

TRIANGLE BUSINESS JOURNAL

Exec of Raleigh-based Hutchison law firm talks Atlanta expansion

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Triangle Business Journal

The Raleigh-based Hutchison law firm will expand into Georgia by opening an office in Atlanta.

The group specializes in the life science and technology industries and the new office will be led by partner Scott Bryant, who chatted with Triangle Business Journal about the move and the life sciences and technology industries.

Why Atlanta? We are fortunate to work with a number of terrific Atlanta-based technology and life sciences clients, and continue to see expanding opportunities as the city develops into an increasingly vibrant hub for innovation in the technology industry. Atlanta is also a central, highly connected gateway from which we can better serve our regional and national clients and readily connect to our international clients.

How have you seen your tech and life science business grow in the past few years? To what do you attribute that growth? Our tech and life sciences practices continue to experience solid growth. We attribute this to both macroeconomic trends as well as our exclusive focus on the innovation and venture communities. Data from a well-respected deal aggregator shows that in 2015,



Scott Bryant will head the new Atlanta office of the Raleigh-based Hutchison law firm

Hutchison was among the top firms in the nation completing venture financing transactions, and we also closed a record number of M&A transactions as well.

Where do you see the biggest growth coming from in the next few years? Investment dollars into venture funds continue to increase, and as a result, we expect to see continued growth in venture financing transactions, as those funds put that money to work. We also expect the larger players in the innovation economy to remain acquisitive and

M&A deal flow to remain strong. We anticipate most of the growth in the startup sector will come from the traditional entrepreneurial hotspots, but there is also an increasing amount of activity in cities that haven't historically had as much activity (Wilmington, Chattanooga and Tampa, for example).

What is one of the biggest mistakes that tech and life sciences companies make before contacting a law firm? Many companies don't engage in as much due diligence as they should before choosing or changing legal counsel. A recommendation is important, of course, but the company should interview two or three law firms to ensure that there is a fit and meeting of the minds. All growth companies will go through cycles of good times and bad, and partnering with counsel that has the flexibility and capability to weather those cycles and grow with them goes a long way towards helping the company succeed.

What other cities have you targeted for growth? We will explore other cities on an opportunistic basis but will only expand our footprint as demand requires. We currently have clients across the US and in over 15 foreign countries.