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## Corporate plays continue in Perth accounting industry

AMANDA SAUNDERS, The West Australian  
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A month after BDO's raid on accounting firm PKF's Perth office, rival MGI Perth has revealed a merger with a boutique practice to fill part of the gap left from the rapid consolidation in the mid-tier market.

Jedlands firm Ord Nexia, with its team of 21 staff, including director Darren Crawte, will merge under the MGI Perth banner on October 1. The move will increase MGI Perth's staff to 81, including 10 directors, making it the biggest office in MGI's national network.

MGI Perth managing director Bruce Fielding said he had started talks with Ord Nexia in January but the merger had become even more appealing after Deloitte and then BDO raided the 110-strong PKF Perth office in July and August.

Obviously there has been space emerging in the market . . . and we certainly see some good opportunities to take advantage of that, particularly in the audit, corporate and tax consulting areas," Mr Fielding said.

Every client wants priority, and a local firm that still lives and dies by its performance in the local market has a certain amount of appeal to people."

Mr Crawte would start at MGI as a salaried director but take equity in the Perth firm in the "near future", while his two fellow directors at Ord Nexia, Ian Macpherson and Robert Parker, had been taken on as consultants.

Ord Nexia, which was established in 1990, specialises in audit and corporate advisory services and would complement MGI's strong tax consulting practice, Mr Fielding said. The firm's clients included big private groups and small listed companies.

Mr Fielding said more consolidation in the mid-tier accounting space was inevitable, particularly given BDO's rapid growth had left a sizeable gap in the market.

The market is pushing firms into growing to remain competitive and keep up with regulatory requirements, which are becoming more and more onerous," he said.

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