Buyer universe for an Irish managed IT services provider

Fictional target	Fictional Republic of Ireland seller with about 30 staff. It provides recurring Microsoft 365 and helpdesk support, mainly to Irish SMEs, with some UK revenue.
Selection	Rank the three named strategic buyers in this extract by service fit, then customer fit, then geography. Use recency to break ties and weigh contrary evidence before deciding who merits research.
Limits	Seller financials, customer consent terms and price expectations are unknown. Current buyer interest, authority and available capital are unverified. No buyer was contacted.

Rank	Buyer	Research decision	Documented evidence	Assessment for this seller	What would change the decision?
1	**Ekco**	**Investigate first**	Ekco bought two Irish SME service providers, Adapt IT and Radius, and the Bristol MSP Solsoft. Adapt had 37 staff and served over 300 SMEs. [E1–E3]	Closest match on service, customers and geography. Existing operations in Cork and Waterford weaken a case built on regional coverage alone.	Obtain anonymised customer, engineer-certification and recurring gross-profit schedules. Keep first if they show relationships or capabilities Ekco would gain. Move down if the case relies on overlapping coverage.
2	**BCN Group**	**Test UK fit**	NewCMI added Belfast and English offices. Prestige Logic supplied UK SMEs with managed IT. In 2026 BCN's CEO described price pressure in standard support and a rethink of acquisition priorities. [B1–B3]	Two UK precedents match the service. A Belfast office establishes a UK presence. The records leave appetite for a Republic-based seller open.	Check UK recurring gross profit, retention, contract transfer terms and cost to serve. Move up if transferable UK business and a distinctive capability make the case. Hold if it rests on routine support alone.
3	**Version 1**	**Defer**	Neueda brought capital-markets expertise. CreateFuture added regulated-enterprise engineering. Evoco brought UK public-sector service design. CRN reported 41 Evoco staff. [V1–V5]	Evoco makes headcount a weak reason to exclude. The seller meets the CEO's geography screen. Complementary technology, sector fit and financial health still need evidence. [V6]	Reopen if invoices, references and accounts confirm repeat enterprise or public-sector engineering and sound finances. Which delivery and client leads would stay after a sale, and for how long? Defer if routine support dominates.

The Commercial records sheet links each reference to its source. Ownership records the evidence for each sponsor relationship.

Commercial records

Twelve records underpin the shortlist. The CEO interviews record first-hand views at the time. Volpi and CRN both reported 41 staff at Evoco.

Ref.	Buyer	Record type	Publication[1]	What the record establishes	Open source
E1	Ekco	Acquirer announcement	4 Jul 2025	Ekco reported acquiring a Cork MSP with 37 people, Microsoft workplace expertise and over 300 SME customers. The €57m cited was total spend across six deals.	Adapt IT
E2	Ekco	Acquirer announcement	23 Oct 2023	Ekco reported acquiring an SME IT provider based in Waterford with a Cork office. It identified an opportunity to offer security services to Radius customers.	Radius Technologies
E3	Ekco	Acquirer announcement	3 Oct 2025	Ekco said the 16-person team at Bristol-based Solsoft had joined its MSP division, adding coverage in the south and southwest of England.	Solsoft
B1	BCN Group	Acquirer announcement	3 Apr 2023	BCN reported buying a Microsoft MSP in London, Belfast and the Thames Valley. NewCMI supplied Modern Workplace, Azure, security and managed IT.	NewCMI
B2	BCN Group	Acquirer announcement	25 Jan 2024	BCN reported acquiring a Stockport business supplying UK SMEs with managed services, on-premises support and Microsoft cloud solutions.	Prestige Logic
B3	BCN Group	CEO testimony in trade press	12 Jan 2026	Davies told IT Channel Oxygen that standard IT support, Azure and workplace services were becoming commoditised. He said BCN was reconsidering what it wanted from acquisitions.	Rob Davies interview

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Ref.	Buyer	Record type	Publication[1]	What the record establishes	Open source
V1	Version 1	Acquirer announcement	24 Jun 2021	Version 1 reported buying the Belfast digital-services specialist. It highlighted capital-markets expertise and named J.P. Morgan and Citi as Neueda customers.	Neueda
V2	Version 1	Acquirer announcement	13 May 2026	The 30 April statement, posted on 13 May, announced a signed agreement, subject to clearance. CreateFuture had 550 professionals serving regulated sectors. Consideration was undisclosed.	CreateFuture agreement
V3	Version 1	Acquired company statement	23 Jul 2026	CreateFuture identified itself as part of the Version 1 Group. This confirms membership by 23 July. The statement gives no legal completion date.	CreateFuture membership
V4	Version 1	Investor announcement	2 Feb 2022	Volpi reported that Version 1 had acquired Evoco, a 41-person public-sector service design specialist. The plan was for the full team to stay and join Version 1's UK Digital, Data and Cloud practice.	Evoco acquisition
V5	Version 1	Trade reporting	4 Feb 2022	CRN also reported 41 staff at Hull-based Evoco at the time of the transaction, corroborating Volpi's headcount in V4.	Evoco team size
V6	Version 1	CEO testimony in trade press	10 Sep 2026	Singh cited UK, Irish or US presence, tech fit, sector and finances. He sought data and AI expertise. He saw CreateFuture as a distinct unit for up to 36 months and expected leaders to stay at least three years.	Roop Singh interview

[1] Dated releases show publication dates. Other entries identify a dated event or the date the page was checked.

Ownership and sponsor backing

Historical completion notices establish ownership at the transaction date. Current portfolio listings do not establish today's equity split, capital available for an acquisition or approval authority.

Ref.	Buyer	Record type	Publication[1]	What the record establishes	Open source
O1	Ekco	Sponsor release	28 Oct 2022	Corten reported completion of its investment and described majority ownership at completion. Co-founders and senior management would retain a significant holding.	Corten investment
O2	Ekco	Sponsor portfolio	Checked 19 Nov 2026	Corten lists Ekco among its investments. The page identifies ongoing backing but gives no current ownership percentage.	Corten portfolio
O3	BCN Group	Sponsor release	20 Jun 2022	ECI announced its investment. It reported a full exit for the previous investor, Beech Tree Private Equity. It gave no percentage for ECI's holding.	ECI investment
O4	BCN Group	Sponsor portfolio	Checked 19 Nov 2026	ECI lists BCN in its portfolio and describes a UK-focused managed and cloud services business. The profile gives no current equity split.	ECI portfolio
O5	Version 1	Exiting investor	13 Jul 2022 close	Volpi dates the completed sale of its holding to 13 July 2022. It identifies Partners Group as the majority shareholder at that transaction, alongside management.	Volpi exit
O6	Version 1	Company profile	Checked 19 Nov 2026	Version 1 identifies itself as a Partners Group portfolio company. That confirms the relationship. The FAQ gives no current percentage.	Company FAQ

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