

**Headlines for 2015**

2015 was the largest M&A year in history with total worldwide deal volume standing at \$5.05 trillion; surpassing the previous high mark of \$4.6 trillion set in 2007. Healthcare and Technology were the leading sectors at \$724.4 billion and \$713.1 billion in deals respectively.

The worldwide oil industry is experiencing its most significant downturn since the 1990’s. The prolific oil production in the United States combined with steady international production has led to the drop in oil prices. Experts forecast prices to stay low for the foreseeable future.

SpaceX CEO Elon Musk revealed his idea to colonize Mars. His initial plans involve dropping thermonuclear bombs at the poles of Mars to heat up the atmosphere. This tactic, along with the recent discovery of water on the planet, lead him to believe that Mars will be habitable in the future.

**Things to Watch For in 2016**

The race for the Presidency heats up as the U.S. enters an election year. Leading candidates Hillary Clinton (D), Ted Cruz (R), Marco Rubio (R), Bernie Sanders (D) and Donald Trump (R) will all jockey for position throughout the year.

The decrease in global demand for Chinese products combined with the government’s plans for structural reform will lead to further economic instability throughout 2016.

**Investment Banking Terminology:**

409A Valuation – Required when a company issues employee stock options or uses stock to purchase other companies. By hiring a professional valuation firm, a company is allowed more flexibility in its valuation methodology.

**Market Snapshot as of Dec. 31, 2015**

As of Dec. 31 <sup>st</sup>	Dec. 31 <sup>st</sup>	LTM % Δ
<b>S&amp;P 500</b>	<b>\$2,035.40</b>	<b>(0.83)%</b>
<b>Gold</b>	<b>\$1,086.00</b>	<b>(10.46)%</b>
<b>Oil</b>	<b>\$37.04</b>	<b>(30.47)%</b>
<b>10 Yr. T-Note</b>	<b>2.26%</b>	<b>9 bps</b>

**Janet Yellen, the Most Powerful Woman in the World**

On Dec. 16th, Janet Yellen announced the long-expected increase in the targeted federal funds rate – signifying the general view that inflation and employment rates are heading in the right direction. This move is the most public decision of Janet’s career as Chair of the Board of Governors since her confirmation in Jan. 2014. In the wake of the change, CNN and The Atlantic dubbed Janet the “most powerful woman in the world.” Over the last 40 years, Janet has held many positions in the upper echelons of the economics field; with her confirmation in January 2014 she rose to the highest position within the field.

**M&A Focus**

On Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>, Cox Automotive completed its acquisition of Dealertrack Technologies, Inc. Dealertrack is one of the frontrunners of software solutions and services for automotive retailers. The deal is valued at approximately \$4 billion, or a 54 percent premium for Dealertrack’s common stock. The merger is notable because Tobin & Company has a history with Dealertrack. In 2006, Tobin & Company acted as the investment bank of record in the sale of Dealerwire, Inc., a provider of inventory management solutions for the automotive retail industry, to Dealertrack.

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