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## Langdon & Emison opens office in North Kansas City

Premium content from **Kansas City Business Journal** - by **Steve Vockrodt**, Staff Writer

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A rural Missouri law firm is planting its flag in North Kansas City, bringing with it a caseload that includes a number of national cases.

Langdon & Emison PC, based in Lexington, Mo., opened its North Kansas City office on Jan. 5. It will be staffed with two lawyers, including name partner **Bob Langdon**.

The firm, now with seven lawyers, has its eye on reaching 15 to 20 lawyers, which would make it one of the Midwest's larger plaintiff's firms.

"The larger you get, the better cases you can attract," Langdon said. "If you don't have people to work them, they just sit there."

The firm has established a track record in product liability cases throughout the region and beyond.

"Where they've gotten a big name is automobile product liability cases," said **Grant Davis**, a partner with Kansas City plaintiff's firm [Davis Bethune & Jones LLC](#). "They've done them all over the country. They've just won a big case in California. They won a case in Baltimore, in Florida. They're just don't-miss experts in that field."

Langdon & Emison holds the record trial verdict in Platte County, set in February when it won an \$8 million award against Johnson Controls Inc. In that case, a 2-year-old girl suffered serious injuries when a device intended to keep car seats upright snapped in a low-speed collision, causing the seat in front of the girl to snap back and strike her head.

"We have so much work in Kansas City that we figured we would open an office here," Langdon said.

The biggest cases now on the books for the firm are headed to trial in federal court later this year.

A pair of lawsuits accuse drug company Bayer Healthcare Pharmaceuticals Inc. of mislabeling its oral contraceptive Yaz and downplaying its potential harmful effects.

The suits are the first among hundreds waiting in line, and their outcomes could be a bellwether for the remaining suits.

A successful plaintiff's verdict in the early cases could lead to settlements, something Bayer so far has resisted.

"With Yaz, there wasn't a recall. ... You're arguing liability and damages, so it's hairier," said **Phyllis Norman**, a lawyer with the firm.

Former Missouri Congressman **Ike Skelton**'s father started the firm in Lexington, where it has remained stationed for low costs and its lawyers' preference for a rural setting. Skelton himself worked there for a time. The firm has a St. Louis office and plans a Chicago presence.



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