

Smith + Howard buys Bauknight Pietras & Stormer

By [Michael Cohn](#) January 13, 2026, 8:00 a.m. EST



Smith + Howard, a Top 100 Firm based in Atlanta, acquired Bauknight Pietras & Stormer PA, in Columbia, South Carolina, one of the largest locally owned public accounting firms in the Palmetto State.

The acquisition will bolster Smith + Howard's presence in the Southeast. Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed. With the acquisition of BPS, Smith + Howard anticipates it will earn approximately \$175 million in revenue in 2026.

Smith + Howard ranked No. 85 on *Accounting Today*'s 2025 list of the Top 100 Firms. It was founded in 1971, has over 45 partners and more than 600 employees across 10 offices. BPS dates back to 1991 and has 13 partners, approximately 90 staff members and a single office.



Smith + Howard CEO Sean Taylor

"BPS was looking for a partner that could provide greater scale and expanded services for its clients, while Smith + Howard saw an opportunity to strengthen its presence in a key Southeast market," said Smith + Howard CEO Sean Taylor. "The firms share strong cultural alignment and a deep commitment to client service excellence. Together, Smith + Howard plans to expand services for BPS clients while continuing its broader growth strategy."

The addition of BPS fits into Smith + Howard's long-term growth strategy, broadening its footprint into a strategic Southeast market. Both firms cater to clients in industries such as construction, real estate, manufacturing and distribution. The deal also extends Smith+Howard's reach into BPS's core client industries, including captive insurance and telecommunications, and strengthens advisory services such as forensic accounting and litigation support. Koltin Consulting Group CEO Allan Koltin advised the firms on the transaction.

"Joining Smith + Howard marks an exciting next chapter for our firm and our clients," said BPS managing shareholder Jay Swearingen in a news release Tuesday. "This partnership strengthens our ability to ensure the long-term success of our employees and our clients by expanding the services, resources, and expertise we bring to the table. It aligns us with a firm that shares our commitment to trust, innovation and collaborative relationships, allowing us to continue delivering exceptional accounting and advisory services while supporting sustainable growth for everyone involved."

Koltin Consulting Group CEO Allan Koltin advised the firms on the transaction. "This merger reflects thoughtful leadership and a proactive response to where the accounting profession is headed," said Koltin in a LinkedIn post. "By combining Smith & Howard and BPS, the firm is investing in scale, talent, and capabilities that will matter most over the next decade."

Last year, Smith + Howard acquired Horton, Lee & Burnett in Birmingham, Alabama. Smith + Howard received private equity funding in 2022 from Broad Sky Partners in New York, one of the first accounting firms to score PE investment.