

NameProtect, a Madison technology company, is being sold to Corporation Service Co., of Wilmington, Del.

Terms of the acquisition are not being disclosed.

NameProtect, founded in 1997 by Madison serial entrepreneurs Brian Wiegand and Mark McGuire, researches trademarks and monitors the Internet for abuse of brand names, such as counterfeiting and phishing attacks -- a way of drawing people to fake Web sites. The company has 74 employees, all but a handful of them in Madison. Wiegand said the company became profitable about 18 months ago and was expected to top \$10 million in revenue in 2006. "We saw a nice growth through the years ... and thought it was a good time for an exit," he said. The state Investment Board and Mason Wells, Milwaukee, were among NameProtect's key investors. Its main clients are big business and big law firms, Wiegand said. "From 1997 to 2000, they were primarily small businesses. Then we shifted the business strategy to move toward large law firms and Fortune 500 companies, and it turned out to be very successful," he said. Privately owned Corporation Service Co., established in 1899, provides legal and financial services to corporations and law firms. "By combining CSC's entity management and global domain capabilities with NameProtect's innovative brand monitoring tools and trademark expertise, both companies' customers now will get the best of both worlds in managing their brands online," Bruce Winn, president and chief executive officer of CSC, said in a news release. No information was available from CSC about its plans for the Madison operation or employees. Wiegand said, though, he expected them to stay here. Wiegand also co-founded another company, Business Filings, in 1996 with his former UW-Madison roommate, Rick Oster. The online business incorporation service was sold in 2002 to a Dutch publishing company for \$14 million.

The most recent venture for Wiegand and McGuire is Jellyfish.com, an 8-month-old, live comparison shopping and social networking Web site. Wiegand wouldn't disclose financial information but said Jellyfish.com "surpassed our projections in 2006."