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SECTOR BENCHMARK REPORT · FCA COMPLIANCE CONSULTANCY · 2026

# How ten FCA compliance consultancies present themselves, and what it is costing them.

We read thirty pages across ten UK FCA compliance consultancies, most of them serving the insurance market, and scored each against the same two frameworks. The average was 28.4 out of 60, and the best firm scored 36. Every firm opened with itself. The deeper we looked, the better the firms got, but the foundation never moved. The position the market leaves open needs clarity, not scale.


Produced by
**Tom Wood, Addoli Ltd**


Framework
**The Proposition Architect**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# The substance is there. It is just not where the buyer looks.

**10**
UK FCA compliance consultancies assessed

**28.4** / 60
Average combined score

**36** / 60
Highest score in the market

**10** / 10
Caught in the Mirror Trap

This report benchmarks the proposition of 10 UK FCA compliance consultancies against two frameworks: the 5S Proposition Score, which measures what a firm says (out of 25), and the Commercial Architecture Score, which measures how it sells (out of 35). The combined maximum is 60.

We read each firm in two passes: the homepage first, as a cold prospect would meet it, then the main service page and one proof or about page. The second pass lifted the average from 26.3 to 28.4. Staged processes, named reviews, published prices, interim cover and case studies all appeared further in. The Foundation layer did not move at all.

Four failure patterns drive almost all of the underperformance. The Mirror Trap appears in every firm studied. The Trophy Cabinet and the Wrong Invite each appear in seven. The weakest of the seven commercial layers is The Foundation, at an average of 1.9 out of 5. The weakest of the five proposition dimensions is Signature, at 1.9 out of 5.

This market differs from HR consultancy in one important way. In HR, the binding constraint was public proof. In FCA compliance, the binding constraint sits lower. Firms have built monitoring programmes, tiered retainers, regulatory forecasts and case study libraries on a proposition that does not tell a buyer who it is for or what changes.

The implication is simple. Most firms in this market do not need to build anything new to win more of the right work. They need to move what they already have to the front, and say who it is for.

### HOW TO READ THE SCORES

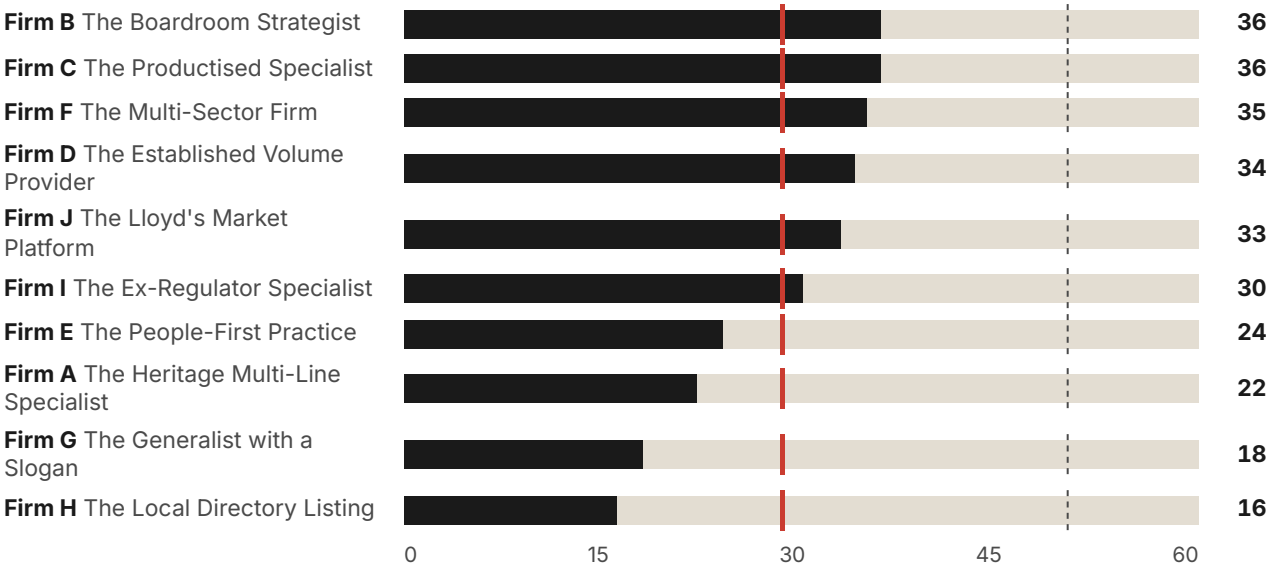
Scores are based on publicly available website content, read as a cold prospect would experience it: the homepage, the main service page and one proof or about page per firm. For one multi-sector firm, its insurance sector page replaced the homepage. Firms are anonymised and referred to by letter and archetype. Scores describe the proposition, not the quality of each firm's work.

01 · SCORE SUMMARY

# Six firms function. None leads.

Each firm is scored on what it says (the 5S Proposition Score, out of 25) and how it sells it (the Commercial Architecture Score, out of 35). Scores are based on publicly available website content, assessed as a cold prospect would experience it.

**Combined score out of 60, highest first**



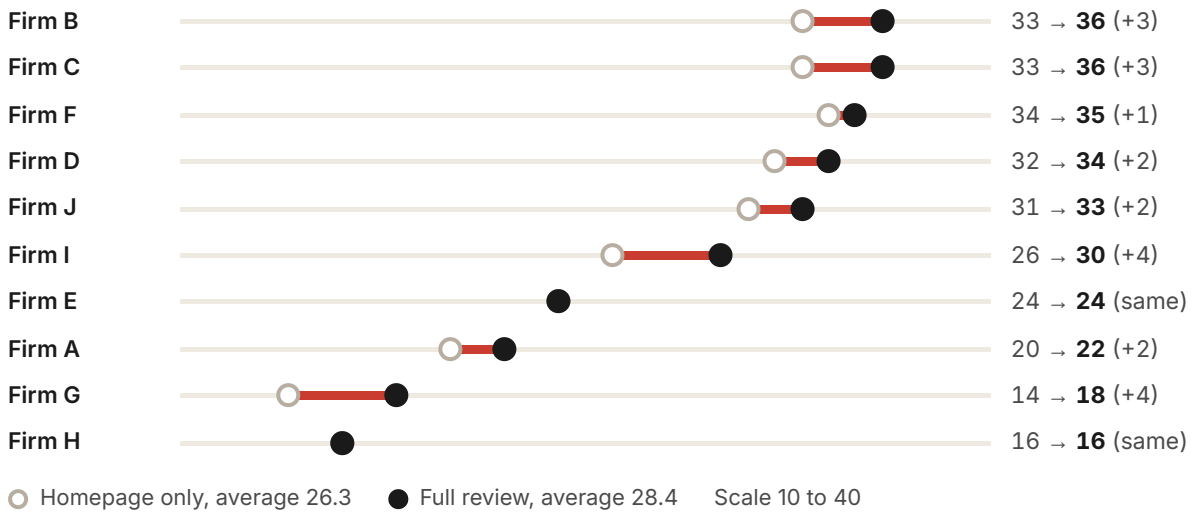

| Firm | Archetype | 5S / 25 | CA / 35 | Total / 60 | Verdict |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | The Heritage Multi-Line Specialist | 8 | 14 | **22** | Developing |
| B | The Boardroom Strategist | 16 | 20 | **36** | Functioning |
| C | The Productised Specialist | 12 | 24 | **36** | Functioning |
| D | The Established Volume Provider | 12 | 22 | **34** | Functioning |
| E | The People-First Practice | 10 | 14 | **24** | Developing |
| F | The Multi-Sector Firm | 14 | 21 | **35** | Functioning |
| G | The Generalist with a Slogan | 8 | 10 | **18** | Fragile |
| H | The Local Directory Listing | 7 | 9 | **16** | Fragile |
| I | The Ex-Regulator Specialist | 14 | 16 | **30** | Functioning |
| J | The Lloyd's Market Platform | 15 | 18 | **33** | Functioning |
| **Market average** | | **11.6** | **16.8** | **28.4** | |

Verdict bands for the combined score match the HR benchmark: 21 and below Fragile, 22 to 29 Developing, 30 and above Functioning.

01 · SCORE SUMMARY, CONTINUED

# The deeper we looked, the better the firms got.

Each firm's score on its homepage alone, and after its service and proof pages were read. The average rises from 26.3 to 28.4. The gains all sit in Layers 2 to 7. The Foundation does not move.




**What firms say: the five dimensions, market average out of 5**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 01 | **Specific** | Most firms name a sector. Almost none name a moment. | 2.6 |
| 02 | **Standout** | Six firms call themselves practical, pragmatic or proportionate. | 2.5 |
| 03 | **Substance** | Thirty-two case studies, one firm with measurable outcomes. | 2.3 |
| 04 | **Signature** | One firm has a named, priced method. Nine do not. | 1.9 |
| 05 | **Shareable** | Two firms teach in public. Most repost regulator news. | 2.3 |

02 · MARKET-WIDE FINDINGS

# One pattern appears in every firm.

Four named failure patterns explain most proposition underperformance in consulting markets. This is how often each appears across the 10 firms.

| Failure pattern | Firms | Share | What it does |
|---|---|---|---|
| **The Mirror Trap** | 10 of 10 | 100% | Buyers cannot recognise themselves, so price and proximity become the filter. |
| **The Trophy Cabinet** | 7 of 10 | 70% | Proof exists but creates no belief. Badges, logos and case studies without outcomes. |
| **The Wrong Invite** | 7 of 10 | 70% | Claiming every firm type and size means no buyer feels chosen. |
| **The Comparison Trap** | 5 of 10 | 50% | No credible differentiator forces a comparison on retainer price. |

## 01 The Mirror Trap 10 of 10 firms · 100%

**Buyers cannot recognise themselves, so price and proximity become the filter.**

Every firm opened its homepage with what it is rather than what its buyer is facing. Headlines describe the firm's expertise, its character, its location or its name. None opens with the moment a buyer is in: a compliance officer who has just resigned, a coverholder audit in six weeks, a Consumer Duty board report nobody wants to write. The deeper pages are better. Several service pages describe real triggers well. But a buyer who does not recognise themselves on the first screen does not reach the second. The Mirror Trap filters out the buyers with the most urgent need.

## 02 The Trophy Cabinet 7 of 10 firms · 70%

**Proof exists but creates no belief. Badges, logos and case studies without outcomes.**

This market has more proof than most. Five firms publish case studies, thirty-two between them. Almost none say what changed. Most describe the situation the client was in and stop. One firm's library sits behind ten unlabelled downloads. Another firm's case studies are all from other sectors. A third firm's most recent case study is more than two years old. Around them sit the familiar credentials: association badges, years trading, client counts and logo walls. Only one firm reports results a board could measure: work delivered on time and on budget, recommendations adopted as a multi-year programme, a client that kept coming back for dozens of projects. Those stories are on its third page, not its first.

02 · MARKET-WIDE FINDINGS, CONTINUED

# Why the patterns persist, and what they cost.

## 03 The Wrong Invite 7 of 10 firms · 70%

**Claiming every firm type and size means no buyer feels chosen.**

Seven firms positioned themselves for every size and type of regulated firm, from start-up brokers to global reinsurers, or across all of financial services. Most of these firms are in fact insurance specialists. Their homepages hide it. A two-person broker and a Lloyd's managing agent have nothing in common except a regulator. A proposition written for both reads as written for neither.

## 04 The Comparison Trap 5 of 10 firms · 50%

**No credible differentiator forces a comparison on retainer price.**

Half the firms gave no reason to choose them that a competitor could not also claim. Outsourced compliance is bought on a monthly retainer, which makes it easy to compare line by line. Only one firm publishes its retainer prices, so for the rest the comparison happens on the phone, after the buyer has already decided the firms are interchangeable.

The firm that solves these problems in its own proposition does not need to be dramatically better at delivery to win.

02 · MARKET-WIDE FINDINGS, CONTINUED

# In a market that sells precision, the shop window is imprecise.

### THE PRACTICAL PROBLEM

Six of the ten firms describe themselves as practical, pragmatic or proportionate. These are the right values for a compliance adviser. They are also the category default. When six firms in ten use the same word, the word stops doing any work. A buyer cannot choose between ten practical firms, so they choose on price.

### THE ACCURACY TEST

Compliance consultancies sell attention to detail. Across thirty pages, six firms fail that test somewhere. One firm's insurance page describes its support for investment and wealth firms and refers to banks in its FAQs. Another opens its main service page with a regulatory deadline that passed more than two years ago. Another's service descriptions describe different services from their headings. Another lists the same service twice and still offers reviews under a framework the regulator has since replaced. Another links its footer email to a different company's domain. Others carry broken links, leftover image text from other pages and spelling errors in page addresses. None of this says anything about the quality of the work. All of it says something to a cold prospect about how carefully the firm checks things.

### LIVE TRIGGERS, LISTED AS SERVICES

The regulatory calendar hands this market more buying moments than almost any other: Consumer Duty board reports, FCA supervisory requests and skilled person reviews, change in control, Lloyd's delegated authority audits, motor finance redress, non-financial misconduct rules and new reporting returns. The service pages show that most firms know this. Several describe triggers well. Almost none uses them as the front door. They appear as items in a service menu, not as the reason to call today.

### THE HIDDEN INTERIM MARKET

Four of the ten firms offer interim cover for compliance officer or senior manager roles. It is one of the most urgent things a regulated firm ever buys. Not one of the four mentions it on its homepage.

03 · COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURE

# Every layer improved with depth except the one that matters most.

The Commercial Architecture Score assesses seven layers. Under the Solid Foundation Rule, the lowest layer limits everything built above it. In this market the deeper pages contain staged processes, tiered retainers, defined entry reviews and case study libraries. All of them sit on a proposition that does not say who it is for or what changes.

**Market average by layer, out of 5**



01 **The Foundation** — 1.9

The lowest layer, and the only one the deeper review did not lift. No firm leads with a must-fix issue. One has a named, priced method.

02 **The Fit Test** — 2.6

Service pages describe real situations: vacant roles, regulatory visits, acquisitions, first authorisation. Homepages do not.

03 **The Visible Path** — 2.6

Three firms describe a clear sequence, from first review to a twelve-month monitoring programme or a ladder of retainer tiers. Most do not.

04 **The Right Tools** — 2.5

One firm builds its services as a ladder. Most list manuals, helplines, portals, e-learning and shops side by side.

05 **The Easy Yes** — 2.4

Free consultations and unpriced health checks are common. One firm offers a priced, fixed-scope entry review.

06 **The Public Proof** — 2.3

Two firms teach in public with original forecasts, analysis and events. Most repost regulator news.

07 **The Open Door** — 2.5

One firm publishes its full price list, tier by tier. Nine publish no prices at all.

THE SOLID FOUNDATION RULE

Your lowest layer is your only priority, whatever your total. Until the foundation is rebuilt around a specific buyer, a specific problem and a named method, everything above it works harder than it should. In this market, the binding constraint is The Foundation. The deeper pages prove the firms can build the upper layers. They have not built the one underneath.

04 · WHAT THIS MEANS TO YOUR BUYER

# What it looks like from the buyer's chair.

Consider the managing director of a 40-person commercial lines broker. Her compliance officer has just handed in his notice. The Consumer Duty annual board report is due in three months. A capacity provider has booked a coverholder audit for the spring. She types "FCA compliance consultant insurance broker" into Google.

She opens ten websites. Every one opens with the firm, not with her. Six tell her they are practical. Four show her the same membership badge. One shows her thirty logos. If she clicks deeper, the picture improves. Four firms offer interim compliance cover. Two have published stories that match her situation almost exactly: a compliance function stabilised through a leadership change, and an audit made ready in a fraction of the usual time. One will tell her exactly what a monthly retainer costs. None of this is on a homepage. She shortlists on proximity, reviews and the first quoted retainer.

## Four firms could have covered her vacancy tomorrow. None told her so on the first screen.

The firm that named her three problems, offered interim cover with a defined handover, and priced a fixed-scope readiness review for the audit and the board report would have won her business before she spoke to anyone else. Between them, the ten firms in this study already have every piece of that offer. None has put the pieces together, or put them first.

The commercial opportunity for a well-positioned firm is significant precisely because the competition is so weak at the proposition layer. A firm with a clear, specific, buyer-led proposition would stand out without needing to be larger, cheaper or fundamentally different in how it delivers.

**THE TEST FOR YOUR OWN HOMEPAGE**

Would this buyer recognise her situation in your first screen? Would she know what to do next, and what it costs, without filling in a contact form?

05 · INDIVIDUAL FIRM DIAGNOSTICS

# Ten firms, ten untaken positions.

FIRM A

## The Heritage Multi-Line Specialist

**22** / 60
5S 8 / 25 · CA 14 / 35
Developing

*Values on the front door, specialism in the small print.*

### THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

The headline promises dependability, which any firm could claim. The genuinely distinctive fact, that it covers general insurance, consumer credit and claims management together, sits in the second paragraph. Deeper in, the firm has a defined entry review: a short remote health check producing a gap analysis and prioritised actions. It is not named, not priced and not tied to any sector. Its case study page holds four stories, the newest more than two years old, none of which states an outcome.

### WHAT WE FOUND

- **The Mirror Trap.** The headline and opening copy describe the firm's values, not the buyer's problem.
- **The Trophy Cabinet.** Badges, years trading and a dated case study page with no results.
- **Layer 5 partial.** A scoped, short-format health check exists. Unpriced and generic, it reads as a contact form with a better title.
- **Layer 1 weak.** No must-fix issue, no named method and no defined buyer on the front page.

### THE UNTAKEN POSITION

Few firms understand both general insurance and consumer credit. Motor and home intermediaries who also broker finance are facing redress exposure and scrutiny on both fronts. "The Motor Finance and GI Exposure Review", built on the existing health check format and priced, would own a live trigger that single-line specialists cannot credibly claim.

FIRM B

## The Boardroom Strategist

**36** / 60
5S 16 / 25 · CA 20 / 35
Functioning

*The best proof in the study, three clicks from the front door.*

### THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

This firm teaches in public better than any other in the study, with a quarterly regulatory forecast, podcasts, webinars and opinion pieces. Its service page goes further than any competitor: staged processes for transactions and due diligence, named benchmarking and review tools, and client stories that state what changed. It is the only firm in the study whose proof a board could measure. None of this is on the homepage, and a persuaded board member still has nowhere to go except a contact form.

### WHAT WE FOUND

- **The Mirror Trap.** The headline leads with the firm's expertise, not the board's problem.
- **The Wrong Invite.** The stated audience is financial services as a whole. Its case studies show insurance is its centre of gravity.
- **Substance strong.** Narrated client outcomes with delivery against deadline, budget and board adoption. Best in the study.
- **Layer 5 critical.** No diagnostic, review or defined entry offer. The firm owns a health check method it does not offer as a first step.

### THE UNTAKEN POSITION

"Regulatory confidence for insurance boards." Turn the quarterly forecast into the front door, put two outcome stories on the homepage, and offer the existing health check as a named, fixed-output board readiness review. The audience is already reading. They need a reason to start.

05 · INDIVIDUAL FIRM DIAGNOSTICS, CONTINUED

FIRM C

## The Productised Specialist

**36** / 60
5S 12 / 25 · CA 24 / 35
Functioning

*The most complete commercial architecture in the study, introduced by a paragraph about the company.*

### THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

This firm has what nine others lack. A named review method covering twelve areas with RAG-rated outputs. A ladder of five retainer tiers, from a template library to a fully flexible service, each with a published monthly price. Published day rates. An entry review discounted for clients who start on the lowest tier. A clear cost comparison with hiring a compliance officer. It is the highest Commercial Architecture score in the study. Almost none of it leads. The homepage opens with a dense paragraph describing the company, and its testimonials and award exist only as images a buyer cannot read or search.

### WHAT WE FOUND

- **The Mirror Trap.** The opening sentence describes the firm and its award.
- **The Trophy Cabinet.** Long client retention is claimed but never narrated. Testimonials are an image, not a story.
- **Layers 3, 4 and 7 strong.** A visible path from entry review to the right tier, with every price published. Best open door in the study.
- **Layer 6 critical.** No content that demonstrates expertise beyond service descriptions.

### THE UNTAKEN POSITION

"Know where you stand in twelve areas, for a fixed fee." Rebuild the homepage around the method, the price ladder and the cost comparison with hiring. Turn the image testimonials into three anonymised before and after stories from real reviews. This firm is one rewrite away from leading the market.

FIRM D

## The Established Volume Provider

**34** / 60
5S 12 / 25 · CA 22 / 35
Functioning

*The best fit test in the study, and its best story buried in a testimonial wall.*

### THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

This firm does something almost no other does. Its homepage sets out four situations it is built for: seeking authorisation, going through structural change, lacking internal oversight and facing regulatory review. Its service page describes a clear sequence: a candid opening review, then a twelve-month monitoring programme, then regular consultant meetings. It offers two free consultations, a portal demo and sample bulletins. But the headline describes the firm's standing, its six published success stories each describe a situation and stop, and its strongest outcome, an audit made ready in a fraction of the usual time, is one quote among many.

### WHAT WE FOUND

- **The Mirror Trap.** The headline and opening line describe the firm's standing, not the buyer's situation.
- **The Wrong Invite.** A claim to serve firms of every size undermines the clear situational targeting further down.
- **The Trophy Cabinet.** Six success stories, none with a stated outcome.
- **Layers 2 and 3 strong.** Four buyer situations and a twelve-month programme. Best fit test in the study.

### THE UNTAKEN POSITION

"Audit-ready without the scramble." Lead with the four situations, give each its own page, name the twelve-month programme, and finish each success story with what changed. The firm already has every piece. It needs the endings.

05 · INDIVIDUAL FIRM DIAGNOSTICS, CONTINUED

FIRM E

## The People-First Practice

**24** / 60
5S 10 / 25 · CA 14 / 35
Developing

*Warmth is the proposition. The outcome is in a testimonial.*

### THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

The homepage leads with personality: warmth and care for clients are the opening message. That is genuine and it shows in the testimonials. The deeper pages make it harder to buy, not easier. The main service page opens with a regulatory deadline from more than two years ago, has no call to action and runs to a long list of services. The review page has one genuinely distinctive idea, sessions where senior managers are questioned as the regulator would question them, which appears nowhere else on the site. The single most persuasive fact the firm has, a new client authorised unusually quickly, is a testimonial.

### WHAT WE FOUND

- **The Mirror Trap.** The opening line describes the firm's character, not the buyer's situation.
- **The Comparison Trap.** Friendliness is a reason to stay, not a reason to choose.
- **Layer 4 weak.** Services, products, training and a shop sit side by side with no journey connecting them.
- **Accuracy.** A stale deadline at the top of the main service page.

### THE UNTAKEN POSITION

Two positions, both already earned. "FCA authorisation for new brokers, in weeks not months", productised with a stated timeline. Or "The regulator's questions, before the regulator asks them": the senior management challenge session as a named, priced entry offer. Either would turn warmth from the headline into the reason clients stay.

FIRM F

## The Multi-Sector Firm

**35** / 60
5S 14 / 25 · CA 21 / 35
Functioning

*The sharpest point of view in the study, on a page that keeps showing evidence from other sectors.*

### THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

The scale is real: years of delivery, thousands of firms advised, a strong events programme and membership of the regulator's skilled person panel. The insurance page contains the sharpest point of view in the study, a partner's argument that compliance should help the board make commercial decisions rather than slow them down. The service page sets out a clear three-step route in. But the insurance page carries copy from another sector, and every case study on the firm's work page comes from mortgages, credit, banking, advice or litigation funding. An insurance buyer is told they are in the right place and then shown evidence that they are not.

### WHAT WE FOUND

- **The Mirror Trap.** The headline describes the service category, not the buyer's situation.
- **The Wrong Invite.** Six sectors on one site, and the insurance page carries copy from another.
- **The Trophy Cabinet.** Six narrated case studies, none from insurance and none with a measured result.
- **Layer 6 strong.** A live events and insight programme, including sessions built for insurance firms.

### THE UNTAKEN POSITION

"When the FCA comes asking." This firm runs events on FCA supervisory tools for MGAs, sits on the skilled person panel and describes supervisory and enforcement work in detail. A named supervisory response service for MGAs and delegated authority firms, led by the partner's commercial point of view and backed by one insurance case study, would make this the obvious call for a firm that has just received a regulatory request.

05 · INDIVIDUAL FIRM DIAGNOSTICS, CONTINUED

FIRM G

## The Generalist with a Slogan

**18** / 60
5S 8 / 25 · CA 10 / 35
Fragile

*A memorable mission and a genuinely useful service, never connected.*

### THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

The homepage opens with a definition of the firm's name and a mission statement built on a technology metaphor. It is the most memorable line in the study and it leads nowhere. Several homepage service descriptions describe a different service from their heading. The service page is clearer and contains one genuinely useful offer: interim cover for the compliance oversight and money laundering reporting roles. The about page centres on one experienced principal, but names her differently in the page text and the page data, and offers two testimonials without results.

### WHAT WE FOUND

- **The Mirror Trap.** The page opens with the firm's name and values.
- **The Wrong Invite.** The stated audience is financial services and insurance in general, which is the whole regulated market.
- **The Trophy Cabinet.** One association badge and two testimonials. No outcomes.
- **Layer 1 critical failure.** No named audience, no must-fix issue and no method.

### THE UNTAKEN POSITION

"Your compliance officer has gone. We can cover the role from Monday." Interim senior cover is the most urgent thing on this firm's list and the hardest for a buyer to find elsewhere. Lead with it, then turn the slogan into a named, fixed-price review for the firm once the seat is filled. The firm already lists cost transparency as a value. Publishing the price would make that true.

FIRM H

## The Local Directory Listing

**16** / 60
5S 7 / 25 · CA 9 / 35
Fragile

*The most original niche in the study, written as a postcode.*

### THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

The headline is built for local search: compliance support named by town. The service list runs to fifteen items, including one listed twice and one framework the regulator has since replaced. The deeper pages add little: an annual health check with no stated scope, output or price, and an about page with no names, no history and no proof. Even the contact link points to a page named after a different page. But in the homepage's final section the firm describes the most distinctive buyer in the study: businesses whose main activity is not regulated, such as property managing agents and motor dealers, who arrange insurance and have found themselves caught by FCA rules.

### WHAT WE FOUND

- **The Mirror Trap.** The headline describes the firm's location, not the buyer's problem.
- **The Comparison Trap.** A long capability list with no differentiator forces a price comparison.
- **The Trophy Cabinet.** No proof of any kind across three pages.
- **Layer 1 failure.** An open promise to help with any need at all is the opposite of a proposition.

### THE UNTAKEN POSITION

"FCA compliance for businesses that are not insurance businesses." Property managing agents, motor dealers and other secondary intermediaries are underserved, confused by regulation and largely ignored by the specialists. This firm already serves them. Leading with them would remove the Comparison Trap entirely.

05 · INDIVIDUAL FIRM DIAGNOSTICS, CONTINUED

FIRM I

## The Ex-Regulator Specialist

**30** / 60
5S 14 / 25 · CA 16 / 35
Functioning

*The best buyer language and the strongest team in the study, under a headline that describes the firm.*

### THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

This firm writes in buyer language more than any other. Its homepage tells the reader that a report nobody acts on is not what they need. Its service page frames real triggers: vacant roles, stretched capacity, sanctions changes, the need for an independent view. Its about page backs the claim to have worked on both sides of regulation with named people, real regulator histories, industry awards and cross-market workshops run with the main London market bodies. But the headline describes the firm, seven service lines sit side by side with no route through them, and the footer email on two pages points to a different company's domain.

### WHAT WE FOUND

- **The Mirror Trap.** The headline is a description of the firm's specialism, not the buyer's problem.
- **The Wrong Invite.** A claim to serve firms of every size contradicts its London market strength.
- **Standout strong.** Former regulators and senior market practitioners, all named. The most credible team in the study.
- **Layer 5 weak.** The only defined entry offer is a demo of a separate software product.

### THE UNTAKEN POSITION

"Interim compliance leadership for London market insurers in transition." The firm's strongest client story is exactly that: stepping in, stabilising the function, then stepping back when the permanent hire was ready. Productise it with a defined handover, and the ex-regulator credential becomes the reason boards trust it.

FIRM J

## The Lloyd's Market Platform

**33** / 60
5S 15 / 25 · CA 18 / 35
Functioning

*The most defensible position in the study, introduced with its own name.*

### THE CORE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM

This firm holds two assets no competitor in the study can claim: approval as a Lloyd's auditor, with a published audit scope aligned to market standards, and its own FCA-authorised principal platform for new appointed representatives. It has named products and ten published success stories. Together these could form a complete journey from launch to audit to transformation. The homepage instead opens with the firm's name, describes its group structure and shows more than thirty client logos. The success stories are ten unlabelled downloads with no summary of what happened.

### WHAT WE FOUND

- **The Mirror Trap.** The headline is the firm's name. The subheading describes its structure.
- **The Trophy Cabinet.** More than thirty logos on the homepage. Ten case studies a buyer has to download to read.
- **The Wrong Invite.** Its stated audience runs from the smallest start-ups to the largest global carriers, which spans the whole market.
- **Standout strong.** Lloyd's-approved auditor and principal platform. The hardest position in the study to copy.

### THE UNTAKEN POSITION

"From MGA launch to Lloyd's audit-ready." Show the path: launch on the principal platform, pass the first delegated authority audit, then scale. Replace the logo wall with three of the existing success stories, one from each stage, each summarised in three lines on the page. No other firm could make this promise.

06 · THE UNTAKEN POSITION

# What good looks like in FCA compliance consultancies.

No single firm in this study occupies the full commercial architecture the market is leaving open. The untaken position has four characteristics that none of these firms shows in combination. Every one of them already exists somewhere in the study, usually on a second or third page. They are simply never in the same place, and never at the front.

## 01

### A specific moment, not a firm type

Not "brokers, MGAs and insurers of all sizes", but a firm at a specific moment: a compliance officer resigns, a coverholder audit is booked, a change in control is planned, a skilled person review lands, the first Consumer Duty board report is due. Several firms describe these moments on their service pages. None leads with them.

## 02

### A named, priced method

Not "tailored support for your business", but a named method with visible steps, defined outputs and a published price. One firm in ten has this, with a full price ladder behind it. It is the strongest commercial asset in the study, and it is placed several screens down its own homepage.

## 03

### Narrated proof, not displayed credentials

Before and after: what the situation was, what changed, and what the client could then do. This market has published thirty-two case studies. Most stop after the situation. The firms that finish the story, and put it where a buyer will read it, will be believed.

## 04

### An entry point with a defined output

Not a contact form or a free call with no stated result, but a review or assessment with a clear deliverable and a known cost. The best entry offers leave the buyer better informed whether they go ahead or not.

A firm does not need to be bigger, older or cheaper to claim the open position. It needs to be clearer. In a market that sells certainty, clarity is the product.

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE

# Two ways to use this report.

This benchmark is read by two kinds of people: the firms in markets like this one, and the businesses choosing between them. There is a next step for each.

IF YOU RUN A FIRM LIKE THESE

## Find out where your own proposition sits.

Start with the free score: the same two frameworks, twelve questions, an instant result with a named failure pattern and a priority fix sequence.

If you want an outside read, the Reviewed Diagnostic is Tom reading your website the way these firms were read, then writing up the score, the pattern, a proposition blueprint and the fix sequence, with a 45-minute call. £495 + VAT, delivered in three working days.

Get your free score · thepropositionarchitect.com/reviewed-diagnostic

IF YOU ARE CHOOSING A FIRM LIKE THESE

## Run a selection that finds the substance behind the shop window.

Tom was CEO of a compliance and training consultancy for eight years. With his team, he helped sell it and then merged it with its biggest competitor. He can help you agree what you need, write a brief firms can answer, run a fair selection and check the contract terms. This report shows how much of a firm sits beyond its homepage. Provider selection is built to find it.

**01**
**Review**
What you actually need, what you have now and what has to change.

**02**
**Brief**
A written brief or RFP and scoring criteria, agreed before anyone pitches.

**03**
**Shortlist and panel**
A researched shortlist, structured interviews and a scoring panel.

**04**
**Select and contract**
A recommendation you can defend, with the engagement terms checked before you sign.

thepropositionarchitect.com/provider-selection

ABOUT THIS REPORT

# Method, citation and the frameworks behind the scores.

## Method

Ten UK FCA compliance consultancies were assessed in October 2026. Nine serve the insurance market as their main or a major sector. For each firm we read three pages as a cold prospect would experience them: the homepage, the main service page, and one proof or about page such as case studies, testimonials or team. Around thirty pages were reviewed in total. For one multi-sector firm, its insurance sector page replaced the homepage. Each firm was then scored against the 5S Proposition Score (25 points) and the Commercial Architecture Score (35 points, seven layers of 5). Homepage-only scores were also recorded to show how much of each firm's proposition sits beyond the first screen. Downloadable documents were not opened or scored. Firms are anonymised and referenced by letter only. Scores reflect public-facing material, not the quality of the firms' work, and this is not a definitive audit of any firm's commercial capability.

## The frameworks

The 5S Proposition Score tests whether a proposition is Specific, Standout, Substantive, Signature and Shareable. The Commercial Architecture Score tests seven layers in sequence, from the Foundation to the Open Door. Both are proprietary diagnostic frameworks developed by Addoli to assess and improve the commercial performance of founder-led and growth-stage consulting businesses.

## Cite this report

Wood, T. (2026). *How ten FCA compliance consultancies present themselves, and what it is costing them.* Sector benchmark report, FCA compliance consultancy. The Proposition Architect, Addoli Ltd. thepropositionarchitect.com/fca-compliance-consultancy-benchmark/

## Read it online

The full report, including an interactive version of every chart, is free to read at thepropositionarchitect.com/fca-compliance-consultancy-benchmark/. No email needed.

## About Addoli

Addoli works with founder-led B2B businesses that have reached the point where growth slows, not because the founder lacks capability, but because the business lacks the commercial systems it needs to scale. Tom Wood is a Fractional Commercial Director. For eight years he was CEO of a compliance and training consultancy and, with his team, helped sell it and then merged it with its biggest competitor, before founding Addoli.

FIND OUT WHERE YOUR PROPOSITION SITS

## How does your firm compare with these ten?

Take the free Proposition Architect score. Twelve questions, five minutes, an instant result with a named failure pattern and a priority fix sequence.

**Get your free score at diagnostics.addoli.com**

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addoli.com · thepropositionarchitect.com · tom@addoli.com

Addoli (Welsh): to worship, to revere. Your business should be adored.

Assessments are based on publicly visible website content only: the homepage, main service page and one proof or about page per firm, evaluated as a cold prospect would experience them. Firms have been anonymised. This report is not a definitive audit of any firm's commercial capability.
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