

A banner image for Business Intelligence featuring a collage of business-related elements: a digital display with numbers, rolled-up documents, and silhouettes of people in a meeting.

Business Intelligence

PKF

Accountants &
business advisers

We look before you leap

Sometimes traditional due diligence is not enough to avoid the many potential hazards that exist. As businesses become more internationally focused, they may increasingly encounter unfamiliar practices and other unpredictable elements that can hinder their success. In these circumstances it is harder than ever to make important decisions, simply because there is not enough reliable information to hand on which to base those decisions. This is where business intelligence often proves invaluable.

Our network

Our business intelligence network is a unique group of multi-disciplined individuals, comprising nearly 1000 sources, some of which are second-generation. Assembled over a period of thirty years, the network has global reach extending to all continents. All the sources are tried and tested and each has consistently demonstrated an ability to provide accurate, current and reliable business intelligence which is not available in the public domain.

For each project that PKF undertakes, intelligence is gathered using a minimum of two sources in order to facilitate corroboration. The intelligence gathered from the individual sources is then compared and tested against intelligence gathered from an extensive range of online databases to which we subscribe. Where relevant, we also gather supporting intelligence from PKF International Limited, our associated network of legally independent firms around the world. The combined results are then checked and analysed before being presented to the client.

Using business intelligence

The uses of business intelligence are many and varied. Some applications include:

- major fraud investigations
- cross-border M&A work
- litigation support
- asset tracing.

In such applications we can help clients to:

- check an individual's background (e.g. with Non-Executive Director or Executive Director searches)
- identify the real owner of a target business
- assess the track record of a business and its key executives and major shareholders
- identify any relevant litigation and, where possible, criminal records
- assess any links to organised crime groups and the overall reputational risk

- determine how local political and economic issues may affect business or commercial decisions.

Additionally, we can help clients comply with KYC (Know Your Customer) regulations by investigating:

- an individual's source of wealth
- business dealings and associations
- political and social connections
- general reputation and integrity.

The identity of the client is not revealed to sources and strict codes of confidentiality are observed at all times.

Business intelligence in action

The following examples show how PKF has provided valuable business intelligence to clients when they need it most:

Task 1: We were engaged by a UK law firm to assist with the identification of assets owned personally, or through corporate entities, by a third party.

Action: Within two weeks our local sources had identified assets controlled directly, or indirectly, by the third party in both on-shore and off-shore jurisdictions. The corroborated intelligence provided by us enabled the law firm to negotiate with the third party, and his legal representatives.

Result: The client law firm achieved a successful result for its client and a substantial settlement followed.

Task 2: A UK client with a substantial presence in Western Europe identified a need to establish manufacturing facilities in the former Soviet Union. Having entered into negotiations with three potential partners the client instructed us to conduct a detailed investigation in order to establish the beneficial ownership of each potential partner.

Action: Local sources were engaged to provide the client with a full report on each potential partner. The reports provided details relating to the directors and shareholders of each potential partner and demonstrated whether the client was already in contact with the beneficial owner or not.

Result: The client switched its attention from one potential partner to another and an agreement was reached. Had the client proceeded with its first choice it would have become involved with an entity controlled by an organised crime group.

Task 3: A UK multinational with an impressive record of achievement in South-East Asia was unable to win similarly significant levels of business in China.

Action: After an initial review of the client's strategy in the region it was discovered by our local sources that the Chinese Joint Venture (JV) partner it had appointed was weaker and less influential than the JV partners engaged by each of the client's two main European rivals.

Result: By drawing on the knowledge and experience of our local sources we were in a position to facilitate the amiable termination of the existing arrangement and the introduction to a suitably qualified and far more influential local JV partner. Within eight months the client was regularly winning significant orders in China.

Task 4: Our client, a UK bank, was carrying out KYC procedures in respect of a potential new customer of its private banking arm.

Action: Through local sources in India, we were able to check details provided by the individual in relation to the sale of large numbers of shares in a business he had once controlled. The client had concerns that some elements of the sale were questionable and needed comfort that the potential customer had not sold shares on behalf of an unnamed third party and had not acted unlawfully. In addition, we were asked to investigate negative press reports which had appeared in India and the UAE relating to the individual and

the Indian company of which he had relinquished control.

Result: The original source of the funds was checked as were the transactions surrounding the original purchase of those shares by the bank's potential client. The negative reports were found to be spurious. Indeed, it was discovered that a rival who had tried (but failed) to buy the shares sold by the potential new customer had placed the articles in order to discredit his rival.

Service to meet your needs

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