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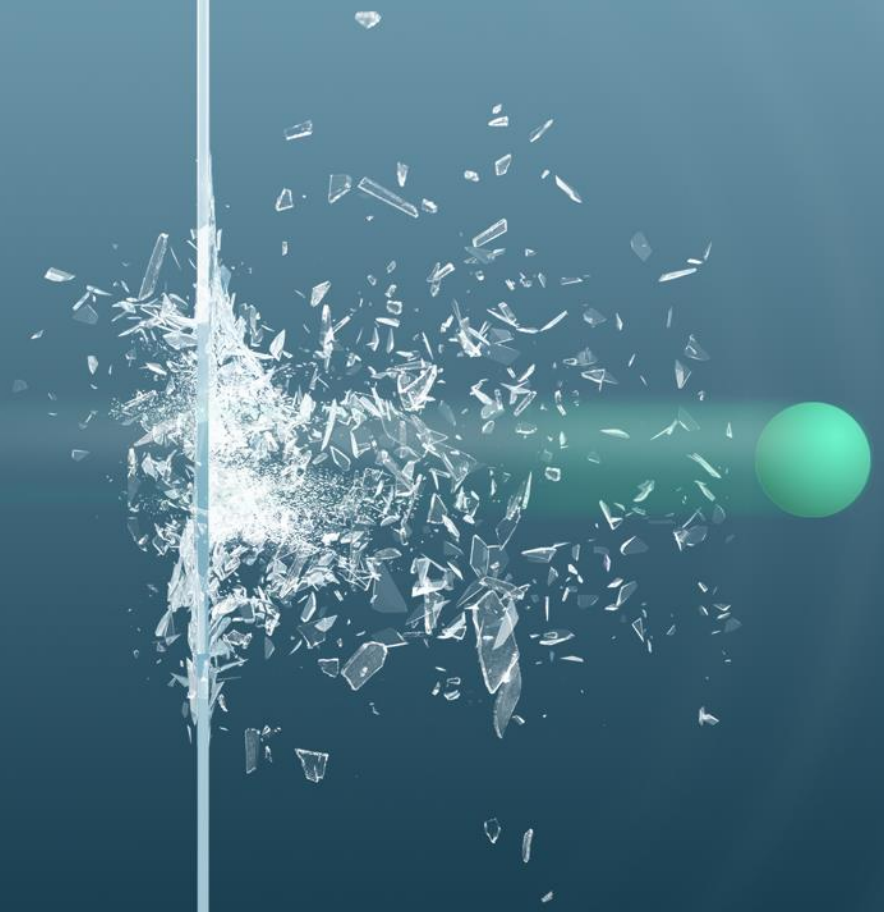
Connor Group:
IPO Midyear Report 2026

18 Month Analysis of 2025 & H1 2026 IPOs |

Deep Dive into 148 "Traditional IPOs" > $250M



2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

IPO Midyear Report 2026

A decision-grade dataset to budget time, dollars AND to set expectations for your IPO process

BUILT FOR THE DEAL TEAM: 4 Target Groups

CEO & CFO
Sizing the spend and the timing

General Counsel
Governance & readiness execution

Corp. Controller
Audit, reporting & cost planning

Board & Investors
Approvals and committee buy-in

THE SEVEN+ QUESTIONS WE ANSWER

1. What will an IPO cost me, end to end?
2. How to budget auditors, lawyers, printers & more
3. Which audit firms lead: Big 4 or regional? Law firms?
4. Which industry sectors are most active for IPOs?
5. Which banks & co-managers are doing the deals?
6. Day-one and six-month trading performance
7. Key IPO readiness workstreams & sample timelines

AND MORE details about bankers, underwriter discounts, board size, trading performance, directed shares, etc.

How To Use: We've found that IPO costs & effort scale predictably by valuation. Thus, we group IPO company data into tiers to help you benchmark against your peers.

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REPORT ROADMAP

What's Inside this Decision-Grade Dataset

Section 1: IPO Market Analysis

18 months of traditional IPOs (2025 to H1 2026)

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SECTION ONE

IPO Market Analysis

Focus on 18 months of Traditional IPOs (2025 to H1 2026)

MARKET STRUCTURE

Traditional IPOs: Majority of the Capital Raised but a Fraction of the Volume

533
IPOs priced
Jan 2025–Jun 2026

$203B
Total Capital Raised

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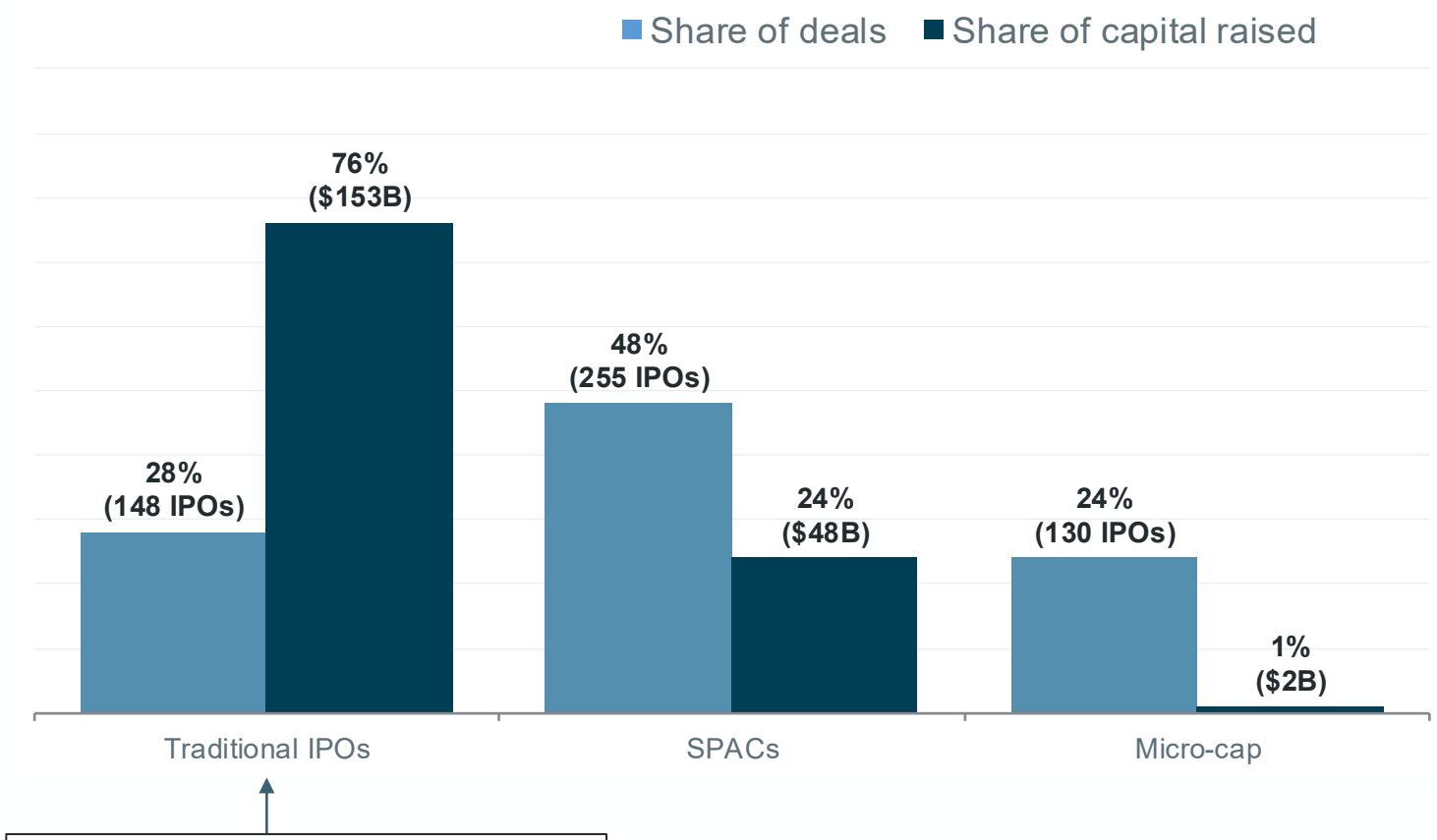
Dataset:
533 IPOs completed over the 18 months from 1/1/25–6/30/26.

Our Focus:
The 148 "Traditional IPOs" ***within*** that data set of 533 Total IPOs. A "Traditional IPO" are companies valued over $250M at time of IPO, excluding SPACs.

Why it matters:
"Traditional IPOs" are the most relevant peer group for IPO planning. This report benchmarks their costs, timelines, and advisors to guide private companies preparing to go public.



This Mid-Year Report drills-down on the 148 "Traditional IPOs" over the past 18 months. This is most relevant for VC and PE backed companies targeting a future IPO.

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IPO EXPENSES

Traditional IPOs: IPO Expenses Scale with Company Valuations

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How to Use the Table:
Find your valuation bucket and read across to pressure-test your S-1 expense budget against what comparable issuers actually paid. Data reflects 148 Traditional IPOs (146 with disclosed fee data) from 1/1/25 to 6/30/26.

Reading the figures:
All amounts are medians per company, the typical deal, NOT an average skewed by outliers.

Example:
A company targeting a $900M IPO valuation should budget roughly $4.6M in total IPO costs:
$2.7M legal, $1.0M audit fees, $0.3M printer fees, $0.6M other.

Valuation bucket	Deals	All-in median	Legal	Auditor	Printer	Other
$5B – $10B+	33	$13.8M	$5.6M	$3.2M	$0.4M	$4.6M
$1B – $5B	57	$9.0M	$4.5M	$1.7M	$0.4M	$2.4M
$500M – $1B	35	$4.6M	$2.7M	$1.0M	$0.3M	$0.6M
$250M – $500M	23	$3.5M	$1.9M	$0.8M	$0.1M	$0.7M

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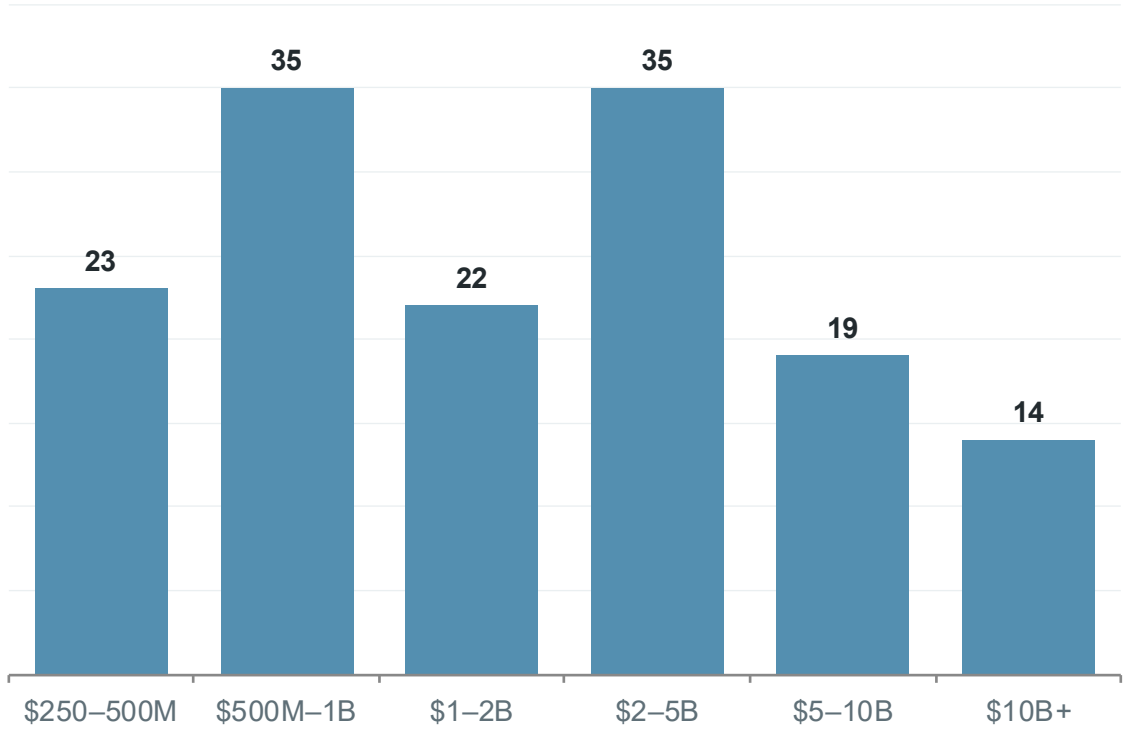
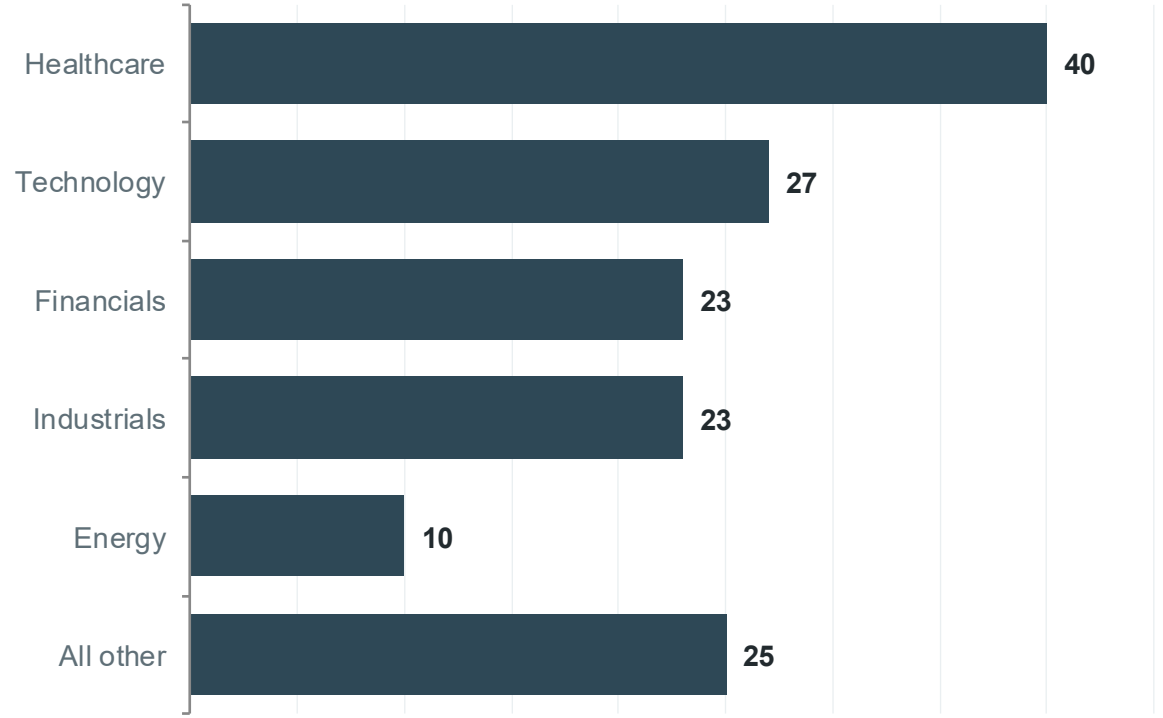
VALUATION & INDUSTRY

Deals Cluster $500M-1B and $2B-$5B: Tech / Healthcare represent 50%

Distribution by valuation at IPO (# of IPOs)



Distribution by sector (# of IPOs)



DATA: 1/1/25 to 6/30/26

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UNDERWRITER DISCOUNTS

The 7% Discount holds for Smaller Deals BUT Reduces for the Larger Deals

7.0%
Deals under $1B in valuation

6.9%
overall median spread

4.8%
median at $5B+ valuations

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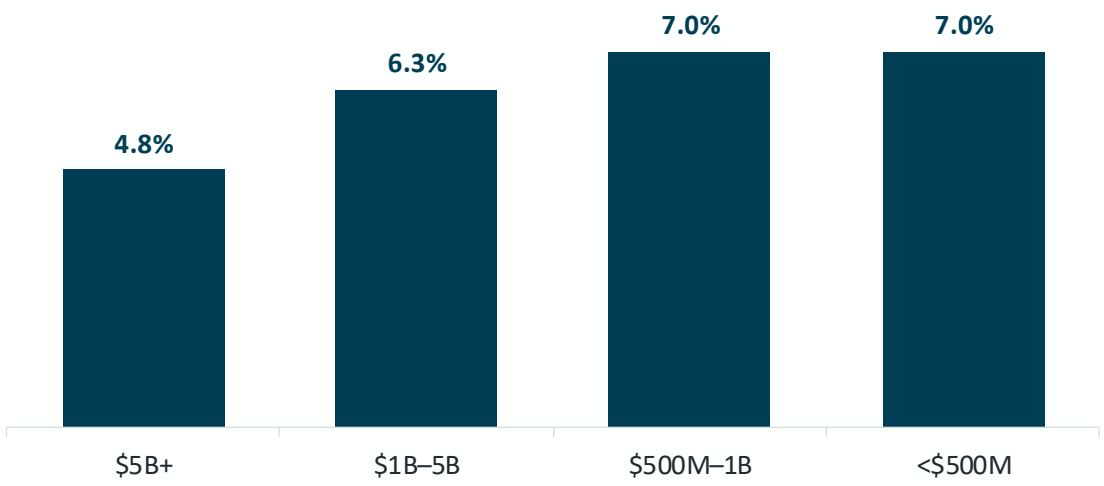
For your IPO:
The underwriter spread is the single biggest cost of going public.

Budget about 7% if you're valued under $1B; at $5B+ you have room to push toward 5% to 6%.

Median underwriter discount, by valuation tier



DATA: 1/1/25 to 6/30/26

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AUDITOR ANALYSIS

The Big Four Audited Roughly Two-thirds of Traditional IPOs

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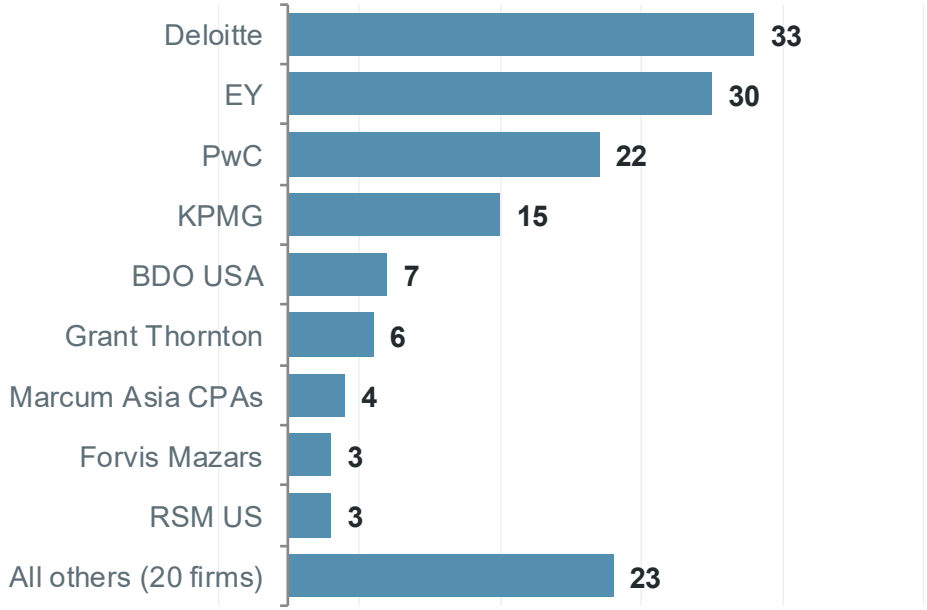
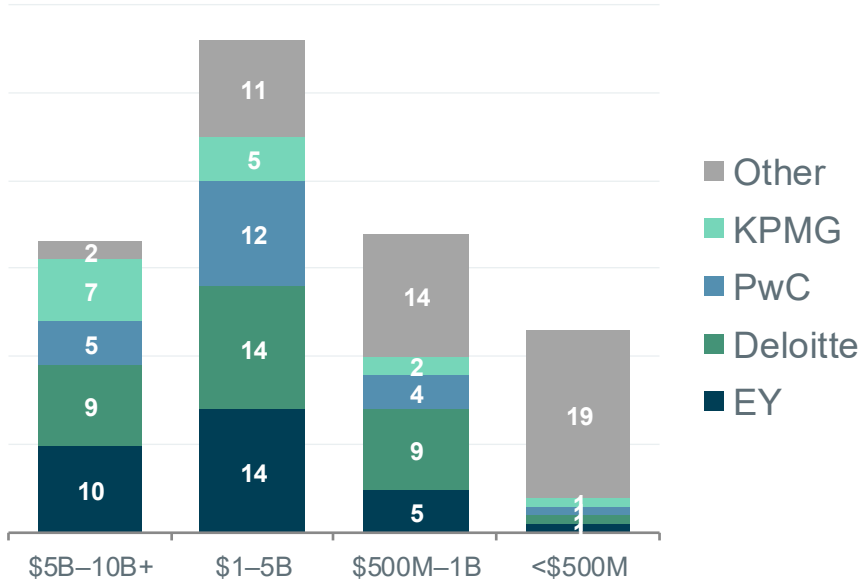
For your IPO:
An Auditor change ahead of IPO often triggers a PCAOB uplift (re-auditing prior-period financials to PCAOB standards). Plan for this early; it's a common driver of registration delays.

Auditor firms by deal count



Who audits each valuation tier (# of deals)



DATA: 1/1/25 to 6/30/26

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LEGAL COUNSEL

Legal Representation is Highly Distributed across the Market

82
distinct issuer law firms

68%
of engagements were with a firm outside the top 5

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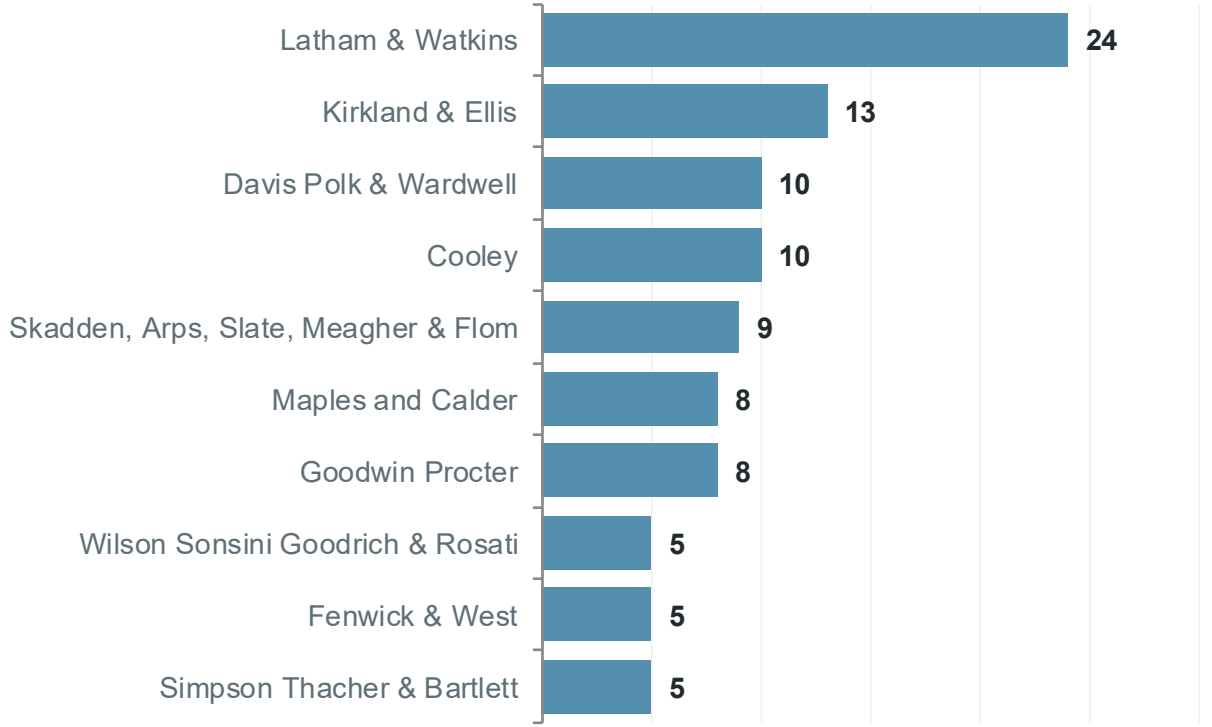
For your IPO:
No single firm dominates: the top firm appears on 24 of 148 deals, and 81 other firms split the rest.

Reported descriptively by deal count — a neutral, data-driven view of the market, not a ranking of quality or outcome.

Issuer law firms by engagement count



Plus 72 additional firms handled the remaining 108 engagements (1-4 deals each).

DATA: 1/1/25 to 6/30/26

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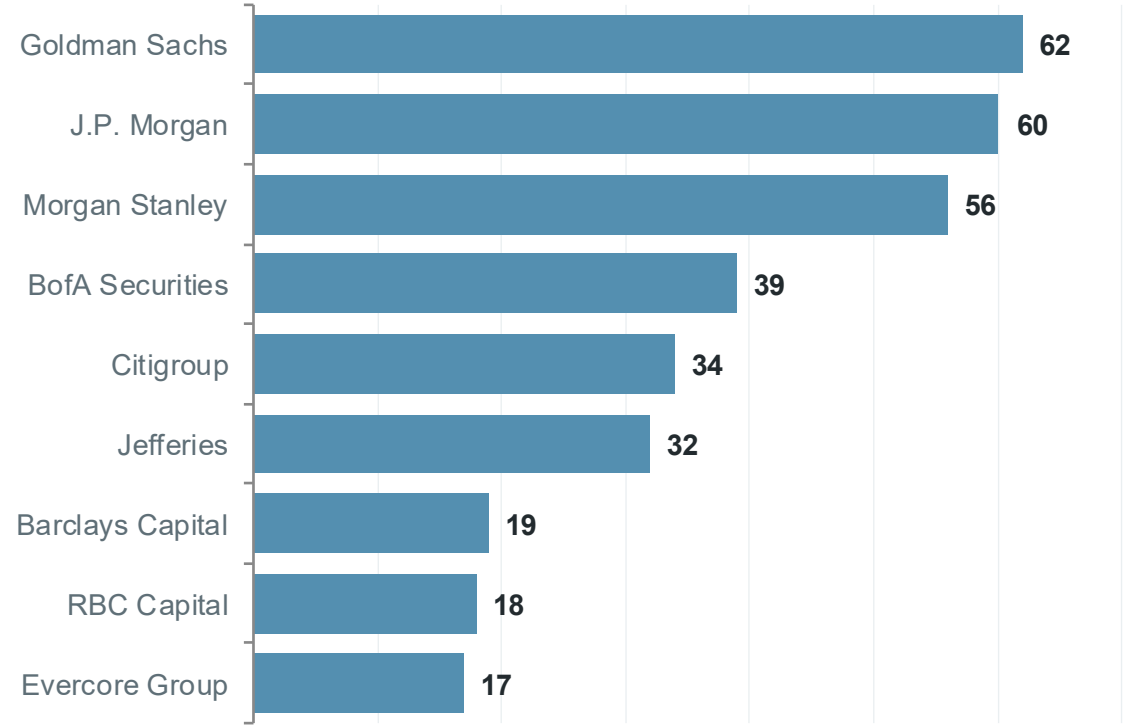
LEAD MANAGERS

Five Bulge-Bracket Banks led the Largest Deals; Smaller IPOs Spread Wide

Lead managers by engagement count



Engagements by valuation tier

Bank	$5B–10B+	$1–5B	$500M–1B	<$500M
Goldman Sachs	24	27	8	3
J.P. Morgan	21	26	12	1
Morgan Stanley	20	28	5	3
BofA Securities	15	15	5	4
Citi	14	16	4	0
Other top banks	43	75	56	17
All other banks	80	111	56	16

DATA: 1/1/25 to 6/30/26

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CO-MANAGERS

Co-Manager Roles are far More Democratic: 135 firms Shared the Work

135
distinct co-manager firms

629
total co-manager engagements

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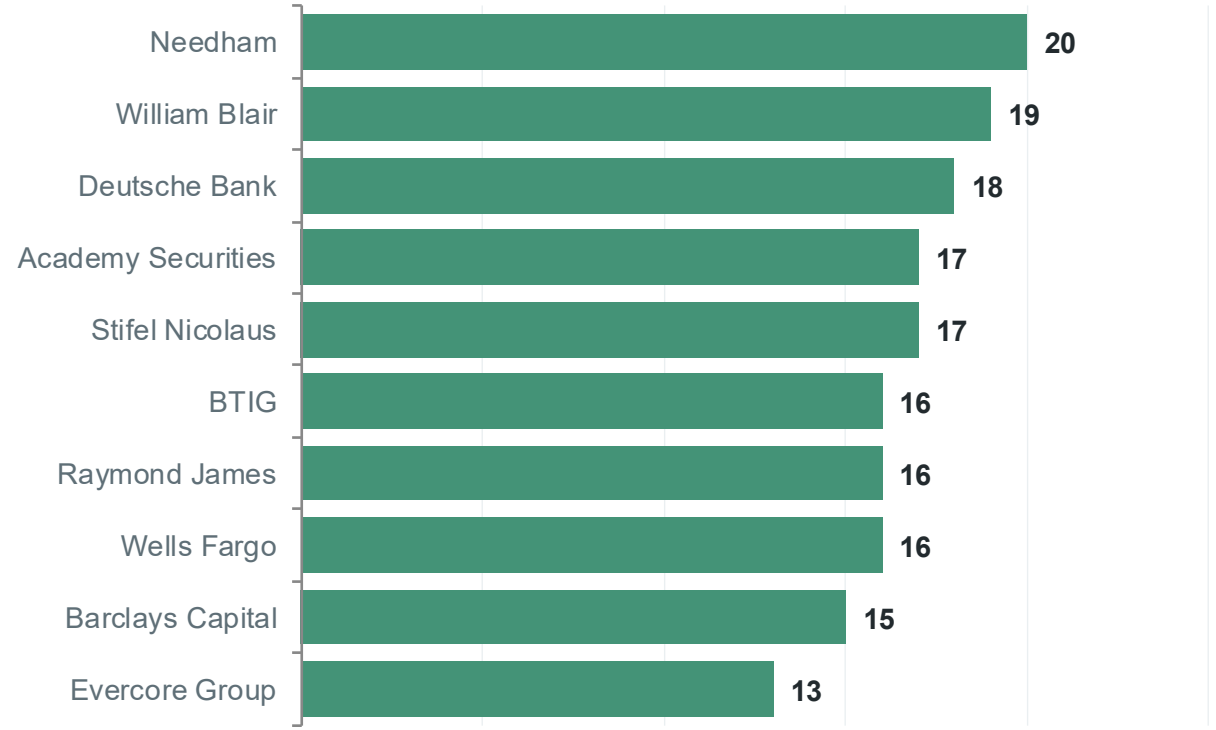
For your IPO:
Where lead-manager slots concentrate among five banks, co-manager roles fan out across 135 firms (the most fragmented advisor category in the dataset).

For issuers, the co-manager syndicate is where regional and sector-specialist banks earn a seat.

Top co-managers by engagement count



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SECTION TWO

“Benchmark” IPO Data

Focus on 18 months of Traditional IPOs (2025 to H1 2026)

BOARD SIZE

Boards Cluster at 7 Directors at IPO, Larger Deals Skew to Bigger Boards

7
median board size

4–15
range across the cohort

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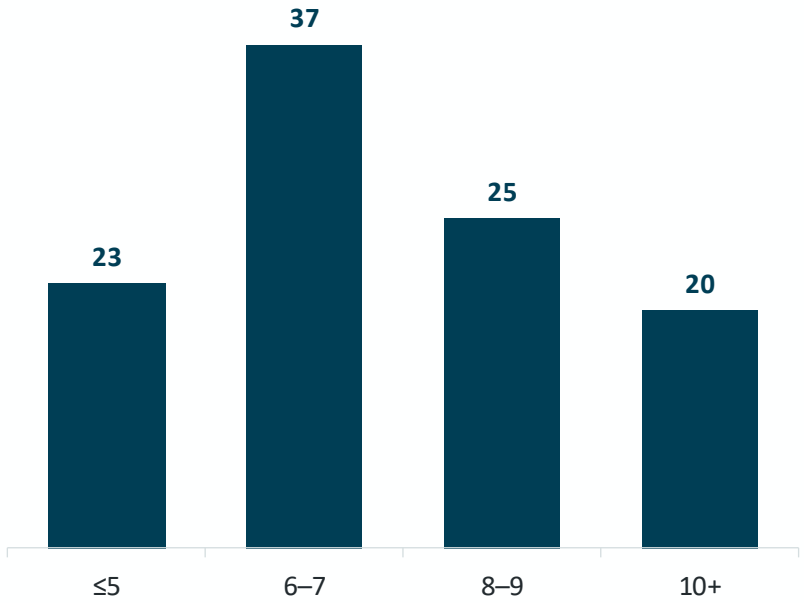
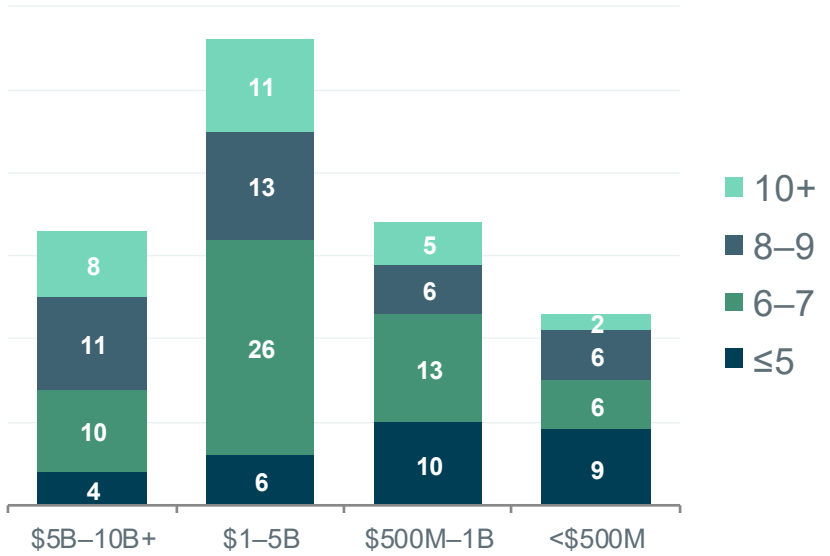
For Your IPO:
Public investors expect a board of roughly seven directors.

Recruit independent directors and stand up committees before you file, not during.

Board size at IPO (# of directors, # of IPOs)



Board size by valuation tier (# of IPOs)



DATA: 1/1/25 to 6/30/26

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DIRECTOR COMPENSATION

Nearly All Boards Pay Directors in both Cash and Equity, some latitude

74%

pay directors in cash and equity

89%

disclose a director-pay program

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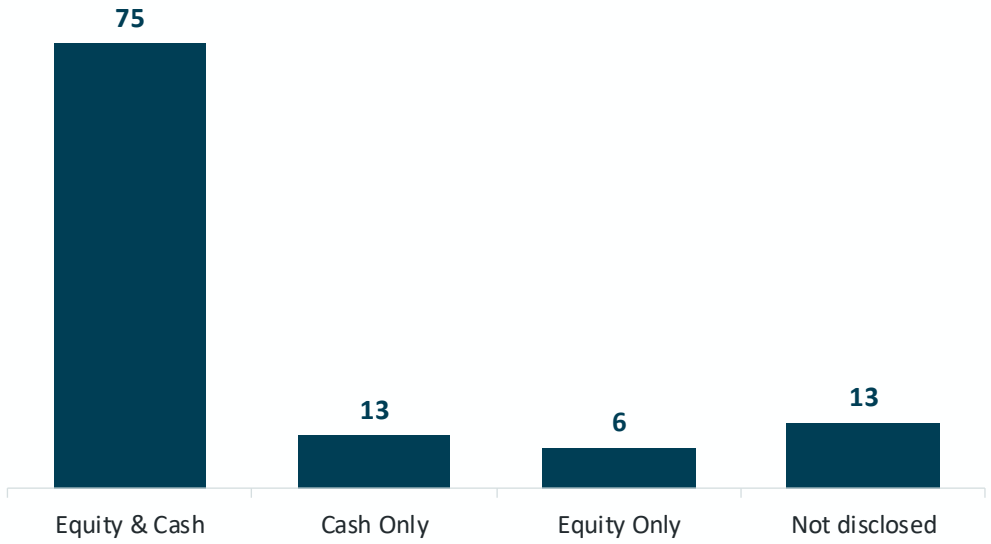
For Your IPO:

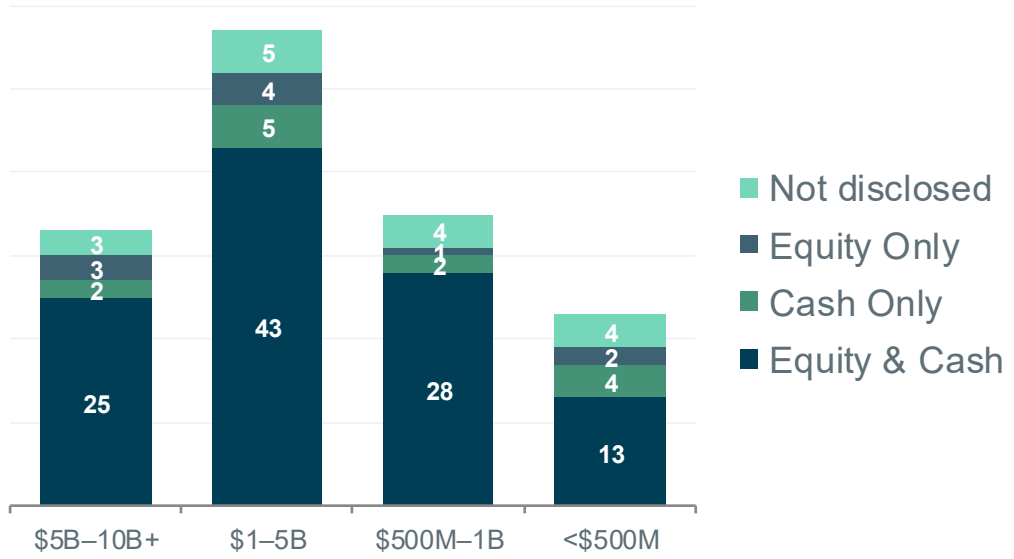
Nearly every board pays its directors, usually in both cash and equity.

Budget a market-competitive director pay package as a standing public-company cost.

Director compensation type (# of IPOs)



Director compensation by valuation tier (# of IPOs)



DATA: 1/1/25 to 6/30/26

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LOCK-UP AGREEMENTS

180 days is the Near-Universal Lock-up Standard, Some deals > 180 days

180

days — median lock-up

91%

of deals locked exactly 180 days

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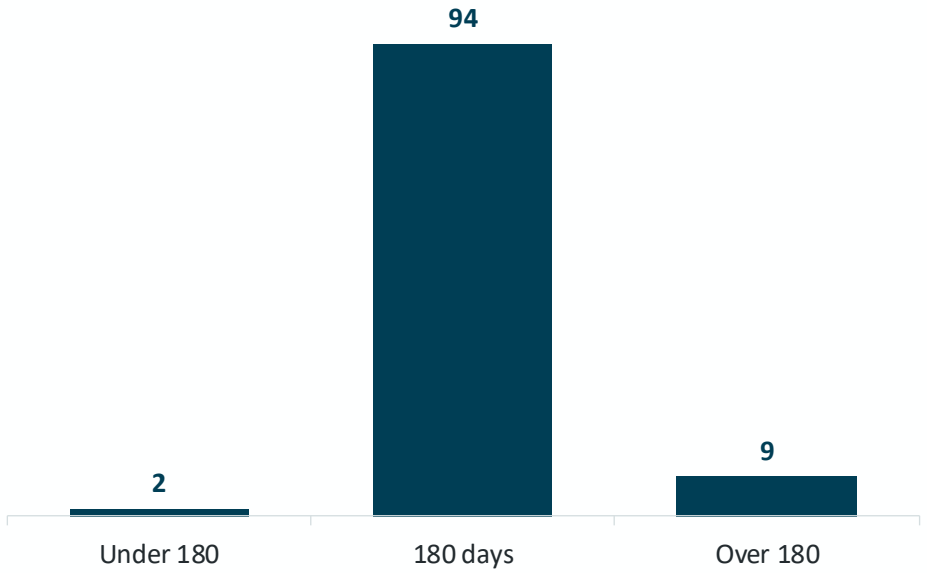
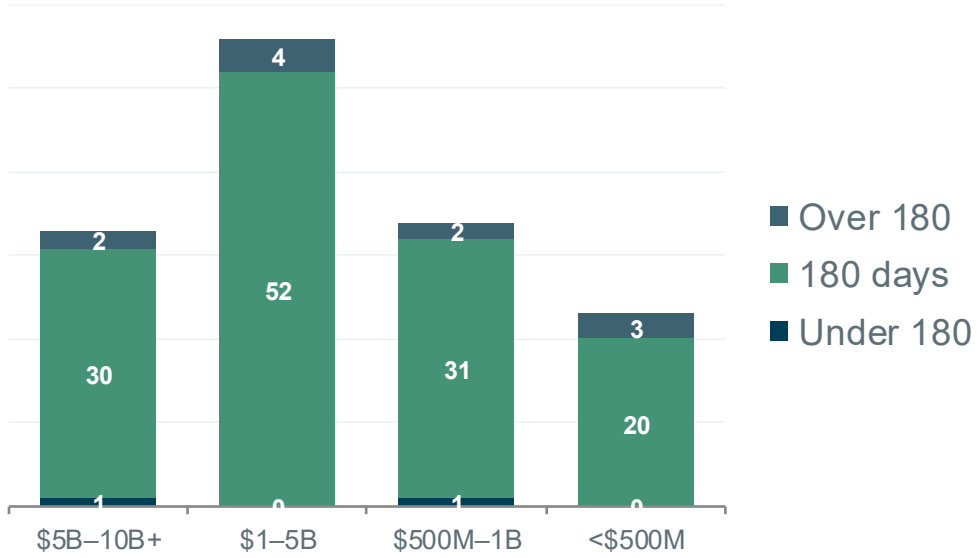
For your IPO:
Plan on a 180-day lock-up as the default.

Map when insiders & employees can sell. Set those expectations well before pricing.

Lock-up length (# of IPOs)



Lock-up length by valuation tier (# of IPOs)



DATA: 1/1/25 to 6/30/26

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DAYS IN REGISTRATION

Most Issuers Priced within a Month, Larger Deals faster than Smaller Deals

26

days — median in registration

66%

priced within 30 days

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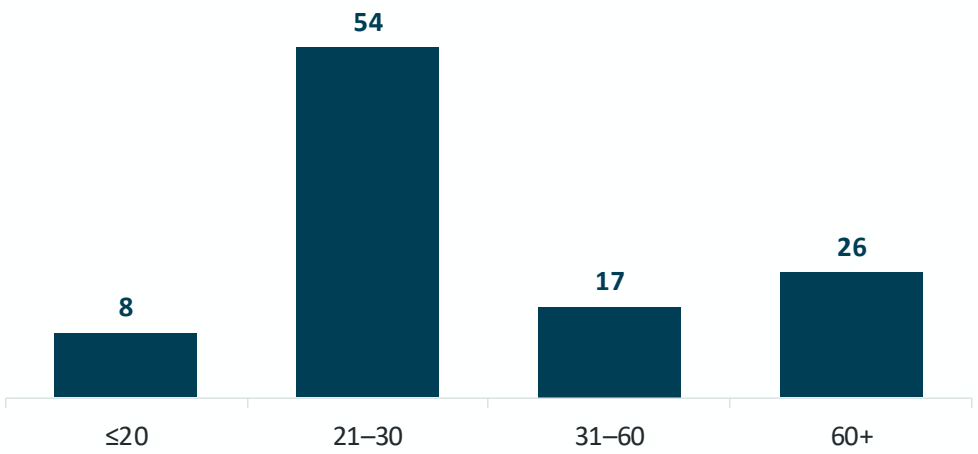
For your IPO:

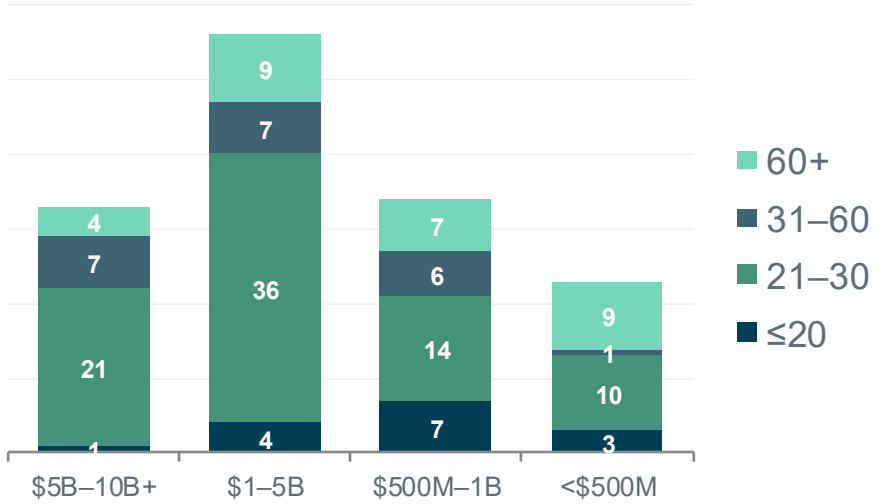
Once you publicly file, the registration window is short, so the real work is being audit-ready, board-ready, and story-ready beforehand. Long poles in the accounting tent include: historical financial statement prep, quarterization, technical memos, SOX/Controls readiness and systems.

Build your calendar backward from your target pricing date.

Days from First Public filing to Pricing (# of IPOs)



Days in registration by valuation tier (# of IPOs)



DATA: 1/1/25 to 6/30/26

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DIRECTED SHARES

About Half of IPOs Run a Directed-Share Program: Typically ~5% of the offer

51%
of IPOs ran a directed-share program

5%
median share of the offer (where used)

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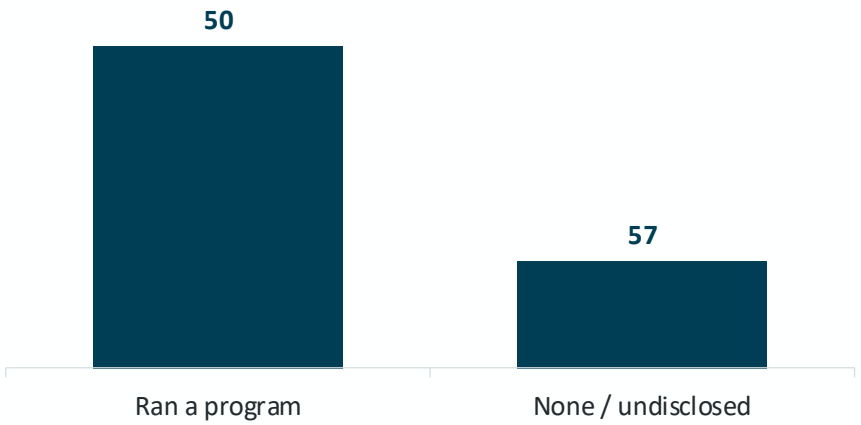
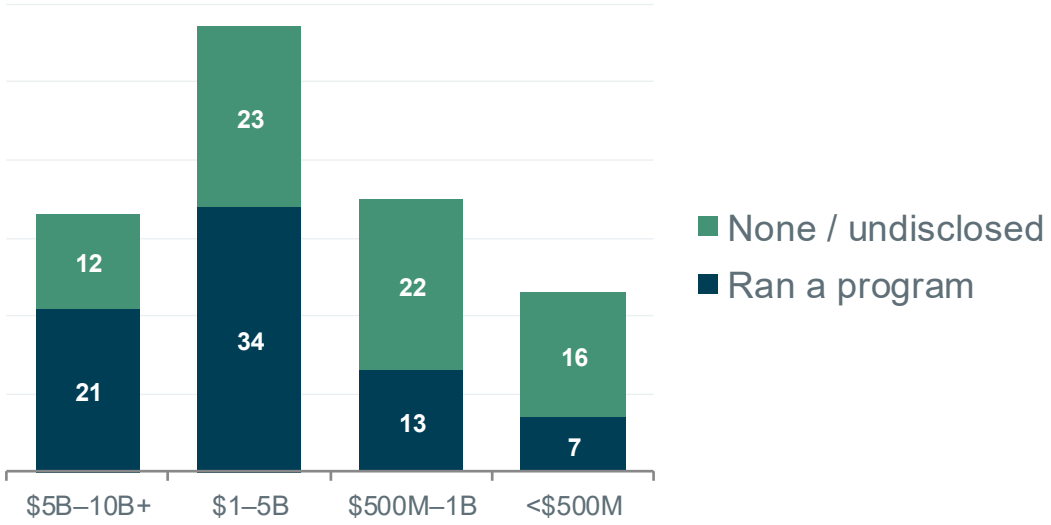
For your IPO:
Decide early whether to reserve shares for employees, customers, or insiders through a directed-share program, and size it deliberately.

Where used, programs typically run around 5% of the offer.

Directed-share program (# of IPOs)



Directed-share program by valuation tier (# of IPOs)



DATA: 1/1/25 to 6/30/26

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TRADING PERFORMANCE · 18 Months (Jan 2025–Jun 2026)

First-day Pops Fade through Six Months, then Recover Beyond a Year

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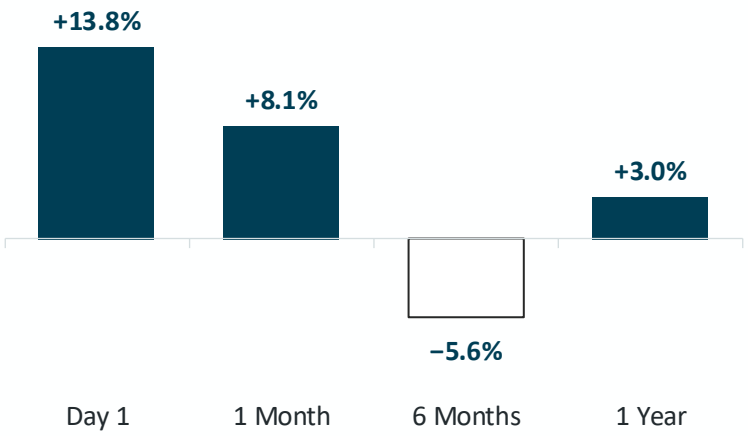
For your IPO:
Post-IPO performance is directly tied to a company's ability to beat and raise on financial guidance, supported by a public company grade close process, reporting infrastructure, and financial forecasting capability. Investing in these areas early creates a measurable advantage.

Medians neutralize a handful of micro-cap moonshots (several deals returned 900–2,400%, lifting the average near +60%). The 1-year sample is smaller (N=37) — later-2025 issuers haven't reached the mark.

Median return vs. offer price, by holding period

Holding period	Median	% above offer	N
Day 1	+13.8%	72%	142
1 Month	+8.1%	65%	137
6 Months	−5.6%	45%	84
1 Year	+3.0%	51%	37

Median return by holding period



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DATA SUMMARY · 18 Months (Jan 2025 – Jun 2026)

The Combined Cohort at a Glance: 148 traditional IPOs valued over $250M

148
traditional IPOs priced

$153.4B
total capital raised

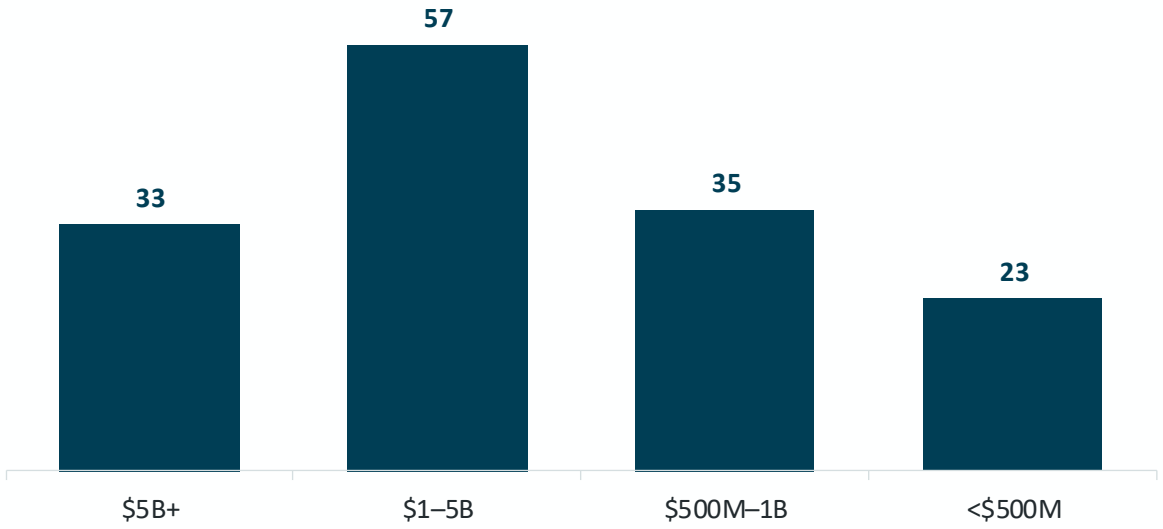
$1.84B
median valuation at IPO

6.9%
median underwriter spread

Cohort detail

Median deal size	**$309.1M**
Valuation range (low – high)	**$261.7M – $1.77T (SpaceX)**
Median days in registration	**26**
Median auditor fee	**$1.49M**
Median all-in IPO expenses	**$7.25M**

Deals by valuation at IPO (# of IPOs)



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SECTION THREE

IPO READINESS CONSIDERATIONS

Lessons learned from 275 IPOs at Connor Group worth over $4 Trillion in Valuation.

Connor Group helps growth companies (private & public) push through finance, accounting, and technology obstacles.

Five Focus Areas Required for "IPO Readiness"

Areas	Activities
1) Historical Accounting	• Audit preparation and support • Technical memos and policy drafting • Quarterly cutoff and SAS 100 procedures
2) Current Accounting	• Ongoing close of books monthly and quarterly • Revenue recognition expertise for products/offerings • Financial reporting at public company standards
3) Public-Company Ready	• People – organization planning, building team • Processes – public company close and timeline • Systems – ERP, revenue automation, close, etc. • Internal controls – certifications, framework, narratives
4) Registration Statement Process	• Drafting of MD&A and other financial sections • Assistance with responses to SEC comments • Post-IPO support: 10-K, 10-Q, & technical accounting
5) Financial Modeling	• Internal budgets, business forecasting, analyst models

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The IPO Journey (At A Glance)

Corporate Governance

- Board (with independent members)
- Audit Committee (with financial experts)
- Nominating Committee
- Governance Committee
- Compensation Committee
- Anti-fraud program
- Whistle-blower policy
- Code of Conduct/Ethics

Registration Statement

- Registration process management and coordination
- Theme design and execution
- Business “story” and description
- Risk factors
- Management’s discussion and analysis
- Compensation disclosures
- Registration statement tie-out and supporting files
- Auditor comfort letter
- Comment letter process
- Registration statement amendments

Forecasting + Reporting

- Accurate and timely management dashboards/reporting
- Robust budget versus actuals
- KPI (metrics) and non-GAAP measures
- Timely forecasts
- Forward-looking model for analysts and investors

Internal Controls

- Internal control assessment
- Entity-level controls
- Risk and control matrices
- Controls documentation
- Deficiency remediation
- SOX timeline and testing approach
- SOX certifications and sub-certs
- Internal audit (SOX) provider/team

Human Resources

- Compensation strategy
- Stock administration
- Internal communications
- HRIS implementation
- HR operational readiness

Legal

- Data room and printer
- Capitalization records
- D&O insurance
- “Lock-up” situation
- Analysis of registration rights
- “Overhang” analysis
- Minute books
- Stock plans
- Executive compensation
- Structure of entity and country/state of incorporation
- Defensive measures
- Charter and bylaw amendments
- Third party consents
- Settlement of claims
- Qualification to do business
- Confidential treatment
- Agreements affected by IPO

Information Technology

- Disaster recovery and security
- Data breaches and reporting
- Monitoring environment
- System implementations
- SOX (general, application)

Accounting

- Preparation of required historical annual and quarterly financial statement periods
- Audit and review preparation
- PCAOB financial statements
- Technical memos and policies
- Cheap stock assessment
- Earnings per share
- Audit and review process management
- Ongoing monthly/quarterly close
- Ongoing financial reporting at public company standards

Investor Relations

- Exchange and ticker
- selection
- Banking syndicate coordination
- Roadshow and TTW preparation
- Roadshow video coordination
- Investor relations website
- Press release and script

Connor Group: Notable IPO and Growth Clients

Below is a representative list of Connor Group clients: 275+ IPOs worth $4 Trillion+, 2000+ clients

Technology & SaaS		Fintech	Life Sciences	Consumer	Food & Foodtech
Uber	datto	coinbase	ambiq	cricut	GRUBHUB
duolingo	NIANTIC	FIGURE	BILLION TO ONE	Etsy	good eggs
NAVAN	OpenAI	GEMINI	bridgebio	AG1	GrubMarket
ServiceTitan	arm	Klarna.	Hinge Health	olo	ripple
UiPath™	HubSpot	toast	omada	WARBY PARKER	ONCE UPON A FARM

IPO READINESS SERVICES

Connor Group Solutions: For Private & Public Companies (over 2,000 clients)

Accounting Advisory

- Accounting for complex transactions
- Technical accounting matters & memos (i.e., revenue recognition, financial instruments, stock-based compensation, etc.)
- New standard adoptions (i.e., CECL)
- IFRS to US GAAP conversion
- PCAOB uplift procedures
- Bankruptcy accounting
- Restatements

Transformation & Risk

- Risk assessment and management
- Controls implementation & SOX compliance
- Internal audit
- Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)
- Cybersecurity
- Policies and procedures
- Process transformation
- Implement GRC technologies (e.g. FastPath, Workiva, AuditBoard, etc.)
- Project management

IPO Services

- Public company readiness assessment
- IPO planning and project management
- SEC-compliant financial statements and footnote preparation (i.e., EPS)
- Pro forma financial statements (Article 11)
- Public company technical accounting issues
- S-1, S-4 and F-1 drafting
- SEC comment letter process
- Public metrics and KPIs

Financial Close & Reporting

- Hands on operational close & accounting
- Interim controllership support
- Historic accounting clean-up
- Audit preparation (reconciliations, PBCs, etc.)
- Quarterization of historic period
- Month-end-close improvement and acceleration
- Drafting financials and quarterly reporting support
- Implement financial reporting technologies (BlackLine, FloQast, Workiva, etc.)

Digital Solutions

- Technology strategy and vision
- System evaluation and selection
- System and ERP implementation
- QTC and revenue transformation and automation
- System integrations (homegrown & 3rd party)
- Data architecture design and implementation
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) strategy & deployment
- Data & Analytics
- System administration and managed services

M&A Services

- Due diligence and M&A analytics
- Quality of earnings
- Deal structuring
- Opening balance sheet
- Purchase accounting
- Integration services
- IFRS and US GAAP M&A

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Systems, Automation and AI Capabilities

Technology Strategy

- Evaluate current technology stacks and support system selection
- Develop system roadmap & planning, including incorporation of AI
- Lead future state system landscape design with a focus on process and controls
- Assess and improve internal proprietary processes and systems (e.g., billing, revenue, inventory, etc.)

Implementation & Optimization

- Project manage and provide functional design support for finance related technologies
- Implement and optimize ERPs with a focus on leading practices for growth
- Incorporate 3rd party point solutions for Procure to Pay, Billing & Revenue Automation, & Close.
- Deploy end to end system integrations of homegrown and 3rd party systems using iPaaS (Workato & Boomi)
- Develop custom workflow, including agentic flows to achieve process automation

Data Architecture

- Deploy data warehousing optimization for finance and operations metrics
- Design and organize data sets for scalability and insight, including establishing common data models
- Support data cleansing activities
- Develop data governance and security
- Automate transactional level data reconciliations
- Advise on optimization of homegrown systems

Analytics & Reporting

- Deploy artificial intelligence (machine learning, agentic flows, etc.) to enhance analytics
- Advise on reporting system design and planning including KPIs
- Generate data driven insights
- Enable predictive modeling

Ongoing Support

- Provide project management and governance throughout the development lifecycle
- Perform ongoing administration and maintenance across all offerings

Internal Controls Over Financial Reporting for an IPO

A large part of being capital market ready is eventual SOX compliance

Planning & Kick-Off

- Engage key stakeholders
- Define plans, timelines, and deliverables
- Develop tools and templates
- Hold project kick-off

Scope & Profile

- **Scope** – Financial statements > Trial balance > Process / Systems / Locations
- **Profile Process / System** – Assess risk, prioritization, and approach to documentation and testing
- Engage and review with management

Assess & Document

- Assess current state
- Define risks
- Develop risk and control matrix
- Align with COSO 2013
- Capture and log gaps
- Recommend remedial actions
- Document process

Remediate

- Develop remedial plan and timeline
- Design new process and controls
- Implement changes
- Update documentation (narratives, flowcharts, matrices)
- Update policies

Validate & Test

- Perform walkthrough test of design
- Develop test plans for operating effectiveness
- Perform testing
- Capture results and control failures
- Determine remedial actions (as needed)

Evaluate & Report

- Evaluate controls and results
- Report results to management
- Develop 302/404 certification processes
- Certify (as needed)

Let’s Continue the Conversation!

TWO WAYS TO ENGAGE — AT NO COST TO YOU

Thank you for reading our IPO Midyear Report. We'd welcome the chance to explore what the findings mean for your organization, at your pace, with no obligation.

1) STRATEGIC WHITEBOARDING SESSIONS (COMPLIMENTARY)

A focused, one-hour working session with Connor Group advisors at no charge. We'll map out your IPO readiness posture, identify critical milestones, and pressure-test your timeline for a 1–3 year horizon.

Walk away with a clear, actionable roadmap tailored to where you are today.

2) PROJECT CREDIT TOWARD YOUR FIRST ENGAGEMENT

Apply a credit toward any Connor Group engagement initiated by December 31, 2026, including an IPO Readiness Assessment, Technology Assessment, AI Roadmap, or any accounting advisory project.

A meaningful head start on the work that matters most.

IPO Readiness Assessment	Technology Assessment	AI Roadmap	Custom Advisory

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