



Erik G. Birkerts, Partner

Expertise

Erik has years of practical, hands-on experience centered on the design, implementation and/or repositioning of go-to-market strategies. In particular, he specializes in leveraging indirect channels and partnerships to achieve cost-effective market coverage and profitable revenue growth. His experience as a public company operating executive gives him unique insight on the challenges faced by management teams and positions him to engage senior management to work collaboratively towards high value outcomes.

Notable Achievements

- Member of the senior management teams for two IPOs of venture capital backed companies. Raised and structured numerous private equity financings.
- Designed and launched channel strategy that now contributes nearly 50% of Orion Energy Systems (NASDAQ: OESX) revenue. Managed channel sales and support team to deliver high double-digit revenue growth with profit margins greater than those witnessed in the direct sales channel.
- Executed comprehensive channel audit of key resellers and VARS for world's largest software company. Analysis identified competencies, readiness to launch new product initiatives, “wallet share” and levers for future growth.
- Created strategic roadmap for international expansion and M&A for a publicly traded for-profit education company. Analysis culminated in sizable acquisition in Brazil.
- Collaborated with turn-around firm to restructure sales and operations of a privately- held food company to position company for sale to strategic acquirer. Deal awarded “2006 Transaction of the Year” by the Turnaround Management Association and “Manufacturing Deal of the Year” by [The M&A Advisor](#).

Professional Background

Erik most recently served as Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President of Orion Energy Systems (NASDAQ: OESX), a leading manufacturer of energy efficient, high-performance lighting systems and renewable technologies. Orion more than doubled its revenues and became publicly traded during his tenure. Erik was originally recruited to Orion after successfully consulting with the company on the design of its indirect sales channel strategy, which now contributes nearly 50% of Orion’s revenues. Prior to Orion, Erik had a successful consulting career as President of The Prairie Partners Group, a boutique consulting firm he co-founded. Working with clients as diverse as Microsoft, Hewlett-Packard, Ingersoll Rand, DeVry University and numerous private equity and venture capital funded companies, Erik developed strategies to capitalize on growth opportunities for clients. He began his career as a financial analyst and bank examiner at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, working on international banking transactions.

Education

Erik earned his MBA at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business and his BA with honors in Economics and International Relations from Tufts University.

Professional Affiliations/Published Works

Erik’s work has been featured in [The Deal](#), [Mergers & Acquisitions](#), [The Chicago Tribune](#), [The Chicago Sun Times](#) and cited by the USDA. He is an Advisor to The Clean Energy Trust and guest lectures at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. He is also a frequent speaker and panel participant on issues of sales, distribution and strategic growth at investor, clean technology and venture capital conferences.

