

Integration after the acquisition

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The integration of an acquired institution is a delicate phase, during which part of the value can be lost. Clients must be informed, reassured and sometimes persuaded to stay. Managers must be retained, through loyalty schemes, and integrated into the new organisation. IT systems must be migrated, which demands months of work and carries operational risks. Compliance procedures must be harmonised, and client files reviewed according to the acquirer's standards.

Corporate cultures play a decisive role. A Geneva family house and the subsidiary of a large international bank do not have the same habits, nor the same expectations. Mergers between equals require an allocation of responsibilities and a shared definition of identity. Failed integrations result in departures of clients and staff, which can wipe out the expected benefits.

The Geneva institutions that have succeeded in their combinations have generally favoured gradual integration, attentive communication with clients and respectful treatment of the acquired teams. The 2002 merger between Lombard, Odier & Cie and Darier, Hentsch & Cie, which brought together two old houses, offers a frequently cited example.¹

1 Notes

1. Article “Banque Lombard Odier”, Wikimonde (accessed September 2026). ↩

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