IGUAKO CAPITAL · Case study

Brunnenmatt Präzision

US$54 million released to a family that had held a precision instrument maker for three generations, with thirty-eight per cent of the company retained.

YEAR	SECTOR	DIVISION
2024	Private Enterprise	Private Wealth & UHNW

JURISDICTION

Switzerland

Situation

The family behind Brunnenmatt Präzision had owned the company for three generations. It makes measurement instruments for laboratory equipment makers and employs two hundred and ten people in the Swiss midlands. Nine family members across two branches held the shares. Four of the nine wanted liquidity and five did not.

The company had never carried debt and had never been valued by anyone outside the family. A full sale would have ended a connection the older branch was not willing to end. A dividend recapitalisation would have put borrowing onto a company that had never serviced any. Neither branch would agree to what the other proposed.

Approach

Private Wealth was engaged in 2023 to advise the family, not to buy the company. The first six months produced no transaction at all. They produced a valuation, a shareholders agreement both branches could sign, and a written statement from each branch of what it wanted the outcome to be.

The transaction was then built to those statements. Sixty-two per cent of the company was sold to a long-term institutional buyer at a valuation of US$142 million. The four members who wanted liquidity sold their entire holdings. The remaining five kept thirty-eight per cent between them and two seats on the board.

Structuring followed the family rather than the tax result. A holding company in Zürich holds the retained stake. A reserved powers structure in Jersey holds the proceeds of one branch. The other branch took its proceeds directly. The firm holds no discretionary authority over any part of it.

Outcome

US$54 million was released to the family at completion in September 2024. The company took on no debt to fund any part of the transaction. The retained stake pays a dividend that funds a family investment committee, which meets twice a year with the Zürich office and sets its own agenda.

Fourteen months passed between the first meeting and completion, and the family made every decision in that period. The relationship is now a Private Client Programme mandate covering US$11 million of the proceeds. The balance sits with counterparties the family had used for years and did not wish to change.

Figures

Measure	Value
Liquidity released to the family	US$54 million
Holding retained by the family	38 per cent
First meeting to completion	14 months