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Law Firms' Merger Will Expand Reach

By BLOOMBERG NEWS
Published: December 15, 2006

Kirkpatrick & Lockhart Nicholson Graham and Preston Gates & Ellis agreed to merge yesterday to form one of the nation's largest law firms, with 1,400 lawyers and expected 2007 revenue of \$750 million.

The firms said they would merge to form Kirkpatrick & Lockhart Preston Gates Ellis. The union will expand both firms' geographic reach, combining Preston Gates's presence in the Pacific Northwest and Asia with Kirkpatrick's East Coast and London offices.

"Firms like Preston Gates that look to be comfortable as regional powerhouses may not in fact think that that's a very secure future, and they may want to ally with someone else and gain a bigger footprint," said Bruce MacEwen, a law firm consultant.

Kirkpatrick & Lockhart has 1,000 lawyers and counts among its clients [Halliburton](#), [Viacom](#) and [Merrill Lynch](#). Preston Gates has about 400 lawyers and is [Microsoft's](#) primary outside law firm. William H. Gates Sr., father of Microsoft's founder, [Bill Gates](#), is a former partner.

Kirkpatrick's chairman, Peter J. Kalis, who is based in New York, said the new firm would have no specific headquarters.

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