

Bruce McMichael is vice president of Credit Watch's southeastern division. He is pictured with receptionist Jessica Ellard. Not pictured: Millie McMichael and Russell Barnes.

Greg Hilburn/  
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## Stop-Loss merges with Fort Worth's CreditWatch

By Greg Hilburn  
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Bruce McMichael is a salesman at heart, so he felt out of place in the administrative role that was thrust on him as president of Stop-Loss Inc. when his father and company founder Ken McMichael died in 2006.

McMichael and his mother Mildred McMichael saw an opportunity for him to return to his passion when they recently sold the Monroe bill collection company to CreditWatch of Fort Worth, Texas.

"I was tired of being stuck in the office," said McMichael, who is now president of the southeast division of CreditWatch. "This allows me to focus on growing our client base."

McMichael said his company was also a bit overwhelmed when its top client, CenturyTel, bought Embarq Corp. and tripled in size to form CenturyLink.

"The CenturyLink merger

created 8,000 accounts a month, and we had trouble handling it," said McMichael, whose client list was also heavy with utility companies like Entergy Louisiana. "CreditWatch has the work force and technology to handle any size client efficiently.

"But we wanted our clients to know that we're still here; we've just got more resources now to help them," McMichael said.

CreditWatch Services has multiple divisions, call centers in four states and bilingual collectors.

"With the acquisition of Stop-Loss, this will solidify the position of CreditWatch in the telecom and utility sectors," said Scott Brandt, vice president of operations for CreditWatch. "Based on their many years of collection experience, Stop-Loss will add further diversification to our overall market strategy and their management team will add over 100 years combined experience."