

Trinity Capital's Burke Tackles Complex Financing Structures

One of the notable career achievements for Trinity Capital founder and managing partner Kevin Burke is the role he played in helping to develop and broaden what has become a \$12 billion national franchise loan securitization market on Wall Street.

The catalyst for those efforts came in the mid-1990s. Burke was working at Koll Capital Markets. By chance, he drove past a convenience store one day that was cleaning up a gas spill that also had a working oil derrick in the background. Most people would simply see the irony of a gas station cleaning up a gas spill in an oil field. For Burke it sparked the idea to bring securitized financing, specifically collateralized mortgage obligations (CMO) to the convenience store sector.

In 1996, Burke joined Franchise Mortgage Acceptance Company as a senior executive where he was one of the early architects for modern CMO and played an instrumental role in developing and broadening the \$12 billion national franchise loan securitization market on Wall Street. He also was involved in warehouse financing, mergers & acquisitions, securitization and loan syndication.

Burke went on to launch Trinity Capital in July 2000. The boutique investment banking firm has since completed more than \$20 billion in mergers and acquisitions, financial restructurings and other financing transactions. The majority of its business is serving restaurants and related sectors such as food production and agriculture. The

firm specializes in middle-market deals with an average transaction size that is just under \$100 million and also has a restaurant systems consulting practice.

These days, Burke's main role at the company is overseeing strategy and managing the team, which has grown to about 20 people. He also maintains a hands-on role and manages his own clients. Throughout his career Burke has combined his expertise in finance and economics to guide clients that have included the likes of Yum! Brands and its subsidiaries such as Taco Bell Corp. and Ready Pac Foods Inc.

Burke concentrated on economics as both an undergrad at Old Dominion University in Virginia and at graduate school. He earned an MBA from the College of William and Mary and now serves as an adjunct professor at the college's Mason School of Business. "I think it's helpful to look at the financial and economic data out there and try to make sense of it for your clients, because there are too many sound bites on TV today," says Burke.

For restaurant companies that might be thinking of an execution date these days, sooner is better than later, advises Burke. "Multiples are probably going to come down a bit. Interest rates will likely decline, as well, but credit could tighten," he says. "The cost of credit tightening could exceed what you pick up in lower interest rates." For more information, contact Kevin at (310) 231-3100 or kburke@tcib.com.