

Wipfli Acquires Two Firms in Philly and Montana

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BY TAMIKA CODY

Top 100 Firm Wipfli LLP has acquired the Philadelphia-based firm Elko & Associates Ltd and the Helena, Mont.-based firm, Galusha, Higgins & Galusha.



Rick Dreher

Elko & Associates Details

As part of the combination with Elko, 81 Elko professionals, including 12 partners, have joined Wipfli. Founded in 1980, Elko provides professional accounting, auditing, tax and business consulting services to clients in the Greater Philadelphia area. The firm has two full-service offices located in the Philadelphia area and is a member of PKF North America.

"We've been searching for an exceptional firm to merge with in the Northeastern United States to expand our firm into that area of the country and found Elko," said Rick Dreher, managing partner of Wipfli LLP.



"We are excited to join a firm with a similar client service philosophy and similar values. This combination with Wipfli is a positive development for our clients and our associates," Michael Pozielli, managing director of Elko, said in a statement. "For our clients, it will broaden and deepen the specialized services and industry-focused solutions we are able to provide, allowing us to continue to meet their needs as they grow and face new challenges in the years ahead. For our associates, the combination will provide advanced training opportunities and increased career opportunities with a larger firm."

GHG Details

As part of the GHG combination, nearly 140 GHG professionals, including 22 partners, have joined Wipfli. Founded in 1919, GHG is one of the largest, privately owned accounting firms in Southeast Idaho and Montana. The firm has six full-service offices located in Montana, a full-service office in Idaho Falls, Idaho, and multiple day-offices strategically located throughout Montana.

"This combination will strengthen and expand Wipfli's physical presence in the Northwestern United States, building and enhancing a more diverse set of services to complement Wipfli's existing Spokane, Washington office," Dreher explained. "This combination is also a great fit for both firms because our cultures and client service philosophies are closely aligned and we bring complementary services to the market."

Richard Shull, president and chief executive officer of GHG, added, "In today's marketplace, businesses are facing ever-changing challenges that often require subject-matter experts and services that go far beyond traditional audit and tax services. We are excited to be joining Wipfli. The combination will provide our firm with the industry and technical specialization we need to meet our growing client demands and to tackle future business growth opportunities. It will also provide our team members with greater opportunities for training and career opportunities."

Allan Koltin, CEO of Koltin Consulting Group, who advised both Wipfli and GHG on their mergers, said that Wipfli is quickly transforming from a regional firm into a national firm. "They have made significant investments in consulting and advisory services, and it has been a big differentiator for them in the marketplace," Koltin shared. "Not surprisingly, they are attracting a lot of attention from other Top 200 firms that want to transform their practices from primarily compliance to compliance and advisory services focused."

The combination of Elko and GHG increased Wipfli's staff to approximately 1,400 associates, 170 partners and 31 office locations.

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