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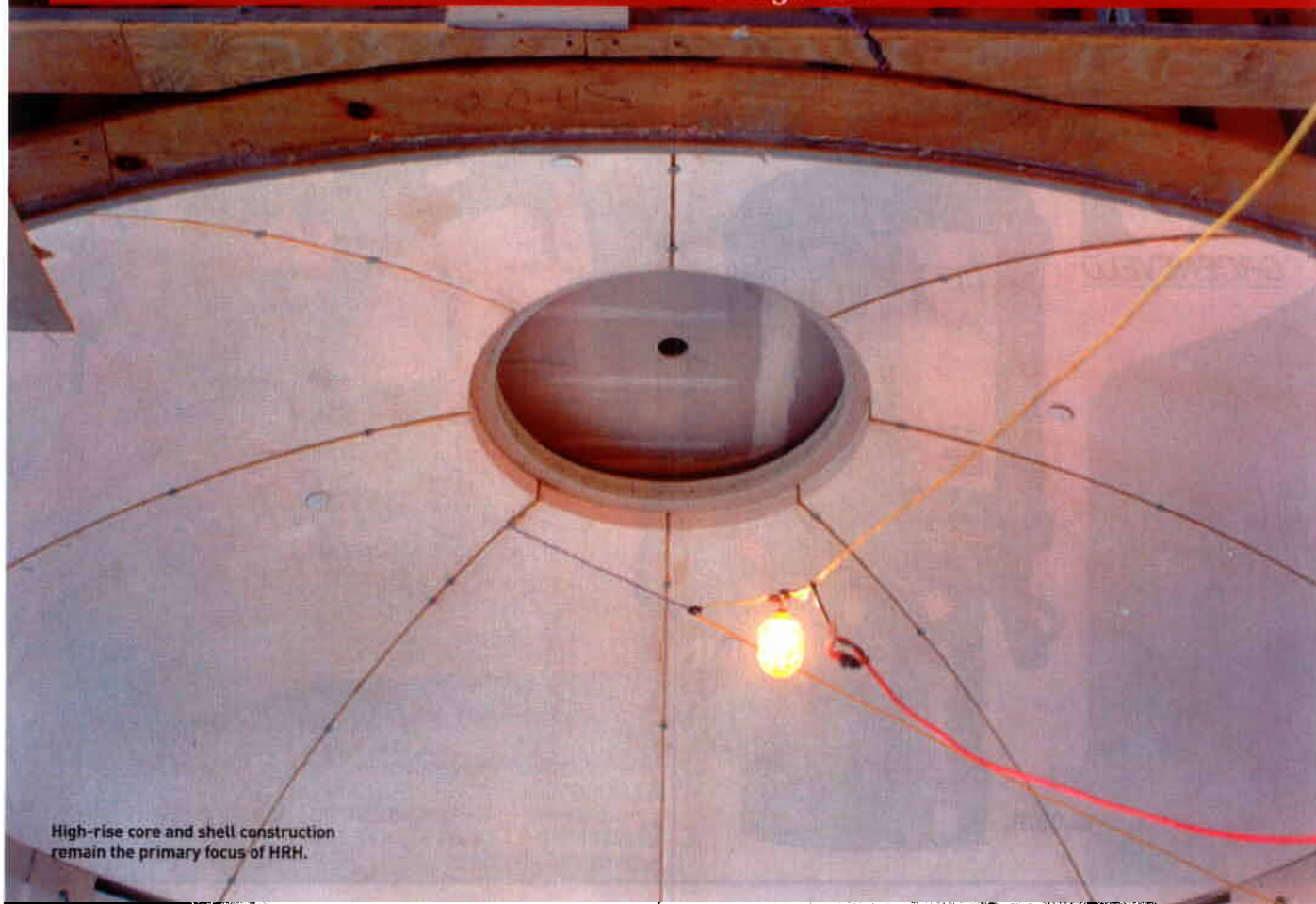
Millennium Minded

Why Office Depot believes its new concept M2, will deliver a greater shopping experience.

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High-rise core and shell construction remain the primary focus of HRH.

HRH, YOU'RE HIRED

This established construction firm says it maintains strong ties with Donald Trump and other high-profile developers, and even lends its expertise to 'The Apprentice.' **JUANNA MILI EK**

MILLIONS OF AMERICANS TUNE IN TO "THE Apprentice" each week to see who will be next on the chopping block in Donald Trump's boardroom. Candidates continue to battle each other to avoid hearing what has become the famed real estate mogul's signature, "You're fired."

After the final boardroom hire, however, the real work begins. After being hired by Trump at the end of the show's first season, Bill Rancic headed to the offices of HRH Construction for a crash course in luxury construction.

HRH Chairman Greg Cuneo has a longtime relationship with Trump. In fact, the company says Trump refers to him as "the original apprentice."

According to Cuneo's partner, HRH President Brad Singer, the company has historically done a considerable amount of Trump's construction work in New York, including Trump International and the renovation of the Gulf and Western building.

"Right now, we are doing most of Trump's work, really high-

end production," Singer says. He attributes this high profile partnership to the people at HRH and the experience they bring to each project.

"So many of the people here have been with the company for so long," he emphasizes. "They are experts in high-rise residential construction. I also believe that it's about relationships. Besides being able to build a building, you have to make people feel comfortable. Historically, that's been something HRH has been able to do."

While HRH is proud of its relationship with Trump, it also works with many other prominent developers, Singer says. For instance, the company is currently working with Louis Capelli on a tower in White Plains, N.Y.

The company was founded nearly 80 years ago. In the 1960s, the firm joined Starrett Corp., a

PROFILE

HRH Construction LLC
www.hrhlc.com
 2003 Sales: \$400+ million
 Headquarters: New York
 Employees: 300
 Services: Residential high-rise construction
 Brad Singer, pres.: "With the low interest rates right now, everyone is going condo."



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to congratulate
HRH Construction
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public company comprised of four subsidiaries, one of which was HRH Construction.

Changing Direction

ACCORDING TO SINGER, HRH, AT ONE TIME, WAS A ONE STOP shop for construction services and building management. In 1997, a real estate group bought HRH and took it private. Singer and Cuneo purchased it in 2000, and shifted the company's focus to construction management.

"I actually got involved with the company in April of 1999," Singer recalls. "A good friend, who had no construction expertise at all, was in management at the company and asked us to come in and help out. That rolled into us buying equity and ultimately taking control of the construction operations."

Since then, Singer says, he and Cuneo have remained true to the company's longstanding identity as a high rise builder. "That is still our main focus," he says. "We do other projects, but high rise core and shell construction remain our focus."

The company has one office in Manhattan and another in White Plains, where the majority of its staff is headquartered. Most HRH projects are based in the metro New York area, Singer says, although the company has worked in other regions for its clients.

"We've gone to places like Rhode Island and Newport News, Va., when our clients have asked us to, but we don't attempt to go out on our own," he explains. "We are trying to expand geographically and are talking about opening up an office in Florida. Then there's the new Trump building in Chicago. We're not doing the actual building, but we are an owner representative for

Trump. That may lead to more projects in the Chicago area."

Building Relationships

HRH EMPLOYS BETWEEN 250 TO 300 PEOPLE AT VARIOUS TIMES throughout the year, Singer says. The company usually works with a list of subcontractors, although it is always looking to develop new relationships, he says. The subcontractors HRH chooses usually depend on the caliber of the project. "For instance, if we are doing a job for Trump, we only use a certain sheet rock company," he explains. "There are only two or three really high end subcontractors and we use them for the really high end jobs. If we're doing a rental apartment building, as opposed to condominiums, we may go to the second tier."

Singer credits purchasing manager and 35 year industry veteran Louis Esposito with always choosing the right subcontractors for the job. "He does so much of it, he always know which of the contractors are looking for work at the time," Singer says. "If they are looking for jobs, we'll get a better price."

Singer says there is high demand for condominiums in the current market. "That's the biggest trend right now," he states. "With the low interest rates right now, everyone is going condo. We don't see very much rental property on the market at this point."

The market is hot now, Singer says, but things are bound to change at some point. That is one of the only constants, of course. "I don't think that a downturn in the real estate market in New York is imminent. There is so much demand for product out there, but realistically, it's going to happen one of these days," he says. "In the future, our goals will be to expand geographically. It just cannot stay as hot as it's been. ■"