POST-ACQUISITION INTEGRATION & POLITICS ELIMINATION

Integrating Six Companies and Killing the Politics That Kept Them Apart

How an operator-CEO stepped in to unify a PE-backed carve-out with five acquisitions — eliminating information-as-currency politics, building transparent systems, and creating a platform that could continue acquiring and scaling. Shadow channels exposed in week 1; first unified operating review by day 21.

6 → 1	**Zero**	**Unified**	**Platform**	**System**
COMPANIES UNIFIED	SHADOW CHANNELS	OPERATING SYSTEM	BUILT TO ACQUIRE	REPLACED POLITICS

THE SITUATION

A PE-backed managed IT services and cybersecurity company ($85M combined revenue) had been carved out of an accounting firm and rapidly acquired five additional companies. The carve-out stripped away the ERP, lead generation, culture, and operating rhythm the parent had provided. Five acquisitions on top of that, each with their own systems. The CEO was asked to step in to integrate and build a scalable platform.

- Information had become currency — people were trading it through shadow channels instead of through decision-makers. Board members getting calls from managers bypassing the CEO

- Previous CEO on the board, receiving back-channel complaints from people who'd nodded along in strategy sessions then worked around the plan

- Six companies with six different systems, processes, P&Ls, and ways of working — no integration roadmap

- Carve-out had stripped the shared infrastructure — lost the ERP, lead gen, culture, and operating rhythm the parent company provided without anyone noticing

- PE investors getting conflicting signals — couldn't distinguish real progress from political positioning

THE APPROACH

The PE sponsor believed the problem was execution speed. The Five Whys revealed something deeper: this wasn't an integration challenge — it was a political system where information hoarding was rational behavior. The fix required flooding the system with transparency:

1 Expose the Shadow System
Mapped the actual information flows — who talked to whom, what went to the board through back channels, where strategy sessions diverged from hallway conversations. Made the political network visible.

2 Flood With Transparency
Made every decision, every metric, every board communication visible to the leadership team. When everyone has the same information, there's nothing left to trade.

3 Unify the Operating System
Built one set of processes, one set of metrics, one reporting cadence across all six entities. Eliminated the legacy identities that kept teams operating as separate companies.

4 Build the Acquisition Platform
Created repeatable integration playbooks so the next acquisition would follow the system, not require another hero. Designed the operating backbone for continued M&A growth.

THE RESULTS — 12 MONTHS

REVENUE	INFORMATION FLOW	BOARD RELATIONS	INTEGRATION	DECISION MAKING	M&A VELOCITY
6 P&Ls → 1 consolidated	**Shadow → Transparent**	**Conflicting → Clear**	**None → Playbook**	**Political → Structured**	**12 mo → 90 days**
Cross-sell revenue +18% in Y1	Nothing left to trade	One source of truth	Repeatable M&A process	Authority defined, not negotiated	Next acquisition integrated 4x faster

THE VOOCS LENS — HOW TRANSPARENCY KILLED THE POLITICS

V
VISION
One company, one operating system, one platform built to keep acquiring — not six fiefdoms pretending to be integrated.

O
OUTCOMES
Every integration milestone had a metric. Pipeline, revenue, and operational metrics unified across all entities. No hiding behind legacy reporting.

O
OWNERSHIP
Decision authority explicitly defined. No more 'go around the CEO' — each function had one owner, each initiative had one accountable leader.

C
CADENCE
Weekly leadership reviews with full transparency. Monthly board updates from one voice. The cadence eliminated the information asymmetry that fueled politics.

S
SCALE
Integration playbooks documented the process. The next acquisition would follow the system, not require the CEO to personally integrate every entity.

> "Information had become currency — everyone was trading it through back channels instead of the people who could actually decide. Once we flooded the system with transparency, there was nothing left to trade. The politics just died."
>
> — CEO, PE-BACKED MANAGED SERVICES PLATFORM

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