LINK AUSTRALIA

Market Update

Issue 23

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A strong start to the new financial year

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Boosting your valuation: Key investments to make before listing your business

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Analysing the competitive landscape: The smart buyer's edge

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we sell businesses

LINK Australia
1300 763 668

Recent business sales

Professional
NORTH QUEENSLAND
$298,000

Import/Export/Wholesale
BRISBANE CITY
$1,920,000 + SAV

Food/Hospitality
BAYSIDE - MELBOURNE
$129,000

Professional
SUNSHINE COAST
$395,000

Food/Hospitality
CAPRICORN COAST REGION
$585,000 + SAV

Retail
GOLD COAST
$44,000 + SAV

Services
TERREY HILLS
$2,600,000

Industrial Manufacturing
SYDNEY
$1,560,000 + SAV

Food/Hospitality
GOLD COAST
$180,000 + Stock

Food/Hospitality
MELBOURNE
$105,000

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Market momentum building: A strong start to the new financial year

The new financial year has brought with it renewed energy. More business owners are choosing to bring their businesses to market, and buyer enquiry is on the rise. Following a period where many were cautious, both buyers and sellers are now ready for a fresh start. The change in sentiment is creating a noticeable lift in market activity, and the pace is set to build in the coming months.

> "There's a lot of confidence returning,"

says Wim Janssen, Director for LINK Business's Sunshine Coast and North Queensland office.

"Listings are up, enquiries are strong, and the next six months look busy."

For sellers, this is an encouraging environment. Investors are actively searching for well-run, profitable businesses, and they are prepared to move when they find the right one.

Sellers who achieve the best results are those who prepare early. This includes ensuring their financial records are clear and up-to-date, understanding the strengths of their business, and being ready to answer buyer questions with efficiency and accuracy. This preparation builds trust and allows a deal to move forward smoothly.

For buyers, the current market offers a broad choice of opportunities. High-quality listings are coming to market, but competition is strong.

"Good businesses sell quickly. If you find one that suits your goals, act on it, and fast."

Buyers who know what they are looking for and have finance arranged are in the strongest position to move when the right opportunity presents itself.

This renewed energy and momentum follows a year where uncertainty led many to delay major decisions. Now, with interest rates stabilising and consumer spending holding steady in key sectors, confidence is returning. The start of a new financial year has also brought a natural reset, encouraging owners to plan their next move and inspiring buyers to act.

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As momentum for the new financial year builds, now is the time to prepare and act, taking advantage of the opportunities that will grow as the pace continues to increase.

Sellers benefit from a market where buyer interest is high, and buyers can take advantage of the increased number of quality businesses for sale. But success, whether buying or selling, comes down to preparation and decisiveness.

Those who are ready to act, supported by clear information, finance in place, and a clear plan, will be best placed to secure the opportunities this market is offering.

Boosting your valuation: Key investments to make before listing your business

Selling your business is one of the most significant financial decisions you'll make. Whether you're planning your exit in a year or a decade, the groundwork you lay now will directly influence the price buyers are willing to pay when the time comes.

A buyer's perception of value isn't shaped by financial statements alone, it's shaped by how well the business is positioned for future growth, how resilient it looks, and how easy it is to step into as the new owner.

Why preparing early matters

Many business owners assume that they'll only need to think about "presentation" once they've decided to sell. In reality, preparing your business for sale well in advance gives you more time to implement improvements and demonstrate their impact. This creates a stronger case for buyers, and a stronger asking price for you.

Even modest investments, when made strategically, can pay off significantly at when you're ready to sell.

Key areas to invest in:

- Operational efficiency: Streamlined systems and well-documented processes make your business more attractive. Buyers want to know they can step in without chaos. Updating software, tightening workflows, or investing in automation can all improve efficiency and increase value.
- Financial clarity: Messy books are one of the fastest ways to drive down a valuation. Clean, transparent accounts signal that your business is well-managed and trustworthy. If you don't already have professional accounting support, now is the time to engage it. Buyers will pay more for peace of mind.
- Customer relationships: A loyal customer base is a powerful asset. Consider investments that strengthen these relationships — whether through improved service, loyalty programmes, or customer experience enhancements. Buyers will see this as future income security.
- Staff and leadership: High turnover or unclear responsibilities can unsettle buyers. By investing in staff training, retention, and leadership structures, you create a team that can carry the business forward under new ownership. This stability adds tangible value.
- A strong brand presence: Your brand is often the first impression a buyer will have. Refreshing your website, improving online visibility, or strengthening your reputation in the market doesn't just attract customers, it reassures buyers that they're stepping into a well-regarded business.
- The power of perception: Valuation isn't only about assets and revenue. It's also about how a buyer perceives the future potential of your business. A clean set of financials, a clear operational structure, and a healthy brand presence tell a story of confidence, stability, and opportunity.

The LINK perspective

At LINK, we believe preparation is the secret weapon of successful sellers. When you take the time to invest in your business before listing, you don't just increase its financial value, you make it easier to sell.

Analysing the competitive landscape: The smart buyer's edge

Buying a business is never just about the numbers. It's about stepping into a living, breathing market, one filled with competitors, shifting customer expectations, and evolving industry trends. Whether you're a first-time buyer or an experienced investor, understanding the competitive environment of the industry you've bought a business within is one of the most important steps in deciding whether a business will deliver the returns and growth you're looking for.

At LINK, we've worked with countless buyers and sellers across a variety of industries. One consistent truth? The businesses that succeed under new ownership are those where the buyer has done their homework, not just on the business financials, but also on the market the business operates within.

Why competitor analysis matters:

A business's past performance tells you where it's been. Competitor analysis tells you where it's going and what key factors may impact its future. When you buy a business, you're not only buying its assets, staff, and customer base, you're also inheriting its competitive position within its current market.

By taking the time to understand this position, you can:

- See whether the business has the resilience to withstand market pressures.
- Identify if the industry is on the rise, levelling off, or in decline.
- Spot overlooked opportunities for growth.

Without this insight, you risk acquiring a business that looks solid on paper but struggles to keep up in practice and one that isn't future-ready.

What to look at when assessing competitors:

Competitor analysis doesn't need to be overwhelming, but it does need to be structured. Here are the key areas we recommend every buyer explores:

- Market share and positioning: Who holds power in the industry? Knowing where your business sits helps you understand whether you're buying into a challenger, a leader, or a niche provider, and what that means for your strategy going forward.
- Strengths and weaknesses: Every competitor has their advantages and blind spots. Their strengths show you the standards you'll need to match, while their weaknesses highlight potential opportunities.
- Differentiation: The businesses that thrive are those with a clear edge. Does your target stand out for its products, its brand, or the way it serves customers?
- Barriers to entry: Consider what makes it difficult for others to enter the market. High start-up costs, strict regulations, or entrenched customer loyalty can all protect your acquisition.

Turning insights into opportunity

Competitor analysis isn't just about protecting yourself from risk. Done well, it's also about finding hidden opportunities.

These insights allow you to walk into an acquisition with a growth strategy already forming, one that builds on strengths, addresses weaknesses, and leverages the gaps competitors have left open.

The numbers just keep getting **better and better**

$2b+

of businesses listed on our global websites

250+

businesses sold globally per month (avg)

3,000+

businesses for sale internationally

73%

of buyers think about buying a business for up to three years

79%

of buyer prefer an established business

ACCC merger law changes: What buyers and sellers need to know

From 1 January 2026, the way business sales and acquisitions are handled in Australia will look a little different. The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) is introducing reforms that shift how mergers are assessed and approved.

For anyone planning to buy or sell a business, these changes are worth noting.

The big shift:

Until the 1st of January 2026, notifying the ACCC of a transaction is voluntary. Businesses can approach the regulator for an informal review if there is a concern around competition. However, following the 1st of Janauray 2026, notification will be mandatory for transactions that meet certain thresholds.

The ACCC will also have a stronger role as the decision-maker. Instead of relying heavily on the courts after a deal is done, the regulator will assess and decide upfront. This is designed to increase certainty, reduce disputes after the fact, and bring Australia closer to international practice.

Key dates:

- 1 July 2025 – a transition period begins. Businesses can voluntarily use the new system, though informal reviews will still be available.
- 31 December 2025 – Informal clearance ends.
- 1 January 2026 – the new system is fully in force. Any deal above the threshold must be notified and cleared before it can proceed.

During the transition, merger authorisations will no longer be an option.

What this means in practice:

For buyers and sellers, the main impacts are likely to be:

- More planning and preparation – you'll need to factor in additional time for ACCC review before a deal can complete.
- More information required – detailed data about the business, its customers, competitors, and market share will need to be on hand.
- Greater risk of delay – deals in concentrated markets, or involving competitors, may face more scrutiny.
- Higher transaction costs – professional and legal fees are expected to rise as notification processes become more involved.

That said, the ACCC has committed to faster decisions for straightforward cases and more transparency around its processes. For many deals, this could mean fewer surprises.

How to prepare:

If you're thinking about selling, it's a good idea to have your business information packaged and ready. Clear records of your customers, revenue streams, competitors, and market position will make the process smoother. For buyers, understanding where potential competition concerns may arise is now a critical part of due diligence.

At LINK, we see these changes as part of a broader effort to make Australia's merger landscape more structured and predictable. While it does mean extra planning, it also means fewer grey areas and more certainty once a deal is cleared.

To find out more details about the new changes please visit the ACCC website.