



Q&A with Industrials Investment Banking Expert, Chris Weil

CONTRIBUTOR

Chris Weil, Managing Director

Portage Point Partners recently welcomed Chris Weil to the Investment Banking Practice, enhancing the firm's industrials expertise. With nearly 20 years of experience, including a substantial tenure at leading bulge bracket firms, Chris offers unique perspectives and wealth of knowledge to his clients.

What are you most looking forward to in your role at Portage Point

"I am excited to contribute to a platform that drives tangible value creation across the full business and investment lifecycle. The unique Portage Point advisory model allows me to offer our clients a comprehensive suite of capabilities and solutions, beyond just transaction execution. It is truly a differentiator in the market, allowing us to greatly enhance the impact we deliver and become both a trusted advisor and partner to our clients. As part of the newest service offering at Portage Point, I am thrilled to help shape and grow the investment banking practice to best support the middle market, an integral driver of the economy. Moreover, I am eager to collaborate with the established team at Portage Point, whose blue chip talent is fundamental to the firm's success."

What drove your decision to move from bulge bracket to the middle market

"Despite having worked at bulge bracket firms for nearly 20 years, I have built significant relationships with middle market companies, investors and other stakeholders. Over time, it has become more evident than ever that fewer firms and advisors are truly committed to serving the middle market and instead are moving up market in pursuit of larger deals. This shift is limiting the advisory options available to middle market companies – who deserve the value-added services, pedigreed talent and experience and strategic support currently only being offered to those with more resources and scale. The impact Portage Point has and will continue to make on this market segment is truly meaningful."

What is your approach to success in the ever-changing / sometimes volatile industrials M&A market

"Success in the industrials M&A market requires a deep appreciation of its episodic and unpredictable nature, influenced by a wide range of micro and macro factors. While the industrials sector is highly correlated to broader economic performance, this correlation does not necessarily dictate whether a company will participate in the M&A market. Given the numerous drivers that can impact M&A appetite, I prioritize maintaining a consistent dialogue with my clients, regardless of market conditions. By becoming a trusted partner, I can drive the most value for them and react swiftly when the right opportunity arises."

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In recent years, we've seen a retreat from the market peaks of 2020 / 2021, driven by tighter monetary policy, rising interest rates and a corresponding compression in asset valuations, which negatively impacted overall M&A activity. Looking ahead to 2025, with inflation more under control and the economy potentially poised for a soft landing, there is optimism that the Federal Reserve may begin cutting interest rates this fall. This, combined with a backlog of potential assets for sale, should provide a significant boost to the M&A markets in 2025.

We also expect financial sponsors and other investors to continue pursuing tactics beyond M&A to increase cash flow and profitability at their portfolio companies. Whether it is market driven or situational factors, Portage Point is uniquely positioned to provide bespoke services and solutions to meet individual client needs. For example, our Performance Improvement practice works across functions and industries to enhance cashflow, accelerate organic growth and optimize EBITDA margins. Additionally, our Transaction Execution Services team can seamlessly integrate with our Investment Banking practice to maximize deal value (e.g., sell-side preparation or buy-side integration planning and execution)."

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What trends are you seeing across Industrial manufacturing

"In the industrial manufacturing sector, several key trends are shaping the landscape. Re-shoring continues to gain momentum as companies, having faced significant supply chain challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic, are reevaluating their production infrastructures to ensure certainty of supply. Additionally, technology and automation are increasingly integral to day-to-day production, as companies strive to enhance efficiency in response to more muted revenue growth in recent years. The challenge of finding qualified technical labor further drives the push toward automation. Sustainability has also become a focal point, with companies prioritizing energy efficiency, waste reduction and minimizing environmental impact in their operations."

How would your clients describe working with you

"My clients would describe working with me as engaging with someone who has a cerebral nature, offering candid and pragmatic advice. I am known for being realistic about situations, ensuring that emotion does not cloud my judgment. I take a holistic approach to client engagements, focusing not only on their immediate needs but also on long-term considerations. Ultimately, I am committed to building relationships that stand the test of time, which I believe can only be achieved through partnerships grounded in trust and accountability."



CHRIS WEIL *Managing Director*

He has nearly 20 years of investment banking experience advising companies on strategic acquisitions, sale transactions, leveraged buyouts and recapitalizations. He has also guided businesses through numerous capital markets transactions, including bank loans and credit facilities, high-yield and investment grade bonds and equity financings. Over the course of his career, Chris has advised on over \$25 billion in M&A transactions and \$60 billion in capital markets transactions.

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Portage Point Partners is a business advisory, interim management and investment banking firm intensely focused on the middle market. Our blue chip team leverages bulge bracket experience in consulting, operations, finance, accounting, investment banking and investing to provide unmatched transactional, operational and financial perspectives to middle market stakeholders. The Portage Point cross-functional platform is uniquely architected to offer fully integrated capabilities and solutions that identify value capture, mitigate risk and positively impact outcomes at every stage of the ever-changing middle market business lifecycle. From ideation to monetization, Portage Point delivers excellence across transaction advisory services, transaction execution services, office of the CFO, performance improvement, interim management, investment banking, operational turnaround and financial restructuring.

Learn how Portage Point can positively impact your business at www.portagepointpartners.com.

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