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Matthew Krieger and Joshua Bratter leveraged their friendship into a successful law practice

Close partner bond helps legal practice flourish

BY STEPHEN VAN DRAKE

Matthew Krieger and Joshua Bratter know how to hang out their law shingles and launch a business plan.

As 1998 graduates of the University of Miami School of Law, the partners leveraged their close friendship into a burgeoning multi-focal international practice on Miami Beach.

Since 1999, the pair has concentrated on immigration law and real estate, networking their talents aggressively, expanding from four employees (including themselves) to 20 this year.

In April, the firm moves into new digs on Miami Beach at 500 S. Pointe Drive, branding the new venue as the "Bratter Krieger" building.

"Our business model was to concentrate on helping foreign business executives and others with complex immigration issues," said Krieger, who initially entered the publishing and marketing world after law school.

Bratter, who speaks fluent Spanish and Russian, started working as an immigration law specialist for Bander Fox Isicoff & Associates. He and Krieger kicked around the idea of melding their close friendship and synergy into a law partnership.

All kinds of work spun off the centrifuge of immigration law, said Krieger, 30.

"Josh connected with the international community and was interested in a long-term immigration practice," he said.

This became a stepping stone for expanding into real estate, international transactional, and corporate practices.

The firm, now with eight lawyers, continues aggressive marketing - Krieger's forté. The pair advertised in newspapers, on billboards, at seminars and after church services to help individuals with new immigration rules, helping people prepare for U.S. citizenship.

"Then, through a confluence of factors, we started getting into the Latin American entertainment industry and helping Latin American companies use Miami as an Internet portal," Bratter said.

"Our first step was to get the business going and earn the loyalty from clients and do good quality work - and it's paid off," Krieger said.

The firm's gross revenue quickly soared after the pair took meager initial salaries, pouring revenue back into the business.

"The important thing is we started with our close relationship, each having confidence in the other and with complementary skill sets," Krieger said.

"We want to be more than just attorneys. We see making our work culture a lifestyle - an all-encompassing experience for us and our clients."