

What Law Firms Can Learn From Bond Schoeneck's Long Island Office Consolidation

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Bond Schoeneck & King is on a growth tear, merging its two Long Island offices into a larger space than both former locations combined and further looking to expand its presence in Manhattan and at least three other cities upstate, in moves that the firm said have taken “many years” of planning.

The firm’s former offices in Melville and Garden City merged into a single, larger space in Melville on May 5. The new space is 42,000 square feet, larger than the roughly 30,000 that the prior offices were together, and the firm is looking to continue growing its practices by adding more attorneys, managing committee chair Brian Butler said in an interview.

“The way that we constructed the office was with the intention of attracting talent,” Butler said. “That was our objective from the start, to provide that type of office environment that lawyers would be attracted to. We’ve done that and we’re in the process of recruiting in a variety of different areas to grow on Long Island.”

Now, the firm is seeking to add 8,000 square feet to its Manhattan office, as well as “actively pursuing



Courtesy photo

Bond Schoeneck & King office's sign.

space” in Rochester, Syracuse and Saratoga to expand its existing offices in those cities, Butler said. These potential expansions stand out from firms of similar size to Bond Schoeneck, which largely have [not been adding office space](#) at the same rate as Big Law in New York.

Head count is increasing at Bond Schoeneck, and Butler said the numbers will rise further soon. At the moment, Bond Schoeneck has 329 attorneys — up from 303 last year — and 48 of those lawyers are in the consolidated Long Island office. Putting those two offices together was a years-long process, sources at the firm say,

and making it work involved extensive planning, culture-building and logistical hurdles that other firms should take note of.

Planning The Consolidation

Bond Schoeneck used to have two Long Island offices because one location – the original Melville space prior to the consolidation – was formerly the office of Lazer Aptheker Rosella & Yedid, a firm that Bond Schoeneck [acquired in 2022](#). Butler said that the plan had always been to eventually combine Lazer Aptheker's office with the Garden City Bond Schoeneck office and that the combination happened this year because both locations' leases were expiring.

While the lease expirations in Melville and Garden City were what set off the move, the firm had been laying groundwork for the eventual combination of the two offices for years on both a logistical and cultural basis.

Craig Olivo, one of the co-managing partners for the new combined Long Island office, said in an interview that making sure the firm's two former offices were in constant contact and had a shared community atmosphere as well as a unified strategy "paid a tremendous dividend" when the combination finally came to be.

"From a business standpoint and an integration standpoint, we had been taking for a few years already steps to ensure that if and when that combination occurred, we would hit the ground running," Olivo said. "So, we would have joint holiday parties, joint summer outings, joint community service projects. We did a lot of groundwork in preparation for the combination to help make sure that it would be successful when it occurred."

Ralph Rosella, Olivo's co-managing partner at the new Long Island office and former managing

partner of Lazer Aptheker, said in an interview that another major aspect of planning the combination was making sure that the attorneys and staff could seamlessly migrate to their new office without confusion or technological hiccups.

"The IT group was an enormous part of this, and they were here for an extended period of time making sure that part of it was seamless to transition over," Rosella said. "And our staff was very excited about the move itself. We brought them into the process, showing them what the place would look like. Even as it was being built, we had little tours for them so they could see what was progressing, and they were fantastic in the process."

According to Butler, the new space was financed by the firm and via investment from RXR, the firm's landlord at the new office. Working with RXR, the firm designed its new Long Island location for growth, Butler said.

Designing the Space

Many firms that have recently moved offices or expanded have been opting for uniform office sizes among partners. Bond Schoeneck pursued that idea and largely adopted it, Rosella said, barring some exceptions for "nooks and crannies" in the space which "makes that sometimes a little difficult" to be exact in terms of uniformity.

Finding a place with largely uniform office sizes was not difficult, Rosella said, but getting those offices laid out in the way the firm wanted proved a challenge.

Rosella, Olivo and Butler all mentioned in interviews that the firm's Long Island office has a lot of natural light throughout and that both attorneys and clients have enjoyed that aspect of the space since they moved to the space in May. That was one of the design goals for the space,

Rosella said, but many locations the firm looked at had offices clustered in the interior without as many windows.

“In terms of having lawyers have the ability to have windowed offices and to create a lot of light into the remaining interior space for people who would be sitting in interior space, it was very hard to find that,” Rosella said.

Making the office comfortable and visually appealing was important because the firm encourages its attorneys to be in the office, according to Butler. Butler said the firm is on a hybrid schedule, but that on a cultural level, both of the prior Long Island offices had largely seen attorneys coming in every day, and that the new space is largely the same in that regard.

Making The Trip

Getting the people, technology and storage of both old offices into the new Long Island space was a big move, physically speaking. The physical move happened over the course of a single weekend, firm sources said, starting on Friday, May 2. By Monday, May 5, the new office was up and running, Olivo said.

According to Rosella, one unexpected challenge of the physical move was dealing with the decades of paper pileup that the old Melville office had, an issue that he compared to someone moving houses and realizing they need to get rid of some things.

“We had a huge basement, so it was very easy for us to accumulate files in paper form, and having to reduce that or, or discard some of that was very time consuming and challenging in terms of what we necessarily had to keep, what we wanted to return to clients and what we could actually destroy,” Rosella said. “That was a very time-consuming process, which I don’t think was necessarily expected, but we obviously dealt with it.”

On arrival, Olivo, Rosella and Butler said that the attorneys and clients at Bond Schoeneck have all been impressed with the new Long Island office and the relative ease of the transition into the new space.

Olivo said that the relative ease of the firm’s move is thanks to its deliberate, methodical planning and dedicated staff, without which there would likely have been significantly more challenges along the way.

“It was as seamless as it was because of all the groundwork that we did over a very long period of time,” Olivo said. “We have a very sophisticated IT department and office services department that were very supportive. We’ve done these combinations previously over the years and in other offices. And so, you know, we had a pretty good sense of what was involved heading into it, and our support staff did not disappoint.”