Principal and President

Brown Commercial Group
Elk Grove Village, Illinois

DAN BROWN

A consistent force: In today's real estate market, headlines are made by million-square-foot construction projects, e-commerce companies leasing blocks of space of more than 250,000 square feet, major in-fill development deals and multi-million-dollar portfolio sales.

Yet the heart and soul of the industrial marketplace—and the broader U.S. economy—isn't your typical headline-maker. Small-to mid-size firms, those leasing or owning from 20,000 to 100,000 square feet of space, are consistent and dependable forces.

These companies need representation, perspective and counsel to develop and execute their real estate strategies as much as the high cube user.

That's the premise on which Dan Brown launched Brown Commercial Group in 2004 in Elk Grove Village, Illinois, the bastion of the Chicago industrial market.

Serving the small- to mid-sized tenants: Brown believes that its focus on making an expanded platform of commercial real estate services available to small to mid-sized tenants, landlords, and investors has allowed his company to grow and expand, regardless of business cycles.

"I enjoy helping people solve problems," Brown said. "I like the satisfaction that comes from learning about a client's business; collaborating with bankers, accountants and other advisors; and creating impact for a client."

A growing business: Brown's company represents tenants and landlords in the suburbs with industrial and office space needs of 100,000 square feet or less. Through dedication to client service and a strategic hiring plan, he has grown the business to include nine brokers and a yearly volume of about 200 transactions. During his 21-year career, Brown himself has negotiated more than 1,200 deals.

Brown takes a long-term view of business and always considers himself a trusted advisor, helping clients with important decisions about their businesses.

"Many firms can complete transactions, but Brown Commercial Group goes the extra mile by creating strategies focused on operational goals for profit and investment return," Brown said. "This means that I'm thinking about the relationship first and not just completing a transaction.

Gaining the trust of clients: According to Brown, one of the key hurdles to overcome, especially when working with smaller companies, is quickly gaining client trust and confidence.

"Not all clients—or prospective clients—are comfortable sharing sensitive or confidential financial and operational information that needs to be shared when making decisions on leasing space, buying buildings and expanding a business," Brown said. "My role from the outset, is to quickly establish that baseline of trust so I can build a detailed picture of the business and its needs, and provide guidance on long-term leasing or investment decisions."

Out-of-office hours: When not expanding Brown Commercial Group or serving his own client base, Brown's four kids "provide so much enjoyment and keep me busy with sports and travel outside of work." Additionally, Brown is active in volunteer work, for his church, Willow Creek, and for Alpha Chicago, an interactive forum for exploring the Christian faith in a casual, no-pressure environment.