



HOW WAS THE MORTGAGE PROFESSIONALS STARTED?

After 18 years in banking, I [Brian] had the opportunity to open an office for a financial agency in Kingston. Unfortunately, within 9 months the business was placed in receivership due to factors outside of my control. It turned out to be a good thing, because business is born out of both invention and necessity. The year was 1989 and mortgage brokering was very new. Our new office wasn't ready yet, so we opened what became The Mortgage Professionals out of my garage. We plugged in the phones outside, went out and did business during the day, and shut the door at night. It's a humble beginning but that's how our business was started. My partners [Ian Rundle and Alan Paterson] soon joined and we began growing.

HOW DOES YOUR EXPERIENCE SERVE YOU AS A MORTGAGE BROKER?

When the brokerage opened in 1989, mortgage brokers were seen as the lenders of last resort. It wasn't until the mid-1990s when we started to get some traction in the market. Today, our profession represents about 33% of mortgages in Canada. Because I had a banking background, I knew what banks did and I was paid to sell their product. Our brokerage wanted to be different. We set out to be the client alternative to banks. We knew we could do a better job. No one owns us, so we can find the best deal (a combination of rate and package) for our clients. That's what we did and what we still do.

WHAT VALUES DO YOU BRING TO YOUR BUSINESS?

I think if you're going to talk about values, you have to talk about our people. The people within the business are what make it. We value professionalism, integrity, and commitment. Our culture is to put the client first. Always. We never hire someone without training and we re-educate continually. Our people are invested in making lending easy and affordable for our clients.



HOW DOES SOMEONE BECOME A MORTGAGE PROFESSIONAL AGENT?

We have agents that have come from a wide range of backgrounds, including business and finance. For those with limited experience, we put them into a two-year training program. Think of it like an internship where they work with one of our Mortgage Professionals. We then assess them to see if they're ready to represent us. We hope to draw on everyone's entrepreneurial spirit on an ongoing basis. This is important because the industry is always changing. And we need flexible, dedicated, full-time agents who are ready to learn, grow and adapt to meet and exceed new standards.

IS THE MORTGAGE PROFESSIONALS PART OF A LARGER NETWORK?

Yes, the Verico network. They are one of a few 'super brokerages': essentially a large buying group. The decision to join with them was easy, even though we were originally independent. They prioritize trust, truth, and transparency. Those three words rang true when they presented them to us. These are values that we can stand behind and they are values we want our business to be known for. Verico provides us tools to help us do what we do. And we're grateful for this. Partnering with them is one of the best moves we've made.

LARGER NETWORK ASIDE, HOW BIG IS THE MORTGAGE PROFESSIONALS?

Over 28 years, in the Kingston market, we do an average of \$300,000,000 worth of mortgages across approximately 1,500 clients each year. This means we may have worked with approximately 10% of the city population in any given year. Interestingly, the large majority of our clients are of a similar variety that one would find going to a bank. We don't just handle the difficult cases. But unlike the bank, we take all cases to make sure the client - not the lender - gets the best deal.



WHAT SERVICES DO THE MORTGAGE PROFESSIONALS OFFER?

Anything to do with home financing - whether it's a purchase, refinance, rental property, recreational property, whatever - we can tailor a mortgage for our clients. We do commercial mortgage as well, though that's a smaller part of our business.

THE COMPANY IS GROWING AND A TRANSITION TO NEW OWNERSHIP IS ABOUT TO OCCUR, IS THAT CORRECT?

Absolutely. This is the most exciting thing for an old guy like me: that we have people in our company, who have worked with us for years and have demonstrated a tremendous amount of professionalism and commitment, who are willing to stand up and take our company in the future. My daughter Karen (Matthey), Leo Ragusa, Leigh Graham, and Hernan Parada are taking over from myself, Alan Paterson, and Ian Rundle. Alan is staying on for a year to help the transition. The new owners have already taken responsibility for management and are doing an excellent job. They're ready to take the company forward, from social media and promotion to navigating new mortgage regulation, and we're excited to see this new group thrive.

WILL THE NEW OWNERS CHANGE ANYTHING ABOUT HOW THE MORTGAGE PROFESSIONALS CONDUCTS BUSINESS?

No. They will update the branding and look, but the basics behind the company will always stay the same. We've been very fortunate: we've been recognized locally and nationally for our dedication to professionalism and the new owners have lived and breathed this. They may modernize business processes but, again, they will carry our service excellence forward.



WE'VE HEARD A LOT ABOUT THE BUSINESS, CAN YOU TALK TO US ABOUT THE WAYS THE MORTGAGE PROFESSIONALS IS INVOLVED IN THE COMMUNITY?

If you're a part of the community, you have to be involved in the community. As a company, we have several key local causes that we help promote and support. From raising money in the Breast Cancer Awareness Walk for the past 24 years to being the title sponsor of the Down Syndrome Golf Tournament, we like to give back in an impactful way. Many of our staff also have their own personal causes, which we help support. We're very proud of our involvement in the community.

WHY SHOULD PEOPLE CHOOSE THE MORTGAGE PROFESSIONALS OVER YOUR COMPETITORS?

It's not about choosing a brand. It's about choosing a person, what they represent and the relationship the broker will build with that person. About 95% of my personal business is repeat and referral. I'm dealing with clients that I dealt with 28 years ago...and their kids. We hope that people know our company and our brand, but more importantly we hope that people know that our agents have a good reputation from their professionalism and community involvement.