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Avalon completes Exacta acquisition in Buffalo

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SYRACUSE — A local document-services company acquired a competitor in the Buffalo area recently.

Avalon Document Services closed its acquisition of Exacta Legal Document Solutions on Oct. 30. Financial terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

The deal adds to Avalon's customer base in the Buffalo area, where it already has an office, but also adds talent to its staff, says Jonathan Denney, Avalon's CEO.

"It's definitely a shot in the arm with respect to the client base, but more importantly we retain their staff of four people who we're impressed with," he says.

Exacta's majority owner, Peter Buchbinder, and Denney became friends over the years.

"It got to a point where he decided he wasn't in a position to continue to invest in growth the way we were," Denney says.

Buchbinder could not be reached for comment on the deal by press time. JP Midgley, Avalon's managing partner in

Buffalo, handled much of the negotiation on the deal, Denney says.

While Exacta focused exclusively on work for the legal sector, Avalon also serves architects, engineering firms, construction companies, and a range of other businesses in addition to law firms. It provides copying and other document services, including work on large-format documents. Avalon began primarily as a copying firm, but fewer and fewer documents, especially in the legal industry, even exist in the physical world anymore, Denney says.

Avalon has adapted by aiding its legal clients in areas like litigation software, electronic discovery, and computer forensics, Denney says.

"A lot of relevant information for major cases these days is electronic," he says. "We're able to help our clients harvest and sort and work with that information to improve their cases."

Exacta was working in many of the same areas so the fit with Avalon is a good one, Denney says.

"We've really captured everything that law firms and corporate general counsels need for litigation in this day and age," he

says. "A lot of it is technology-related."

In addition to general litigation and legal work, Avalon also handles documents for appellate cases.

Denney says the firm has also added new technology in its large-format division, which handles work on items like blueprints and construction plans. Avalon recently added capabilities to allow work on electronic bids — something many construction companies and other firms are dealing with now.

Denney is looking for more acquisition opportunities and expects the company to grow both inside and outside New York.

After adding the staff from Exacta, Avalon employs 12 people in Buffalo and 70 companywide. Avalon has additional offices in Utica and Rochester and is headquartered in a 14,000-square-foot building at 901 N. State St. in Syracuse.

Denney is projecting more than \$5 million in revenue this year and more than \$6 million in 2010.

Avalon launched in 2000 with three employees. □

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