

## Vantis

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*Regional Director, Vantis,  
David Rankin*

**Vantis is the AIM listed UK top 14 business advisory group, providing proactive advice and support for owner-managed businesses and private individuals. It employs over 980 highly experienced staff, working across 17 locations based around the UK and offers a wealth of advisory services that encompass everything that developing companies need to improve the performance of their business. These include accountancy and taxation, business recovery, corporate finance, customs duty recovery, forensic accounting, independent financial advice, HR services outsourcing, and sports advisory and management services.**

One facility that Vantis looks to outsource is specialist IT due diligence services. IT due diligence is an audit that should take place whenever a company changes hands or is going through a process of acquisition, in order to assess exactly what is being acquired and the value of the proposed acquisition.

To deliver on these specialist IT due diligence projects, Vantis chose to work with specialist IT outsourcing consultant ramsac. Any investment in IT infrastructure, processes and personnel represents a considerable asset to any modern business and increasingly it is necessary

for accountants to factor this into the due diligence process for acquisitions.

Explains Outsourcing Director of Vantis, David Rankin, *"ramsac initially worked with Vantis when we invited the company in to health check our IT systems. At this time, we also asked them to carry out internal due diligence on our IT department, including interviewing our IT staff to ascertain their appropriateness for the job. We wanted to have a clear understanding of our IT systems and processes from an independent specialist prior to our acquisition of Numerica earlier this year.*

*We needed to envisage how easily the two companies would be able to fit together and we also wanted to know if we were working with the best business practices."*

Although, large corporate finance teams can reconcile purchase records to form a basic IT inventory, a more specialised skillset is needed to record the value and potential consequences of acquisition.

Explains Managing Director of ramsac, Robert May, "When acquiring it is vital to assess how quickly, efficiently and cost effectively the two businesses can be merged. Key questions that need to be answered are: What systems do they have in place? Does it need updating or replacing? Are these systems compatible with the acquiring companies existing infrastructure? If not, what will it take to join them efficiently? Is the prospective acquisition legally compliant? What are the on ongoing costs, such as contractual

*obligations to third parties? Are they fully licensed? If over licensed what is the cost-saving? If under licensed to what extent?"*

Following the initial Vantis project, ramsac carried out a review of the IT systems and strategies at Numerica to judge how these compared with Vantis.

Continues May, "We looked at both Vantis' and Numerica's IT asset management and licenses and produced a high level report detailing our conclusions in full. These conclusions included our suggestions on the potential consequences of the acquisition and an outline of a roadmap for integration of the two companies IT systems."

"We like the way that ramsac works," continues Rankin. "We rate their professional approach and I feel comfortable working with them, as I know that they fully understand our business and

*as a result, what is important to us. They asked the right questions to ensure that we were fully aware of the IT strategy of Numerica and were very thorough with their findings. With the conclusions in their report, we were able to make the best decisions for the ongoing success of our company."*

Concludes May, "We look at an IT strategy from a business perspective. This is imperative for a company that is thinking of acquiring another. IT due diligence is a vital part of the overall due diligence process of any company merger or acquisition. Crucially, it minimises risk and maintains ongoing efficiency."

Looking to the future, Vantis now use ramsac for its own clients' mergers and acquisitions, working closely together across the financial and IT processes to deliver the best possible service to its customer base.