

By
Michael Cohn

Published
October 03 2018, 1:33pm EDT

Baker Tilly expands to Houston by merging in MiddletonRaines+Zapata

Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, a Top 100 Firm based in Chicago, is adding Texas-based firm MiddletonRaines+Zapata, extending Baker Tilly's footprint in the Lone Star State from Austin to Houston, with the deal expected to close by the end of the year.

Baker Tilly sees the merger as a way to expand to the largest city in Texas and the fourth biggest in the U.S.

Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed. Baker Tilly ranked 14th on *Accounting Today's* 2018 list of the Top 100 Firms. The firm reported \$578 million in revenue for 2017, while MRZ reported \$13.15 million. Baker Tilly has 2,800 team members, including 283 partners, while MRZ has 75 team members, including 10 partners.

"MRZ is one of the fastest-growing accounting firms in Houston," Baker Tilly chairman and CEO Alan D. Whitman said in a statement. "They are progressive and entrepreneurial and are an ideal partner for us in Houston."

Both firms target clients in the construction, real estate, manufacturing and health care sectors. MRZ also caters to the oil and gas industry, while Baker Tilly specializes in private equity as well as tax credits and incentives.

"We are proud of our reputation for delivering innovative accounting and tax solutions through a high-energy, hands-on client experience," MRZ managing partner Wesley Middleton said in a statement. "Joining forces with Baker Tilly gives us national resources and broader capabilities to better serve our clients and provide growth and development opportunities for our team members."

Koltin Consulting Group CEO Allan D. Koltin advised both firms on the merger. “MRZ represents the type of firm that larger firms dream of aligning with – great leadership, dynamic growth, innovation, young, talented professionals and a passion for client service,” he stated. “Wes Middleton and his partners were courted by almost every major CPA firm in the country to become their Houston office. In the end, they loved Baker Tilly’s strategy, culture and leadership and knew it provided the best growth opportunities for their people and clients. Baker Tilly continues to be one of the highest-performing Top 15 CPA firms in the country. This combination is a huge step for them in Texas and I believe it is only the beginning of their expansion plans throughout the state.”

In August, Baker Tilly merged in RGL Forensics, a global financial investigations and forensic accounting firm.



Baker Tilly's Chicago office
Courtesy of Baker Tilly

MRZ Merger with Baker Tilly To Give Firm Foothold in Houston

October 3, 2018 by [INSIDE Public Accounting](#)



Alan D. Whitman

Chicago-based **Baker Tilly Virchow Krause** (FY18 net revenue of \$578.4 million) and Houston-based **MiddletonRaines+Zapata** (FY17 net revenue of \$10.9 million) have announced their intention to merge by the end of the year.

“MRZ is one of the fastest-growing accounting firms in Houston,” Baker Tilly chairman and CEO **Alan D. Whitman** says. “They are progressive and entrepreneurial and are an ideal partner for us in Houston.”

MRZ is known for its “high-energy, hands-on client experience,” says MP **Wesley Middleton**. “Joining forces with Baker Tilly gives us national resources and broader capabilities to better serve our clients and provide growth and development opportunities for our team members.”

MRZ’s industry strengths are compatible with Baker Tilly’s, particularly construction and real estate, manufacturing and health care, the firms say. MRZ also specializes in the oil and gas industry. Baker Tilly’s specialization in private equity and tax credits and incentives will be a competitive addition to MRZ’s services in the Houston market.

Allan D. Koltin, CEO of Koltin Consulting Group, advised both firms on the merger. “MRZ represents the type of firm that larger firms dream of aligning with – great leadership, dynamic growth, innovation, young talented professionals and a passion for client service. Wes Middleton and his partners were

courted by almost every major CPA firm in the country to become their Houston office. In the end, they loved Baker Tilly's strategy, culture and leadership and knew it provided the best growth opportunities for their people and clients."

Baker Tilly Acquires Houston-Based MRZ

OCT 8, 2018



Accounting and advisory firm Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP (Baker Tilly) and MiddletonRaines+Zapata (MRZ), a Houston-area accounting and advisory firm, announce their intent to merge with an effective date expected by the end of the year.

Houston is the largest city in Texas and the fourth-largest city in the U.S. behind New York, Los Angeles and Chicago. "MRZ is one of the fastest-growing accounting firms in Houston," Baker Tilly Chairman and CEO Alan D. Whitman said. "They are progressive and entrepreneurial and are an ideal partner for us in Houston."

"We are proud of our reputation for delivering innovative accounting and tax solutions through a high-energy, hands-on client experience," MRZ Managing Partner Wesley Middleton said. "Joining forces with Baker Tilly gives us national resources and broader capabilities to better serve our clients and provide growth and development opportunities for our team members."

MRZ and Baker Tilly share a focus on the client experience and industry specialization. MRZ's industry strengths are highly compatible with Baker Tilly's, particularly construction and real estate, manufacturing and healthcare. MRZ also specializes in the oil and gas industry. Baker Tilly's specialization in private equity and tax credits and incentives will be a competitive addition to MRZ's offerings in the Houston market.

Allan D. Koltin, CEO of Koltin Consulting Group, advised both firms on the merger. "MRZ represents the type of firm that larger firms dream of aligning with – great leadership, dynamic growth, innovation, young talented professionals and a passion for client service. Wes Middleton and his partners were courted by almost every major CPA firm in the country to become their Houston office. In the end, they loved Baker Tilly's strategy, culture and leadership and knew it provided the best growth opportunities

for their people and clients. Baker Tilly continues to be one of the highest-performing Top 15 CPA firms in the country. This combination is a huge step for them in Texas and I believe it is only the beginning of their expansion plans throughout the state.”

HOUSTON BUSINESS JOURNAL

Houston accounting firm to become part of Chicago firm



Wesley Middleton, managing partner of MiddletonRaines + Zapata LLP.
CHRIS CURRY/HBJ

By Jen Para – Web producer, Houston Business Journal
Oct 3, 2018, 12:01am

One of the nation's largest accounting firms will soon expand into the Houston area.

Chicago-based Baker Tilly Virchow Krause LLP and Houston-based MiddletonRaines + Zapata LLP, or MRZ, announced they will merge in a deal expected to close by the end of the year, according to a press release. The combined firm will be named Baker Tilly. Financial terms were not disclosed.

Accounting and advisory firm MRZ was founded in Houston in 2013 and has about 90 employees among three offices in Houston, Spring and Austin, according to Houston Business Journal research. Last year, it reported \$13.15 million in revenue, a 46 percent increase from two years ago.

The Houston firm has earned a spot on several HBJ lists over the years, including Corporate Philanthropy awards, Best Places to Work and the Cougar 100. Additionally, managing partner Wesley Middleton was named a finalist as part of HBJ's 2017 C-Suite Awards.

“MRZ represents the type of firm that larger firms dream of aligning with – great leadership, dynamic growth, innovation, young talented professionals and a passion for client service,” Allan Koltin — CEO of Koltin Consulting Group, which advised both firms in the merger — said in the release. “Wes Middleton and his partners were courted by almost every major CPA firm in the country to become their Houston office.”



Houston's MiddletonRaines + Zapata LLP main office is located in the Energy Corridor at 11750 Katy Freeway.
COURTESY MIDDLETONRAINES + ZAPATA LLP

Meanwhile, Baker Tilly has more than 2,800 employees and about 30 U.S. offices, according to its website. It currently has one Texas office in Austin, and with the MRZ merger, it could expand into other Texas markets, per the release. The company reported about \$546.4 million in revenue for 2017, making it the 14th-largest firm in the U.S., according to Accounting Today's 2018 Top 100 Firms report.

Baker Tilly specializes in private equity and tax credits and incentives, while MRZ specializes in the oil and gas industry, construction and real estate, manufacturing and health care, per the release.

The merger comes on the heels of another recent deal for Baker Tilly. In August, the Chicago firm announced it will merge with Englewood, Colorado-based RGL Forensics, a global forensic accounting firm. This deal is also expected to close by the end of the year.

Baker Tilly was known as Virchow Krause & Co. before adopting the name of the global network to which it belonged in 2009. In 2015, it acquired Michigan-based Global Development Partners, an accounting firm that specializes in Latin American economies. Today, it encompasses a worldwide network of independent accounting and business advisory firms in 147 locations.



Baker Tilly Enters Houston with MRZ Merger

Combined firm expands Baker Tilly's presence in Texas from Austin to Houston – two of the strongest markets in the country

October 03, 2018 10:00 AM Eastern Daylight Time

CHICAGO & HOUSTON--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Accounting and advisory firm Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP (Baker Tilly) and MiddletonRaines+Zapata (MRZ), a Houston-area accounting and advisory firm, announce their intent to merge with an effective date expected by the end of the year.

Houston is the largest city in Texas and the fourth-largest city in the U.S. behind New York, Los Angeles and Chicago. "MRZ is one of the fastest-growing accounting firms in Houston," Baker Tilly Chairman and CEO Alan D. Whitman said. "They are progressive and entrepreneurial and are an ideal partner for us in Houston."

"We are proud of our reputation for delivering innovative accounting and tax solutions through a high-energy, hands-on client experience," MRZ Managing Partner Wesley Middleton said. "Joining forces with Baker Tilly gives us national resources and broader capabilities to better serve our clients and provide growth and development opportunities for our team members."

MRZ and Baker Tilly share a focus on the client experience and industry specialization. MRZ's industry strengths are highly compatible with Baker Tilly's, particularly construction and real estate, manufacturing and healthcare. MRZ also specializes in the oil and gas industry. Baker Tilly's specialization in private equity and tax credits and incentives will be a competitive addition to MRZ's offerings in the Houston market.

Allan D. Koltin, CEO of Koltin Consulting Group, advised both firms on the merger. "MRZ represents the type of firm that larger firms dream of aligning with – great leadership, dynamic growth, innovation, young talented professionals and a passion for client service. Wes Middleton and his partners were courted by almost every major CPA firm in the country to become their Houston office. In the end, they loved Baker Tilly's strategy, culture and leadership and knew it provided the best growth opportunities for their people and clients. Baker Tilly continues to be one of the highest-performing Top 15 CPA firms in the country. This combination is a huge step for them in Texas and I believe it is only the beginning of their expansion plans throughout the state."

About Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP (bakertilly.com)

Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP (Baker Tilly) is a nationally recognized, full-service accounting and advisory firm whose specialized professionals connect with clients and their businesses through refreshing candor and clear industry insight. With approximately 2,800 employees across the United States, Baker Tilly is ranked as one of the 15 largest accounting and advisory firms in the country. Headquartered in Chicago, Baker Tilly is an independent member of Baker Tilly International, a

worldwide network of independent accounting and business advisory firms in 147 territories, with 33,600 professionals. The combined worldwide revenue of independent member firms is \$3.4 billion.

About MRZ (mrzllp.com)

MRZ (MiddletonRaines+Zapata) is a certified public accounting firm headquartered in Houston, TX, with an additional office in Spring. The firm serves privately held, middle market companies and individuals and places a premium on client experience.