

Twin Capital Mortgage: Duo doubled revenue in one year

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Spencer Brown Brothers in ARMs: These twin mortgage brokers have seen revenue double in a year.

Brothers Darius and Mikey Mirshahzadeh have a simple secret to their success: They work hard.

The 28-year-old fraternal twins have built Twin Capital Mortgage into a \$10 million-a-year business employing 110 in just over three years.

"We work from 11 in the morning to 10 or 11 at night and then another two or three hours when we get home," said Darius Mirshahzadeh, adding that the company has an intense employee training program teaching everything from voice intonation to good work habits. Cigarette breaks, excessive socializing and eight-hour work days are held up as prime examples of what not to do.

Said Mike Mirshahzadeh: "Most people don't know how to work hard."

Growth plans, like the brothers' rapid speech and apparent energy levels, are equally supercharged.

The duo anticipates more than doubling staff and revenue at the company's San Francisco call center within the next year. Although the firm's success is based on telemarketers' ability to turn a cold call into an engaged customer, the size of that success comes down to power in numbers.

Twin Capital makes its money by brokering home mortgages for high-risk customers. The more calls employees make, the more deals they are likely to strike.

The company uses a VOIP phone service that has tripled the number of people agents talk to in a day. The technology switches calls to telemarketers once a person answers and minimizes dead time spent with wrong numbers, answering machines and the like. The other thing the company did was re-think how it got leads. Initially, the brothers only subscribed to various databases of people with home mortgages, but the quality of the leads was poor.

Now, the firm uses a program, built by the firm's data architect, which trolls cyberspace and scrapes the information off of existing web pages.

Despite those advantages, the firm's continued success as a mortgage broker is not guaranteed. The sub-prime mortgage market is crowded, and with the housing market cooling, potential profits are compressed. So the Mirshahzadehs are diversifying.

They are licensed to work in 15 states, with just 50 percent of their loans now in California. They are also beginning to do direct mortgages and have secured a \$10 million line of credit with a subsidiary of CitiBank to service the same sub-prime clients they now work with as a broker. They hired a director of banking last week.

"We're positioning ourselves as equity ninjas," said Darius. "We're going where the markets are going."

Snapshot:

Company name: Twin Capital Mortgage.

What the company does: Mortgage broker to high-risk clients.

HQ: San Francisco.

Founders: Darius and Mike Mirshahzadeh.

2006 revenue: \$10 M (expected).

2005 revenue: \$4.5 M.

2004 revenue: \$1.7 M.

Founded: 2003.

Employees: 110.

Web site: www.twinloans.com



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