

## Wooten Acquires Columbia-Based Firm, Expanding Palmetto State Presence

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In its first corporate acquisition, The Wooten Company has purchased Crescent Engineering, LLC based in Columbia, South Carolina. The agreement means greater bandwidth for community infrastructure projects and expanded support of economic development across the state.

At the heart of the deal, John Stephens, PE transitions from Founder and President of Crescent to head of Wooten's Columbia Regional Office. With more than 20 years of industry knowledge gained at firms large and small – and lifelong ties to Columbia – the University of South Carolina alumnus is ready to write a new chapter.

"The arrangement opens up so many doors," Stephens said. "Being backed by eight-plus decades of company heritage and resources on a regional scale means we can reinforce our existing relationships and forge new ones to make a bigger difference."

Fourteen counties in South Carolina have experienced double-digit population growth since 2010. Fitting a broader pattern, many rural communities are also coping with population loss. That presents both challenges for infrastructure capacity and opportunities for development. Wooten leadership is confident Stephens will help local leaders navigate the road ahead.

"John has the right experience to lead and the right attitude to align with our commitment to design excellence and client service," said Wooten President Gary Hartong, PE. "We are ready to build on this foundation in the capital city to serve statewide."

The acquisition comes against the backdrop of the U.S. Senate passing the largest bipartisan infrastructure package in decades. With Stephens now leading efforts out of the Columbia office, opportunities abound to improve public systems and attract private investment in the Palmetto State.

"Not only is John a great guy, he is also ambitious and experienced in the area," said Wooten Director of Engineering Services Brian Johnson, PE. "Pair that with our firm's diverse service offerings and track record with funding strategies and the future is bright on many fronts."

*Link to original press release:*

<https://www.thewootencompany.com/blog/2021/8/11/wooten-acquires-columbia-based-engineering-firm-expanding-palmetto-state-presence>

