

NEWSWIRE ARTICLE

Lewis Brisbois acquires Dallas small firm

By Casey Sullivan
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Driven by client demand to expand its insurance practice in Dallas, Los Angeles-based Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith LLP acquired small firm White & Co. LLP, picking up three partners and an associate in Lewis Brisbois' Dallas office.

Joining the firm as managing partner of the Dallas office is Christopher C. White, whose practice focuses on insurance coverage, professional and employment liability and transportation. White, who was senior partner at the helm of White & Co., brings with him insurance and civil litigation partners Steven J. Anderson and Addie Jones, along with an associate.

The acquisition brings the headcount of the Dallas office to eight, a doubling in size. Six of the lawyers are partners.

White started White & Co. nearly five years ago. He was with Wilson Elser Moskowitz Edelman & Dicker LLP before that. Between 1999 and 2001, he spent time away from Wilson Elser to work in-house with insurance syndicate Lloyd's of London.

Lewis Brisbois' Los Angeles managing partner Timothy Graves said White's experience, coupled with his London business contacts in the insurance industry, made him and his group attractive. Graves also said Lewis Brisbois clients who have business in Houston were looking for representation in Dallas, prompting the firm to reach out to White & Co. in the first place.

"We had footholds in areas where they would like to expand their business - in Dallas, London and some other areas," White said, adding that the small firm carried clients the large firm didn't yet have.

White said Lewis Brisbois' flexibility was a big factor in his decision to move to the firm's larger platform. He said the firm allows him to charge his own billing rates and is lenient with what types of clients he can bring to it. He also said being employed by Lewis Brisbois will allow his group to be on insurance companies' increasingly selective and competitive lists of firms, or panels, that qualify to get their work.

"It eliminates a hurdle for us getting business," White said.

Lewis Brisbois has tried to expand its Texas presence in recent years, opening a small Dallas office early this year while growing its Houston and Beaumont offices under the management of Kent M. Adams, who oversees its three Texas offices. The firm established a Houston presence in November 2009 with the acquisition of Adams and a group of four attorneys and has since doubled its headcount in that city to 10 lawyers. The firm still staffs just three attorneys in its Beaumont office.

Graves said the firm is currently in talks to hire three more attorneys in Dallas. Two of them are partners who focus in insurance defense litigation. He said the deal should be announced in a week.

The White & Co. acquisition was brokered by recruiter Sandy Lechtick of Esquire Search Consultants Inc.

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