

# NEWSLETTER

## MUST WE GROW?

**Fundraising activities, especially from Private Equity and Venture Capital firms**, will continue to serve as **the lifeblood** that fuels innovation and technology adoption. This flow of capital enables Vietnamese businesses to invest in research and development, scale digital models such as fintech, edtech, and e-commerce, and ultimately enhance the overall productivity of the economy.

**Macroeconomic stability** and **the ongoing plan to upgrade Vietnam's stock market classification** will also attract more foreign indirect investment, which in turn strengthens market liquidity and transparency. At the same time, mergers and acquisitions remain a critical mechanism for reallocating resources more efficiently. Through M&A transactions and the participation of foreign investors, domestic enterprises gain access to modern technologies, advanced governance practices, and opportunities to restructure debt or divest underperforming assets, thereby improving their competitiveness on the global stage.

The momentum of M&A is shifting toward long-term growth sectors such as renewable energy, healthcare, pharmaceuticals, and manufacturing, reflecting the broader trend of global supply chain diversification. Taken together, the combination of new capital inflows through fundraising and better optimization of existing resources through M&A creates a dual engine that helps Vietnam's key industries grow in scale, improve operational efficiency, and move toward more sustainable development in the years ahead.



# EFISHERY WHEN DATA LIES

**eFishery**, a pioneer in Indonesia's AquaTech (aquaculture technology) sector, was once a symbol of exceptional growth within the Southeast Asian startup ecosystem. With its core product being an IoT-based smart feeder device designed to optimize fish and shrimp farming efficiency, eFishery attracted significant attention from international investors and achieved Unicorn status with an impressive valuation of approximately \$1.4 billion after completing its Series D funding round in 2023. The breakneck growth rate and the mission to support small-scale farmers transformed eFishery into a "shining star," fostering confidence in the immense potential of the AgriTech/AquaTech sector across the region.

*However, this growth was built upon an unstable financial foundation and a severe lack of transparency. The company was accused of systematic data fraud, allegedly spanning since 2018. The lack of transparency was demonstrated by maintaining dual accounting books, where the figures presented to investors were intentionally inflated..*

Specifically, external financial reports were falsified; for instance, actual revenue was reportedly only one-fourth of the reported figure. Furthermore, the dishonesty extended to core operational data, as the actual number of deployed devices or the scale of farmer partners reported was also exaggerated. This behavior was not merely an accounting error but an organized act of manipulation, aiming to create an image of an exceptionally profitable enterprise with outstanding growth potential to attract capital.

**When accusations of financial and data fraud were exposed, the consequences for eFishery and the entire regional startup ecosystem were profound.** Investor confidence in Southeast Asian Startups, particularly high-growth AgriTech companies, was severely eroded. **Venture Capital funds became more cautious, tightening the due diligence process and demanding higher standards of Corporate Governance.** For eFishery itself, the scandal destroyed its reputation, pushing the company into an un-commercial state in its current form and facing complex legal issues.

*This case serves as a powerful warning: no matter how brilliant the idea or how high the growth rate, data quality and integrity are the ultimate foundations determining the survival, successful fundraising capability, and sustainability of any enterprise.*





# DATA INTEGRITY

## THE FOUNDATION FOR SME GROWTH FUNDRAISING

When the digital economy increases its share of GDP, investors demand transparent, verifiable data. For SMEs, "data integrity" is no longer a bonus but a prerequisite for closing a funding round and scaling up.

### POLICY FROM THE GOVERNMENT

On September 9, 2025, the Government issued **Decision 1946/QĐ-TTg** on the Implementation Plan for the **Law on Digital Technology Industry**, requiring ministries and sectors to finalize guidelines and organize synchronous implementation by 2026.

This serves as the implementation framework for standardizing data and digital processes at the enterprise level. Concurrently, reports indicate that the digital economy's share reached approximately 18.72% of GDP in 2025 and is heading towards the 20% mark—figures that both drive growth and necessitate higher standards for transparency and data verifiability in capital access.



### THE REALITY OF DATA GOVERNANCE DURING FUNDRAISING



Many SMEs operate on fragmented systems (POS/ERP/CRM/e-commerce platforms), resulting in multiple data figures being used for the same metrics (revenue, inventory, cash flow). Lack of structural standardization and reconciliation schedules leads to inconsistent data over time, prolonging the due diligence process and diminishing the valuation. Furthermore, the proportion of documents with digital signatures and audit trails (change logs, access permissions, timestamps) remains limited, making it difficult to prove data origin and integrity, even though the capacity for digital signatures across the entire economy is ready for transformation.



# ADVICE FOR SMES

## 1. Review & Audit the Data Strategy (Digital/Data strategy)

Review all current data systems (POS/ERP/CRM/e-Commerce...) to assess the degree of standardization, accuracy, and accessibility when data is required for the valuation and fundraising process.

## 2. Establish an End-to-End System with a "Single Source of Truth" (Centralized Data Hub)

Design a synchronous system solution (data lake/data warehouse) so that all metrics related to revenue, costs, and inventory are managed uniformly, avoiding data fragmentation.

## 3. Design Intelligent Management Dashboards

Provide financial reports and operational metrics (revenue, CAC, LTV, operating costs) according to transparent, verifiable standards, ready for investor due diligence.

## 4. Ensure Data Security & Compliance

Integrate security, access controls, and comply with new regulations such as the **Personal Data Protection Decree 13/2025**.

*If you requires a highly specialized unit, **Orthian** is always confident and ready to **partner with SMEs** not just as a technology implementation provider, but as a "**Digital Partner**" helping your business **design, operate, and standardize the entire data system**, making it ready for any **funding round**.*

*"In a stricter economic climate, data integrity is no longer a "bonus" but has become the prerequisite for unlocking fundraising and scaling. The new implementation framework (1946/QD-TTg) and national digital signature capacity are ready; the rest lies in the data discipline and operational consistency of each enterprise."*

