

From this week's Focus

## Banks lend new meaning to 'revolving line of credit'

By: John Rosenthal February 22, 2010



Scott Schnurr, owner of DRF Total Property Solutions | Photo: Erik Unger

Scott Schnurr, owner of DRF Total Property Solutions, a Plainfield contracting business, wasn't planning to refinance. But he needed a new relationship in spring 2009, when he got wind that struggling Park National Bank was seeking to call in as many loans as possible.

Mr. Schnurr, 42, moved his business to Northern Trust Corp., taking out a smaller line of credit than he had at Park National.

"I like to pay everything off and not have any debt," Mr. Schnurr says.

He says his 70-employee business, which he started in 2004, posts annual sales of just under \$10 million. "We're a good company with good cash flow."

But six months after his move, more trouble arrived: Citibank turned off an unsecured credit line he had been using to buy water heaters in bulk.

"It threw a shock to me," says Mr. Schnurr, who had never missed a payment. "I'd managed the relationship perfectly, then without notice, they said we don't have this tool anymore."

His first instinct was to ask Northern Trust for a letter of credit so he could keep the Citibank line open. But after reviewing DRF's financials, Northern Trust Vice-president Curtis Bambule offered to double the size of his revolving line instead.

"Mr. Schnurr has a good handle on his financial position and has used debt responsibly to grow his business," Mr. Bambule says. "He understands DRF's competitive advantage and has invested in technology, systems and people to make the client's experience as positive as possible."

to make the clients experience as positive as possible.

"The whole process took two weeks," Mr. Schnurr says, "and one week of that was me sending the paperwork to my attorney asking why it was so easy."

He's now got more credit than ever and a relationship with a bank that values his business. DRF grew by 263% in 2008 and a more pedestrian 23% in 2009, thanks in large part to an exclusive contract it signed with Home Depot of Northern Illinois to sell, furnish and install plumbing equipment.

© 2010 by Crain Communications Inc.