

Inc.
Founder
Friendly
Investors

Founded
2013

Total AUM
\$2.2 billion

Employees
39

Partners
4

 **ACCESS**
HOLDINGS
Building Enduring Businesses

Partner Support Leads to ‘Functional Excellence’

Access Holdings focuses on providing the support and tools its partners need to scale and innovate to build enduring businesses



Lenny Tarzia, founder of Regency Pet, and George Shipley, Access Holdings' principal of digital origination, at a recent event.

When Access Holdings was founded eight years ago, Kevin McAllister started with a specific vision in mind: purposeful investing. Rather than just pursuing businesses for sale, his team focuses on identifying fragmented markets characterized by stability and growing demand, then seeking out small and midsize companies that stand out in their sectors. Often, Access Holdings ends up providing the first institutional capital these businesses see. “Owners of these companies have been highly successful but face challenges scaling and innovating their organizations and

undertaking programmatic M&A,” McAllister says. “We are not just buying these companies; we are providing the capabilities and technology solutions needed to bring their ventures to the next level to better serve their customers, employees, and communities.” The Access Holdings process starts with extensive research into industries it believes have strong growth potential. After developing conviction in an industry and business model, Access identifies potential partners. “We don’t just go in and say, hey, we want to buy your business,”

Building an enduring business is always a challenge, and the journey is always different.

—Kevin McAllister, founder and managing partner, Access Holdings



McAllister explains. “We share with them our point of view on an industry and seek to understand theirs.”

A ROADMAP TO THE FUTURE

Conversations with owners often evolve into discussions about the opportunities for the business during the next five to 10 years. Access Holdings undertakes a “destination planning process” with the owner to design a roadmap with a shared vision of what the business will endeavor to become.

“By mapping an organizational evolution along with its strategic and financial evolution, we create tangible milestones to evaluate how well we each are doing in meeting our respective commitments to the partnership,” McAllister says. “That kind of mutual commitment underlies everything we do.”

Access Holdings stresses what it calls “functional excellence” in relationships with its portfolio businesses. It helps them build and operate capabilities essential to scale a business from \$5 million to \$50 million in EBITDA. By implementing highly transparent capabilities in areas including human capital, technology, M&A, and ESG, Access Holdings enables company leaders to work on their business, not just in it.

INTENSE FOCUS ON INNOVATION

That level of support is resource- and

time-intensive, so the firm made a deliberate decision to limit its investments for every fund to five or six platforms—about half the number of a typical PE fund. Access has invested heavily in technology, creating proprietary digital business intelligence and lead generation tools to identify, grow, and innovate with its partners. Access Holdings’ functional assistance and next-gen technology solutions are centralized in its Access Acceleration Center, which occupies an entire floor in the firm’s new office.

A recently realized deal illustrates how powerful this approach can be. In less than three years, Access Holdings helped Regency, a local provider of pet aftercare (cremation) services, expand to become the national leader. Combining functional improvements in technology, operations, and human capital with a robust M&A strategy, Access Holdings helped Regency grow its business by more than 600 percent in 35 months.

“Building an enduring business is always a challenge, and the journey is always different,” McAllister says. “At Access Holdings, we have walked that road ourselves as we’ve built our firm. Taking that journey and building Access from the ground up has given us the flexibility, empathy, and creativity that makes our purposeful investing approach so effective and our commitment to partnership so ironclad.”



Members of Access Holdings' leadership team (from left to right) Kevin McAllister, founding partner; Morgan Masiejczyk, associate director; Junaid Zaheer, principal of strategy; Kim Kile, head of investor relations, fundraising, and communications; and Omar Rahman, CFO