

Asset complexity and regulatory challenges

Centaur Fund Services: Best Fund Administrator <\$30 billion AUM

Regulatory pressures and more complex investment strategies are driving a greater number of PE funds to outsource their administration operations. Centaur is well positioned to meet these growing demands having built the global reach to fulfil the needs for cross-domicile services.

Des Johnson, CEO of Centaur USA comments: "In the last twelve months alone, Centaur has hired senior managers in Private Equity out of New Jersey, Bermuda and throughout Europe. The company has also invested heavily in PE specific technology which has been developed specifically to support Centaur Private Equity clients.

"The move towards outsourcing by PE funds is reflected in Centaur's success in the sector. Since launching our Private Equity Service in 2016, we have experienced phenomenal growth. The sector is set to be a major driver of business growth for the firm in 2020 and beyond."

According to Johnson, the future of PE fund administration is a combination of experienced people along with best in class technology. The firm is wholly committed to developing industry best practice and ensuring its clients receive the best client service that the industry has to offer.

An example of how Centaur develops best practice is its dedicated platform for PE servicing and use of best of breed technology to support and deliver its services. Johnson says: "Our platform includes FIS Investran for accounting and investor services and Blueprint for corporate services

including a portal to enhance the client experience. Centaur also services all related corporate entities – such as SPVs, blockers and carry vehicles – in a broad array of jurisdictions.

"We have also gained deep sector knowledge in Private Equity with dedicated personnel joining the firm in North America and Europe."

Centaur is supporting PE clients in meeting the growing regulatory and market pressures to deliver greater transparency, better reporting and have tighter accounting processes. The firm provides PE funds with enhanced efficiency, taking some of the operational burden off their shoulders.

Johnson notes: "Fundamentally, we take away the administrative headache from the Investment Manager. Managers now understand the efficiencies realised with outsourcing fund administration to specialist, external providers along with the associated cost savings.

"Additionally, much of the movement towards outsourcing has been driven by investors who are demanding more transparency and better reporting. When you add increased regulation and operational risk to this scenario, you can see the logic of outsourcing these functions to an external provider with specialist skills. Outsourcing administration enables the fund manager to focus on the performance of their fund and generating returns."

Johnson believes regulation is one of the major challenges PE managers are currently facing. He says: "Over the past few years, we have seen

massive changes in the PE industry as clients are turning to administrators to service their increasingly complex requirements from regulators."

Accountability and client service sit at the heart of Centaur's work. The firm takes pride in generating a client-first culture throughout the entire firm and has not lost a client in its 10 year existence.

In its effort to build on its core values, Centaur will continue to invest heavily in its PE platform and ensure its teams provide the most comprehensive service in fund administration for PE clients.

"We will also continue to remove complexity, uncertainty and unfamiliarity from the on-boarding process by using the best people, backed by the best processes in the industry," Johnson concludes. ■



Des Johnson
CEO & Partner, Centaur Fund Services

Des Johnson is based in New York. Des has grown the business significantly over the last few years and Centaur now has over 150 people across 9 offices administering over \$35N in assets. Prior to joining Centaur Des was Managing Director and Global Co-Head of Investor Services at SS&C. Des has experienced all aspects of the Investment fund Industry since 1998 working in Ireland, Bermuda and New York. Des has held senior management positions at Citibank, BISYS and IFS/State Street. Des has a BA (Hons) in Business from Dublin Business School.