

# ALAIN VAN WEST

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## CORPORATE GROWTH & EXPANSION SPECIALIST

**Commercial Strategy | Sports and Travel-Tech Leadership | Capital Raising | Partnership & Market Dev**

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Business leader with 20+ years in multinational and startup environments across sport, business travel, travel technology, and rail/airline distribution. Proven track record in global growth markets, partnerships, and indirect routes to market. Founder and Executive Chairman of a venture-stage sports platform, leading capital raising, board building, and strategic positioning. Experienced in building scalable business models and high-level networks, thriving in complex, dynamic environments where commercial strategy and stakeholder alignment are key.

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## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**ELITE WOMEN RUGBY COMMUNITY** – *The global platform and professional competition for women's rugby.*

**Executive Chairman**, London

2018–to date

**Founder of a venture stage startup**, building the Elite Women Rugby Community (EWRC): a platform and digital marketplace for women's rugby, centred on the World Professional Championship (WPRC) – the flagship elite-level competition designed to professionalise players, create global role models, and drive participation in sport.

- Built a high calibre board and advisory panel comprising household names and senior influencers across sport, media, and investment.
- Raised several hundred thousand pounds in pre-seed capital and currently leading a multi-million pound seed round in preparations for Series A.
- Established a growing network across federation, unions, clubs, sponsors, and players to position EWRC within the wider rugby ecosystem.
- Defined a scalable business model combining professional competition, digital fan engagement, and athlete-driven content as the foundation for the global platform.
- Developed strong expertise in venture capital, private equity, and family office networks, with hands-on experience in capital raising, structuring, and investor relations.

**SAP CONCUR** – *Global Technology company. Global transactions >US\$1.6B.*

**Chief of Staff / COO International**, London

2016–2020

**Part of the International Senior Leadership Team**, tasked with the exponential expansion of the Concur product outside the USA, taking the Concur to markets across LATAM, EMEA and APAC

- Grew ARR by over 35% year over year through both expansion into over 10 new markets in the space of 3 years, and the further deployment into existing markets.
- Participated in the global efforts to streamline the product roadmap, resulting in the adoption of new technologies to lead the field in travel technology.
- Coordinated efforts with transverse internal partners (Finance, Talent Acquisition, HR and SAP) in order to ensure the staffing process was always on point, which in turn impacted growth (quota carrying FTEs).
- Responsible for cross division coordination from an SAP Concur perspective within SAP, in order to harmonise the commercial process flow, and fully integrate SAP Concur within the SAP commercial machine.

**SILVERRAIL TECHNOLOGIES** – *A start-up technology company that provides a global rail GDS service and a technology stack to organisations across the world. 210 staff.*

**Vice President Business Development and Industry Relations**, London

2013–2016

**Specifically appointed to leverage previous experience and powerful skill set** to refocus this emerging start-up with business development traction, strategic market positioning and organisational restructuring.

Teamed in an 8 person executive, directing client and distributor acquisition and technology stack sales. Negotiation and contracting authority shared with executive colleagues.

- Comprehensive analysis and detailed strategic planning underpinned outstanding success with the doubling of revenue in each of the last 2 years, and a fivefold increase in the company's valuation.
- Astutely attracted key decision making staff, infused market knowledge, renegotiated disadvantageous contracts and secured 6 distribution infrastructure sales contracts with organisations in the USA and Europe.
- Initiated decisive upselling plans focusing on corporate strengths, and subsequently expanded sales through the full technology stack product range.
- Delivered inspiring leadership to consolidate the organization with multiple strategic partnerships to transform the organization from a transactional to an enterprise business, with a healthy business pipeline.
- Outstanding performance recognised with a 50% overachievement of annual bonus targets.

**AMERICAN EXPRESS BUSINESS TRAVEL** – Global Travel Management company. UK transactions >US\$1B.

**Director – Head of Sales UK**, London

2011–2013

**Challenged to turn around an underperforming sales team**, revitalise client engagement strategies and refocus a business suffering from a depleted pipeline and poor bid-to-win ratio. A senior leadership team role with 16 UK staff and US\$200M incremental sales budget.

- Gained rapid traction with charismatic leadership to dramatically improve client acquisition, exceeding team revenue targets and dramatically improving the bid to win ratio from 20% to >50% in year 1.
- Refocused underperforming staff towards their skill set strengths, effectively rejuvenating engagement and motivation and securing high levels of productivity and job satisfaction.
- Strategically focused on a significant uplift in customer satisfaction metrics, championing a level of service that directly led to a move from the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest UK travel organization to being the largest by a significant amount.
- Internally recognised for managerial effectiveness and provided the opportunity to develop the next generation of company leaders via stewardship of internal training and development programs.

**PIDGEWEST GROUP** – A company in start-up mode, providing an online service provider database. Operated prototypes in Europe, the USA, and New Zealand, acquiring 700 service providers prior to wind up.

**Chief Executive Officer and Founder**, London and Toulouse

2007–2011

**Courageously formed a new technology company**, consolidating prodigious corporate experience, understanding, expertise and network in a global enterprise. Operated as CEO and Board Chairman, overseeing 17 staff and a US\$500K budget delivering 2 prototypes across 4 locations.

- Undertook extensive tactical planning to consolidate this innovative concept, successfully engaging colleagues, 700 service providers and securing letters of intent from global travel and financial services organisations.
- Successfully delivered fully functional models in 4 countries across 3 continents, achieving high levels of market recognition for this uniquely innovative technology based service.

**Prior Positions:** Early experience gained as Interim Commercial Director with BCD Travel in France (2006-2007), Global Sales Director with Carlson Wagonlit Travel (2005-2006), Director of International Sales with Eurostar (2002–2005), Manager Pan European Accounts and E-Commerce with US Airways (1997–2002), Account Manager with T.A.T. European Airlines (1995-1997), and UK Sales Manager with The Walt Disney Company (1992-1995).

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## BOARD EXPERIENCE

**Board roles** with Avenir Digital (2018-2020), PIDGEWEST GROUP (2007-2011) and EWRC (2018 to date) and various community sports clubs.

**Charity board roles** on Sacred Heart Parish Finance Committee (2016 to date), Vice Chair on the Board of Governors at St John Fisher Primary School (2021 to date)

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## EDUCATION

**MBA** – Heriot-Watt University.

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