

Meet Ctrl Alt, the expert solutions provider for alternative assets

As part of our quick founder questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to Matt Ong, CEO & cofounder of Ctrl Alt about the barriers to entry in the alternative assets market, creating flexible products and the importance of keeping things moving.

The idea for Ctrl Alt came from my lived experience a few years ago of wanting to invest in alternative assets like property but being frustrated by the barriers to entry. From the capital needed to the endless legal paperwork, it felt like an unnecessarily complicated process and that there had to be a simpler way.

Ironically, at the time, I worked at Morgan Stanley and Credit Suisse for the better part of a decade. I was creating financial products for the wealthiest in society day-to-day and yet I had no access to them.

Ctrl Alt was born to solve this problem. I took my knowledge of the sector and coupled it with my frustration on the lack of access for myself and so many more.

Tell me about the business – what it is,

what it aims to achieve, who you work with, how you reach customers and so on?

Ctrl Alt is a B2B alternative asset solutions provider offering a flexible range of products for fintechs to investment platforms who are looking to open up alternative assets to their eligible customers as well as asset owners seeking alternative financing to raise capital.

Archaic processes and exclusivity have meant access to investing in things like property, green energy and more have traditionally been dominated by the super-rich and institutional investors only. I believe that a diversified portfolio should play a key role in any investment strategy and it's not right that only the few have access.

The landscape of investing is changing, a new generation of investors are coming through who are redefining what investing looks like. We're seeing fintechs and investment platforms looking to move fast to evolve their offerings to reach this generation and Ctrl Alt plays a key role in this.

On the team front, I'm very lucky to have grown the Ctrl Alt team over the last few years with a diverse range of people, including people from the likes of Revolut, Shares and Morgan Stanley.

How has the business evolved since its launch?

One of the most exciting evolutions has been developing our B2B product range including our 'Embedded' product a.k.a our API 'plug and play' offering for FinTechs and Investment platforms who are looking to offer alternative assets to their eligible customers.

We've taken the learnings from originally launching with our B2C platform as the main focus in November 2022 to help us to evolve our B2B products that speaks to the increasing demand for solutions to open up the world of alternative assets.

Tell us about the working culture at Ctrl

Alt

One of our go to sayings is 'just keep it moving'. There's so much that can come our way day-to-day. So, put simply, as long as we're moving forward and not getting overwhelmed or spending time wondering 'what if?' we're winning.

We have offices in both London and Dundalk, Ireland. We've actually just got back from a company offsite in Belfast which was a great opportunity to re-group, reflect, look ahead and of course have some fun after such an intense year. We're aiming to host these quarterly with a different team member running it each time.

How are you funded?

We have just closed our Seed Round of £2.2M which is really exciting.

The funding round was led by Forward Partners and Middlegame Ventures, and joined by a group of notable Angel Investors and follow-on funds, including Enterprise Ireland, Algorand Ventures, 365.fintech, Marc Cohen (Unbundled VC), Omid Ashtari (Director of Foursquare and ex-Citymapper) and Alex Macdonald (founder of Velocity Black).

What has been your biggest challenge so far and how have you overcome this?

Fundraising in 2023! What a year it's been. It's been quite the climate to raise in and I'm really proud of what we've accomplished in the backdrop of everything going on.

How does Ctrl Alt answer an unmet need?

The market for alternatives is huge and only growing. Preqin estimates the alternative assets market will be over \$23T by 2026 so this shows just how much scope and demand is and will be there.

At our core, we're opening up the previously exclusive world of investing in alternative asset investing and showing the possibilities of the tokenisation of real world assets with our B2B product solutions.

For too long, access has been reserved for the few and I truly believe as

mentioned above that alternative assets should play a part in a diversified portfolio.

What's in store for the future?

Well, hopefully in the future, you'll be able to open your banking app and have the option to invest in alternative assets via us. We're currently piloting our API product that brings this to life so watch this space for more in the new year.

I'm also excited to further grow our team. As mentioned, we currently have offices in London and our European Headquarters in Dundalk, Ireland and looking forward to further expansion within these regions.

What one piece of advice would you give other founders or future founders?

Have a good team that you can trust to execute and most importantly have fun along the way.

Startups can be a lonely place of 'high highs' and 'low lows' so, you need a strong team around you to keep you going.

And finally, a more personal question! What's your daily routine and the rules you're living by at the moment?

I think there's a lot of pressure as a founder to have an impressive morning routine i.e. up at 05:00, meditation, gym and then the list goes on... but the reality is different for myself and I'm sure many others.

Right now, I'm focused on trying to go back to basics to streamline my day. At a startup there is so much noise from all directions so I'm really focused on the 'key jobs to be done' day-to-day to put mine and my team's energy where it needs to be.

Outside the office, exercise is really important to me and helps me to keep a clear head. I really notice it if I skip a couple days so whether it's going for a run or going to the gym I'll be quite disciplined here.

Matt Ong is the CEO and cofounder of [Ctrl Alt](#).

