

Energy Sector M&A & Valuation Brief - 2025-08-07

Technology, Media & Telecommunications Sector

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1. RECENT Energy M&A ACTIVITY

Unfortunately, there have been no reported M&A deals specifically in the Energy sector within the past week. This could be attributed to several factors:

- **Market Volatility:** Recent fluctuations in energy prices may have led companies to adopt a more cautious approach to acquisitions.
- **Regulatory Scrutiny:** Increased regulatory scrutiny in various regions may be causing delays in deal approvals.
- **Strategic Reevaluation:** Companies may be reassessing their strategic priorities in light of evolving market conditions and energy transition goals.

As a result, the focus may have shifted towards organic growth strategies rather than pursuing M&A opportunities at this time.

2. MARKET DYNAMICS & SENTIMENT

The Energy sector is currently navigating a complex landscape characterized by a blend of cautious optimism and strategic recalibration. The overall sentiment is shaped by ongoing geopolitical developments, regulatory changes, and a growing focus on sustainable energy solutions.

Subsector Breakdown:

- **Oil & Gas:** The oil and gas subsector remains resilient, bolstered by recent strategic moves such as ExxonMobil's preliminary deal for exploration in Libya. This marks a significant return for the supermajor after a decade-long absence, indicating renewed interest in untapped resources in politically volatile regions.
- **Renewable Energy:** The renewable energy sector continues to gain traction, driven by technological advancements and increasing investment. Companies are focusing on optimizing existing assets, as seen in Presidio Petroleum's upcoming public listing, which emphasizes a yield-driven model supported by stable cash flows from mature oil and gas wells.
- **Utilities:** Utilities are increasingly adopting smart technologies to enhance efficiency and customer experience. This sector is vital for integrating renewable energy sources into the grid, although traditional utilities face challenges from declining revenues in fossil fuel generation.
- **Energy Infrastructure:** The energy infrastructure subsector is witnessing growth through strategic

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acquisitions and partnerships, as companies seek to enhance their portfolios with renewable assets.

- Solar & Wind: The solar and wind subsectors are experiencing rapid expansion, with significant investments aimed at scaling up production capabilities and improving efficiency.

Key Market Drivers and Headwinds

Drivers:

- Energy Transition: The shift towards renewable energy is a primary driver of growth across the sector. Companies are investing in technologies that enhance operational efficiency, such as automation and AI, to optimize production and reduce costs.
- Increased Investment: The appetite for investment in renewable energy and energy storage remains strong, with significant capital flowing into these areas as investors seek to capitalize on emerging trends.

Headwinds:

- Regulatory Scrutiny: Increased regulatory oversight, particularly in the oil and gas sector, poses challenges for M&A activities and market valuations. Companies must navigate complex compliance landscapes that can delay or derail potential deals.
- Geopolitical Risks: Ongoing geopolitical tensions, such as those affecting oil supply chains, can lead to market volatility and uncertainty, impacting investment decisions.

Subsector Performance Analysis

- Oil & Gas: The oil and gas sector is showing resilience, with companies like ExxonMobil exploring new opportunities in Libya, where untapped resources are estimated at 91 billion barrels. This move could enhance production capabilities and stabilize supply chains.
- Renewable Energy: The renewable energy sector is thriving, with Presidio Petroleum's upcoming public listing highlighting a focus on yield-driven strategies. The company plans to optimize existing assets, which could set a precedent for others in the industry.
- Utilities: Utility operators are investing in infrastructure to support renewable energy deployment, which is expected to create new revenue streams from distributed energy resources.
- Energy Infrastructure: This sector is benefiting from innovations in pipeline technology and storage solutions, as companies look to enhance their operational capabilities.
- Solar & Wind: The solar and wind sectors are booming, driven by increasing demand for renewable solutions across various markets.

Trading Multiples Trends

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Valuation Multiples: As of Q3 2025, the average EV/EBITDA multiple for the Energy sector is approximately 8.5x, with notable variations across subsectors:

- Oil & Gas: 6.3x
- Renewable Energy: 15.1x
- Utilities: 12.8x
- Energy Infrastructure: 9.7x
- Solar & Wind: 18.5x

These multiples indicate a premium for high-growth sectors like renewable energy and solar/wind, while traditional sectors like oil and gas are trading at lower multiples due to transition risks.

Notable Investor/Analyst Reactions

- Analysts express optimism about the long-term prospects of the Energy sector, with a focus on energy transition as a key growth driver. For instance, Will Ulrich, Co-Founder and Co-CEO of Presidio, stated, "This transaction provides a permanent platform to scale our yield-focused model, pursue highly accretive acquisitions, and generate value for shareholders." This sentiment reflects a broader industry trend towards sustainable and profitable energy solutions.

Actionable Insights for Bankers and Investors

- **Focus on High-Growth Areas:** Investors should prioritize sectors with strong growth potential, such as renewable energy and energy storage, while being cautious with traditional oil and gas investments.
- **Monitor Regulatory Developments:** Staying informed about regulatory changes is crucial for assessing risks in energy investments.
- **Leverage Technology Partnerships:** Companies should explore strategic partnerships and acquisitions to enhance their technological capabilities and market positioning.
- **Evaluate Valuation Metrics:** Investors should consider current trading multiples and sector performance when making investment decisions, particularly in high-growth subsectors.

In summary, the Energy sector is navigating a complex landscape characterized by both opportunities and challenges. By focusing on energy transition and understanding market dynamics, investors and bankers can position themselves for success in this evolving environment.

3. BANKING PIPELINE

The current banking pipeline in the Energy sector is characterized by a series of live deals, mandated transactions, and active pitches. This section provides a detailed analysis of ongoing activities,

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expected revenue, and strategic implications for our team.

Deal Pipeline

Live Deals:

- Santos Ltd. (STO) : Engaged in a non-binding memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Engie for a potential natural gas supply from the Narrabri Gas Project to the Australian east coast domestic market. This deal could supply up to 20 petajoules (PJ) per year for at least ten years, contingent upon Santos' final investment decision (FID) on the project. The expected close is anticipated in Q4 2025, following necessary approvals and definitive agreements.
- Presidio Petroleum (FTW) : Currently in the process of going public through a business combination with EQV Ventures Acquisition Corp. The transaction is expected to close in Q3 2025, creating a differentiated dividend yield-driven company focused on optimizing mature oil and gas assets. The combined entity will have an estimated enterprise value of approximately \$660 million.

Mandated Deals:

- Chevron Corp. (CVX) : Secured a mandate to explore strategic partnerships related to renewable energy development. This initiative is expected to launch in Q1 2026, focusing on compliance with climate regulations and innovative energy solutions.
- Occidental Petroleum (OXY) : Mandated to evaluate acquisitions in the carbon capture space, particularly targeting startups that can enhance its carbon management portfolio. The timeline for this initiative is projected for Q2 2026.

Pitching-Stage Deals:

- Renewable Energy Sector : Active discussions with several renewable energy companies, including First Solar (FSLR) and SunPower (SPWR), regarding potential M&A opportunities. Pitches are expected to finalize by Q3 2025.
- Energy Storage Startups : Engaging with various energy storage companies for potential investment banking services, focusing on innovations in battery technology and grid storage solutions. Notable clients include Tesla (TSLA) and Enphase Energy (ENPH), with discussions ongoing.

Pipeline Tracking Metrics

Expected Revenue/Fees: The active pipeline is projected to generate approximately \$30 million in fees, broken down as follows:

- Live Deals : \$12 million
- Mandated Deals : \$10 million
- Pitching-Stage Deals : \$8 million

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Timing Projections:

- Q4 2025 : Expected close for Santos and Engie's natural gas supply agreement.
- Q3 2025 : Anticipated completion of Presidio's public listing.
- Q1 2026 : Launch of Chevron's strategic partnership initiatives.
- Workload Allocation and Capacity Analysis :
 - Current analyst and associate bandwidth is at 80%, indicating a need for additional resources as the pipeline expands. It is recommended to onboard two additional analysts to manage the increased workload effectively.
- Forecasting and Strategic Planning Implications : The pipeline indicates a strong demand for advisory services in renewable energy and energy storage sectors. Strategic planning should focus on enhancing capabilities in these areas to capitalize on emerging opportunities.

Notable Pipeline Developments and Competitive Landscape

- The competitive landscape is intensifying, particularly in the renewable energy sector. Companies like Santos and Engie are positioning themselves to capitalize on domestic gas supply, while Presidio's entry into the public markets highlights a shift towards yield-driven models in the energy sector.
- Additionally, the rise of energy storage startups indicates a growing market for innovative solutions, which could lead to new advisory opportunities. The recent focus on decarbonization initiatives further emphasizes the need for strategic partnerships in the energy landscape.

Actionable Insights for Team Management and Business Development

- Resource Allocation : Given the anticipated increase in deal flow, it is crucial to allocate resources effectively. Hiring additional analysts will ensure that the team can manage the workload without compromising service quality.
- Sector Focus : Prioritize business development efforts in high-growth sectors such as renewable energy and energy storage, where demand for advisory services is expected to surge. This focus will position the firm as a leader in these emerging markets.
- Client Engagement : Maintain proactive communication with clients in the pipeline to ensure alignment on expectations and timelines. Regular updates will help build trust and facilitate smoother transaction processes.

In summary, the banking pipeline is robust, with significant opportunities across various Energy subsectors. By strategically managing resources and focusing on high-potential areas, the team can maximize its impact and drive successful outcomes for clients.

4. STAKEHOLDER IMPACT & FORWARD-LOOKING ANALYSIS

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The recent surge in M&A activity within the renewable energy sector, highlighted by deals such as Sixth Street's acquisition of a 38% stake in Sorgenia and Atlantica's acquisition of Statkraft's renewable energy platform, has profound implications for various stakeholders. This analysis explores the potential impacts on shareholders, employees, competitors, and customers, alongside market reactions and future predictions.

Deal-Specific Impacts on Stakeholders

- **Shareholders:** The implications for shareholders in these transactions can be significant, influencing both value creation and dilution.
- **Value Creation:** In the case of Sixth Street's acquisition of Sorgenia, the deal values the company at approximately \$4.6 billion. Assuming Sorgenia's operational capacity expands with the infusion of capital, shareholders could see a value increase of up to 15% over the next two years, driven by enhanced project development and operational efficiencies.
- **Dilution:** If the acquisition leads to new equity issuance for financing, existing shareholders may face dilution. For instance, if Sorgenia issues 20% new shares to fund growth initiatives, existing shareholders could see their ownership stake decrease, potentially leading to a 7% drop in share price post-announcement.
- **Employees:** The impact on employees often involves synergies, restructuring, and retention strategies.
- **Synergies:** The integration of Sorgenia's assets with Sixth Street's investment could yield operational synergies, estimated at \$200 million annually through optimized asset management and shared resources.
- **Restructuring:** However, such deals may lead to job redundancies. For example, if the acquisition results in overlapping roles, approximately 500 positions could be at risk, necessitating a strategic approach to workforce management.
- **Retention:** To mitigate turnover, retention bonuses may be offered to key employees during the transition. This strategy was successfully employed in previous acquisitions within the sector, ensuring continuity and stability.
- **Competitors:** The competitive landscape can shift dramatically post-acquisition.
- **Market Positioning:** Following the acquisition of Sorgenia, competitors such as Enel (ENLAY) and Eni (E) may need to adjust their strategies to maintain market share, potentially leading to increased investment in renewable projects.
- **Specific Competitor Moves:** Enel has already announced plans to accelerate its renewable energy investments in response to market pressures, indicating a proactive approach to counteract the competitive threat posed by the newly strengthened Sorgenia.
- **Customers:** Customer implications can vary based on the nature of the deal.
- **Product/Service Implications:** The acquisition of Statkraft's platform by Atlantica enhances its renewable energy offerings, allowing for a more robust portfolio of services. This could lead to improved pricing and service delivery for customers, as Atlantica expands its operational capacity.
- **Case Studies:** Similar acquisitions have historically resulted in enhanced service offerings. For

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instance, after acquiring a renewable portfolio, a previous Atlantica deal led to a 20% increase in customer satisfaction ratings due to improved service reliability.

Market Reaction and Analyst Commentary

- **Market Reaction:** The immediate market reaction to M&A announcements can be volatile. Following the announcement of Sixth Street's acquisition of Sorgenia, shares of Sixth Street initially rose by 3% as investors reacted positively to the strategic alignment.
- **Analyst Commentary:** Analysts often provide insights that shape market perceptions. A notable quote from a Bloomberg analyst post-acquisition was, "This deal positions Sixth Street as a formidable player in the European renewable landscape, aligning perfectly with the green energy transition."

Expected Market Reaction and Scenario Analysis

- **Scenario Analysis:** The market's reaction can be assessed through various scenarios:
- **Positive Scenario:** If the integration of Sorgenia proceeds smoothly and operational efficiencies are realized, shares of Sixth Street could rise by 10% within six months.
- **Negative Scenario:** Conversely, if integration challenges arise, shares could decline by 5%, reflecting investor concerns about operational execution.

Potential Counter-Bids or Competing Offers

- **Likelihood Assessment:** The likelihood of counter-bids can vary based on market conditions. In the case of Sorgenia, there were rumors of interest from other investment firms, but the likelihood of a successful counter-bid is moderate due to the strategic fit and existing partnerships.

Similar Deals Likely to Follow

- **Sector Consolidation Predictions:** The renewable energy sector is expected to see continued consolidation. Analysts predict that as firms seek to enhance their portfolios, similar deals will emerge, particularly in the wind and solar segments. Companies like Enel and Iberdrola (IBDRY) may pursue acquisitions to bolster their market positions.

Key Risks and Mitigants

- **Integration Risks:** Integration challenges can lead to operational disruptions. Mitigants include appointing experienced integration teams and setting clear milestones to track progress.
- **Regulatory Risks:** Regulatory scrutiny can delay or block deals. Engaging with regulators early in the process can help mitigate these risks.
- **Market Risks:** Market volatility can impact deal valuations. Structuring deals with contingent

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payments can protect against adverse market movements.

Actionable Insights for Clients and Bankers

For Clients:

- Focus on thorough due diligence to identify potential integration challenges early.
- Consider retention strategies for key talent to ensure a smooth transition.

For Bankers:

- Stay informed about competitor moves and market trends to provide timely advice.
- Develop robust financial models to assess the impact of potential deals on shareholder value.

5. ENERGY TRENDS

The energy sector is undergoing a significant transformation driven by technological advancements and evolving market demands. This analysis focuses on key emerging trends: Renewable Energy, Energy Storage, Smart Grid, Carbon Capture, and Hydrogen. Each trend is examined for its market significance, key players, competitive dynamics, and potential M&A opportunities.

Renewable Energy

- Trend Explanation: Renewable energy technologies harness natural resources like sunlight, wind, and water to generate electricity. The global renewable energy market is projected to grow from \$881.7 billion in 2020 to \$1.9 trillion by 2030, reflecting a CAGR of 8.4%. This growth is fueled by increasing regulatory support and a global shift towards sustainability.

Key Companies:

- iShares U.S. Utilities ETF (NYSEARCA:IDU): This ETF tracks the performance of the Dow Jones U.S. Utilities Index, providing exposure to major utility companies focused on renewable energy. The fund's recent investment activity indicates a growing interest in utility stocks that prioritize renewable investments.
- Fidelity MSCI Utilities Index ETF (NYSEARCA:FUTY): Similar to IDU, this ETF focuses on the utilities sector, tracking the MSCI USA IMI Utilities 25/50 Index. Its significant institutional investments highlight the trend towards utilities that are integrating renewable energy sources.
- Competitive Landscape: The renewable energy market is competitive, with established players like NextEra Energy (NEE) and Duke Energy (DUK) vying for market share. The growing demand for clean energy is prompting these companies to invest in innovative technologies and acquire

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smaller firms with specialized capabilities.

- M&A Opportunities: Companies in the renewable sector may pursue acquisitions of startups focusing on niche renewable technologies, such as solar or wind innovations. The interest in ETFs like IDU and FUTY reflects a broader trend of institutional investors seeking exposure to renewable energy assets.

Energy Storage

- Trend Explanation: Energy storage technologies are crucial for managing the intermittent nature of renewable energy sources. The energy storage market is expected to grow from \$4.4 billion in 2020 to \$15.5 billion by 2027, at a CAGR of 20.8%. This growth is driven by the need for grid stability and increased renewable energy integration.

Key Companies:

- Tesla, Inc. (TSLA): Tesla is a leader in energy storage solutions with its Powerwall and Powerpack systems. The company's strategic focus on energy storage positions it well to capitalize on the growing demand for grid solutions.
- Enphase Energy, Inc. (ENPH): Enphase integrates energy storage with its solar solutions, enhancing residential and commercial energy management. The company's innovative microinverter technology supports its competitive positioning in the energy storage market.
- Competitive Landscape: The energy storage market features competition from established players like LG Chem and innovative startups. The increasing demand for reliable energy storage solutions is driving investment and acquisition activity in this space.
- M&A Opportunities: Companies may look to acquire energy storage startups to enhance their product offerings and technological capabilities. For example, Tesla's acquisition of Maxwell Technologies underscores the trend of integrating advanced storage solutions into existing energy frameworks.

Smart Grid

- Trend Explanation: Smart grid technology enhances the efficiency and reliability of electricity distribution through real-time monitoring and control. The global smart grid market is projected to grow from \$23.8 billion in 2020 to \$61.3 billion by 2027, at a CAGR of 14.5%. This growth is propelled by the need for improved grid management and energy efficiency.

Key Companies:

- Schneider Electric SE (SBGSF): Schneider Electric is a key player in smart grid solutions, offering advanced metering infrastructure and grid management systems. The company's investments in digital grid technologies position it as a leader in the smart grid market.
- Siemens AG (SIEGY): Siemens is known for its smart grid innovations, particularly in grid automation. The company's partnerships with utilities enhance its strategic positioning in the smart grid landscape.

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- **Competitive Landscape:** The smart grid market is competitive, with major players like General Electric (GE) and ABB Ltd. investing heavily in smart grid technologies. The race for innovation is driving companies to acquire startups with unique smart grid capabilities.
- **M&A Opportunities:** Companies may seek to acquire startups specializing in demand response or advanced metering technologies to enhance their smart grid capabilities. Schneider Electric's acquisition of Aveva Group exemplifies this trend.

Carbon Capture

- **Trend Explanation:** Carbon capture technology aims to reduce CO2 emissions from industrial processes by capturing and storing carbon. The carbon capture market is expected to grow from \$1.9 billion in 2020 to \$7.0 billion by 2027, at a CAGR of 20.5%. This growth is driven by increasing regulatory pressures and corporate sustainability goals.

Key Companies:

- **Occidental Petroleum Corporation (OXY):** Occidental is a leader in carbon capture, focusing on technologies that capture CO2 for storage or utilization. The company's initiatives align with the growing emphasis on carbon reduction.
- **Chevron Corporation (CVX):** Chevron integrates carbon capture into its operations, enhancing oil recovery while minimizing emissions. The company's focus on sustainability positions it well in the carbon capture market.
- **Competitive Landscape:** The carbon capture market features competition from established oil and gas companies like ExxonMobil (XOM) and Shell (RDS.A), which are also investing in carbon capture technologies.
- **M&A Opportunities:** Energy companies may pursue acquisitions of startups specializing in carbon capture technologies to enhance their sustainability initiatives. Occidental's acquisition of Carbon Engineering exemplifies this trend.

Hydrogen

- **Trend Explanation:** Hydrogen technology focuses on producing hydrogen from renewable sources for clean fuel applications. The hydrogen market is projected to grow from \$130 billion

6. Recommended Readings

Deal Name: ExxonMobil's Acquisition of Pioneer Natural Resources

- **Reading Material:** "The Prize" by Daniel Yergin
- **Why This Matters:** This book provides insights into the oil industry's financial dynamics and market trends, which are crucial for understanding ExxonMobil's strategic rationale behind the

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\$60 billion acquisition (XOM). It explains how oil companies leverage reserves and production capabilities to drive revenue, helping to contextualize the deal's valuation and potential synergies.

Deal Name: NextEra Energy's Acquisition of Gulf Power

- Reading Material: "The New Economics of Energy" by David H. Hargreaves
- Why This Matters: This reading delves into the evolving landscape of energy and utilities, particularly in the context of renewable energy integration. It helps to understand NextEra's \$5.1 billion acquisition (NEE) as a strategic move to bolster its renewable energy portfolio and compete with rivals like Duke Energy (DUK) and Dominion Energy (D).

Deal Name: Chevron's Acquisition of Noble Energy

- Reading Material: "The Lean Startup" by Eric Ries
- Why This Matters: This book outlines methodologies for energy companies to innovate and grow, which is relevant for understanding Chevron's \$5 billion acquisition (CVX) of Noble Energy. It highlights the importance of integrating new technologies and production methods to enhance operational efficiency and market positioning, aligning with Chevron's vision of a comprehensive energy portfolio.

7. MACROECONOMIC UPDATE

Key Data Points:

- Average effective U.S. tariff rate: 15-20%
- Q1 imports: up 37%
- Q2 imports: down 30%
- GDP growth in Q2: 3%
- Final sales to domestic purchasers: up 1.1%

Main Insights:

- Recent trade agreements have reduced short-term tariff uncertainty but long-term uncertainties remain.
- Effective tariff rates have decreased from potential highs of 25-30% to current levels of 15-20%.
- Economic data may not fully reflect the impacts of tariffs yet, with inflation expected to rise in the coming months.
- Consumer spending, particularly among lower and middle-income households, is anticipated to soften due to tariffs acting as a regressive tax.

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Market Commentary:

- "We've reduced the range of potential outcomes in the near term around tariff rates." - Michael Zezas
- "We think the consumer would slow down into the end of the year." - Michael Gapen

Energy Sector Relevance:

- The agreement with Europe includes commitments to purchase U.S. energy, raising questions about supply amidst rising domestic energy needs.
- Tariffs could impact energy prices and consumption patterns, particularly as they affect lower-income households who spend a larger portion of their income on energy-related expenses.

The information used in this section is gathered from 'Thoughts on the market', by Morgan Stanley