

Da Vinci buys brokerage as fund close looms

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The investment comes from the Russian-based firm's second fund which is nearing a \$200m final close.

Da Vinci Capital has acquired a 63 percent stake in IT Invest, a Russian online brokerage service. Financial details of the transaction were undisclosed.

IT Invest provides brokerage services for individuals and businesses on Russian and global financial markets, including internet trading, depositary services, margin financing, investment consulting and analytical support, according to a statement from the firm. Oleg Jelezko, managing partner of Da Vinci Capital, said the investment rationale was internationalizing the business and expanding the company's product lines.

Da Vinci made the investment using its latest fund, Da Vinci Private Equity Fund II, which is currently in the market attempting to raise \$200 million. The firm held a \$100 million first close in January, and is expected to hold a final close in the first half of the year.

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development committed \$30 million to the fund. Other anchor investors include two US fund of funds.

Da Vinci, which was founded in 2007, targets investments in Russia and the rest of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The firm typically invests in financial services and IT, but also targets other sectors.

Following the acquisition of IT Invest, the firm has made three investments from this fund. It has backed B2B Center, a Russian online procurement platform within the corporate sector, and First Collection Bureau, a Russian debt acquisition and collection business.