

CI Capital's Tech Air Starts its Growth Plan

The New York-based private equity firm's packaging and distribution business is in the process to acquire Corp Brothers.

By TAMIKA CODY

CI Capital Partner's industrial, medical and specialty gases distribution business, Tech Air, signed a definitive agreement to buy Corp Brothers. In addition to specialty gases, Tech Air distributes welding equipment and supplies. The company has plans to merge with the Providence, Rhode Island-based, Corp Brothers which also distributes specialty and industrial gases, safety and welding equipment as well as dry ice and related products.

While deal terms were undisclosed, the firm tends to spend between \$25 million to \$100 million on its investments. It generally seeks out opportunities in the business, consumer, distribution, government and defense services, as well as the light manufacturing sector.

It was only in January of this year that CI Capital teamed up with Tech Air's management team to acquire a controlling interest in the Danbury, Connecticut - based business. The firm tapped into its CI Capital Investor II Fund to finance the deal.

At the time of the deal CI Capital stated that Tech Air is "an excellent growth platform in the industrial gas distribution sector." Tech Air's CEO, Myles Dempsey, Jr., stated in the press release that the acquisition of Corp Brothers is consistent with the company's growth strategy, which includes selective, high-quality acquisitions in regions that complement its existing operations. The company will be able to expand its footprint within New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island

and Massachusetts. Corp Brothers currently distributes its products throughout Rhode Island and the southern part of Massachusetts.

Joost Thesseling, a managing director at CI Capital, stated in the press release that Corp Brothers is the first of a number of deals it expects to complete for Tech Air. He said the firm has already spotted attractive opportunities in the large and fragmented packaged gas market in the US, which will allow Tech Air to carry out its expansion plans.

Avery Seaman, Jr., who is the President of Corp Brothers, will hold on to his title and will be an equity investor in the two companies.

Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison provided legal advice to Tech Air while Corp Brothers used Reavis Cianciolo as its legal counsel. **MA**