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## Butler Snow big on Nashville amid Miller & Martin exodus

Nashville Business Journal by Brian Reisinger, Staff Reporter

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Expressing enthusiasm for the Nashville legal market, leadership with sudden challenger Butler Snow O'Mara Stevens and Cannada today touted its alternative billing practices and fluid relationships among attorneys across its footprint.

The Mississippi-based firm recently [lured 37 attorneys away from Miller & Martin](#), which has also lost lawyers to other firms in recent months. Steering clear of critiquing **Miller & Martin** — whose Chattanooga-based leadership acknowledged "different philosophies" about how to build its practice — Butler Snow chairman [Don Clark](#) emphasized his excitement to be upping his game locally.

"Everyone is attracted to Nashville, it's a great city," Clark said in an interview this afternoon. "We're very excited to have this base, but this is just beginning, this is not the end."

The firm opened what Clark called a small "beach head" here in the fall of 2011. It then began recruiting attorneys, with Wednesday's news of the Miller & Martin departure ranking as one of the most dramatic single moves in the Nashville legal industry in recent memory.

Now, Butler Snow has more than 40 attorneys in Nashville, making it a sizable presence with a range of legal practices. Key among the firm's features, Clark said, is that about 40 percent of its revenue comes from alternative billing — ways of charging outside of the billable hour that are widely discussed but only partially embraced by many firms.

[Dan Elrod](#), a health care regulatory and government relations attorney who joined Butler Snow from Miller & Martin, said he thinks his new firm "executes on many things other firms aspire to." Those include alternative billing, but also the technology and open attitude to allow a free flow of attorneys and resources across the firm's footprint in the service of clients.

"Virtually every law firm will say that they do that," Elrod said. "It seemed to us that Butler Snow really executes on that extraordinarily well."

Asked about the issues with Miller & Martin, Elrod said it's a "fine firm" that simply had a different philosophy than many of its Nashville attorneys on how to grow and approach service to clients. On Wednesday, Miller & Martin officials pointed the Nashville Business Journal toward its previous statement.

Going forward, Clark said Butler Snow will not pursue "growth for growth's sake" and wants to be systematic about implementing a strong culture following such a massive influx of attorneys. The firm's services include health care regulation, government relations, litigation, labor and employment, banking and financial and a range of other business services practices.

Brian Reisinger covers government, banking/finance, civic affairs, professional services and nonprofits.

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