desk, M&A support is rarely plug-and-play. In these cases, a subset of the existing team should be enabled on the interim strategy, supported by M&A program leads, and connected to post-close integration planning efforts.

The most successful Interim Deal Desks aren't the most polished, they're the ones with clear owners, defined scope, and fast feedback loops, with an ability to operate scrappily.



The Bottom Line

M&A is complex, fast-paced, and high-stakes. Speed matters, but so does discipline.

Without a strong execution model in place, the most promising commercial deals and strategic customer accounts can quickly become chaotic, reactive, and at risk.

An Interim Deal Desk isn't about adding bureaucracy to your integration plans. It's about anticipating probable impediments to post-Close go-to-market objectives, and laying the groundwork for clarity, speed, and governance for commercial operations during critical post-Close project phases.

At Tiger Team M&A, we help companies design, and launch, an operational Deal Desk model tailored to their needs, whether you're closing your first acquisition or scaling a repeatable M&A capability.

If your M&A GTM execution drains resources and generates customer escalations, scattered, or unpredictable, it might be time to ask:

Do you have the deal desk structure in place to execute well?

Will it support your M&A value targets?

If the answer isn't yes, let's talk solutions!



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