



\$500,000 - \$5 MIL
LOAN SOLUTIONS

JACK COHEN

40

YEARS EXPERIENCE
OWNER OPERATOR

CLIENT SINCE

2019

Our Client

Stronghill Capital is an established, respected national direct lender serving entrepreneurial owners of income-producing real estate. The small balance lender, owned by ArrowMark, focuses on loan solutions that range from \$500,000 - \$5 million for commercial and investor residential real estate.

In 2019, Stronghill Capital hired Jack Cohen, a commercial real estate industry veteran, to come up with a strategy to transform the company with an aggressive growth execution plan. Experienced as an owner operator for more than 40 years, Mr. Cohen, through DarkKnightVentures, applies intellectual and/or economic capital in order to accelerate the success and promote growth in performance. As a mentor, coach, consultant, adviser and investor, Jack, develops talent, creates and manages high performance teams, grows revenue, solves issues of sales origination, capital formation, corporate recapitalization, scaling and organization and strategy. Mr. Cohen started his career at Cohen Financial before taking the lead of the firm as CEO for 26 years. Mr. Cohen has held several Professional Affiliations, including Association Presidents of Chartered Realty Investor and Commercial Real Estate Finance Council ("CREFC"), Commercial Real Estate Finance/Multifamily Board of Governors ("COMBOG") and has sat on the big board at Mortgage Bankers Association ("MBA"). Additionally, Mr. Cohen currently serves as a non-executive Vice-Chairman at 3650 REIT. In January of 2020, Mr. Cohen took over as President and Chief Innovation Officer at Stronghill Capital.

A client since August, 2019, Mr. Cohen generously made time to sit down with RealINSIGHT to discuss his views on the adoption of CRE technology and his plans for Stronghill Capital.

THE CHALLENGE

With a mandate for aggressive growth Mr. Cohen was tasked with identifying and implementing technology solutions that would allow Stronghill Capital to scale without major disruption to its current processes and business. In evaluating current technologies in the market, Mr. Cohen needed to find a comprehensive system that integrated with current technologies, contained the flexibility to be customized, and had a robust onboarding process with full client support.

Interviewer: What was the vision for Stronghill Capital?

Jack Cohen: Our strategy called for high growth in a scalable way. Stronghills’ strategy is to build a predictable, high growth business with certainty and reliability. By providing a standard, reliable process we are creating transactions that people want to engage in. With our technology we don’t miss deadlines and there are no gaps in the process.

“Imagine a world where you are surrounded by **people you can rely on**”

Interviewer: What was the problem that you were trying to solve at Stronghill Capital?

Jack Cohen: The leadership was looking for exponential growth and I was brought on to implement a plan to assess the current processes and apply the right systems, processes, and technology. We had multiple requirements for the technology we were looking for. Firstly, it had to cover the full lifecycle of a loan and be customizable to our specific process. Secondly, it was important that the technology provided real-time data for internal purposes. Our employees are not all in the same location so that was important for accountability as well as identifying gaps in the process. Finally, we needed a technology that could increase employee efficiency. Our goal was to dramatically increase our business with a scalable process that provided a high degree of insight. We needed to be able to adapt and pivot, quickly and efficiently.

THE SOLUTION

Interviewer: What technology solutions did you implement to execute your strategy?

Jack Cohen: We needed a data warehouse with clean data and a reliable, systematic process with insightful outputs. In a previous position (3650 REIT) I was involved in the adoption of RealINSIGHT so I am very familiar with their products. There are a lot of pain points in loan originations for commercial real estate and the leadership at RealINSIGHT has a deep understanding of the process, so the technology accounts for every potential issue that arises. Technology is supposed to make life easier so it was important that we adopted a technology that we could implement quickly with immediate impact.

Interviewer: What was the process of implementing RealINSIGHT like?

Jack Cohen: The onboarding process was very smooth. The client success team was very dedicated and knowledgeable. What they were able to accomplish blew my mind and they delivered exactly what they said they would. When small issues arose, they were adaptable and responsive to feedback. There are three things that sets RealINSIGHT apart from other software product, **their people, their word, and their execution.**

“...their people, their word, and their execution.”

THE RESULT

Interviewer: With the covid-19 pandemic was there a disruption to Stronghill Capital’ strategic plans?

Jack Cohen: The pandemic was a non-issue for us. We were already set up for remote work and with RealINSIGHT I already had the visibility I needed to manage my team. By standardizing the data and leveraging this technology, we were able to double our number of loans and by June 2021 we had already matched our 2020 year-end production.

 Doubled loan volume

 Matched last years production by mid-year 2021

LOOKING FORWARD

Interviewer: How do you intend to leverage RealINSIGHT in the future?

Jack Cohen: When your data is clean and easily understood, integration with other business lines becomes simple. A quick demonstration of RealINSIGHT makes it very easy to see the benefits and opportunities that this software provides. I hope that RealINSIGHT can empower more businesses I am involved in in the future.