

CASE STUDY

Lending Hand Program

“People today are looking for a specific plan they can follow to qualify for a mortgage. Lending Hand enables me to give them very specific action steps. It’s nice to be able to say, ‘If you do A, B, and C, you’re going to have a great opportunity to get where you need to be.’”

Eleftherios (Lefty) Hazimihalis

Vice President

Creekside Mortgage
Boardman, Ohio

Creekside Mortgage has served residential mortgage customers in Ohio and Florida for 12 years. Learn more at creeksidehomeloans.com.

“Lending Hand is a great tool. The customer just has to be willing to roll up their sleeves and follow the program’s recommendations. Lending Hand directs them on how to get their goals accomplished. We try to use this tool to the best advantage of our customers and it’s been a real success.”

Alex Ricci

Loan Processor

Intercounty Mortgage Network Corp.
Hazlet, N.J.

Intercounty Mortgage Network serves residential mortgage customers in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Florida. Learn more at intercountymortgage.com.

Leading Mortgage Professionals Help Applicants Qualify with Credit Plus’ Lending Hand Program

Creekside Mortgage and Intercounty Mortgage Network value the personalized strategies provided to each customer

Credit Plus, Inc., a leader in credit information services since 1928, is dedicated to providing mortgage professionals with an unsurpassed level of service and technology. The company is based in Salisbury, Md., and provides quality products and services to mortgage professionals throughout the nation. Credit Plus can be found on the Internet at creditplus.com or reached by calling **800.258.3488**.

THE SITUATION

Recent data suggests that a mortgage remains out of reach for nearly 30 percent of American households, even with historically low interest rates and declining home prices. Home loan applicants whose credit scores fell below the 620 minimum score threshold that Fannie Mae set in December 2009 were unlikely to qualify for a mortgage even with a down payment of as much as 25 percent. More recently, most lenders began raising their score requirement on FHA loans to 640 – raising the hurdle even higher for aspiring home owners.

Mortgage professionals at Creekside Mortgage and Intercounty Mortgage Network reported that 30 to 60 percent of their residential mortgage applicants were failing to qualify for a home loan due to a low credit score. Eleftherios (Lefty) Hazimihalis, Vice President at Creekside Mortgage, said that in a typical month, six out of ten applicants are deemed nonviable because the applicant’s credit score fell below 640. Alex Ricci, a loan processor with Intercounty Mortgage Network, said that while many applicants had adequate income, as many as half could not qualify because of a credit score below 640.

Intercounty Mortgage Network and Creekside Mortgage share a strong commitment to provide excellent service to their customers. Both companies realized that for many applicants, the correction of even one credit report error, or simply paying down the balance on a revolving credit line, would result in a qualifying credit score. They were eager to find a way to offer more applicants the assistance that would help them qualify for a home loan.

SOLUTIONS/RESULTS

Credit Plus began working with both Intercounty Mortgage Network and Creekside Mortgage on the Lending Hand program soon after the program was launched in March 2010. Credit Plus offered Lending Hand’s unique combination of proprietary technology and personalized attention by seasoned industry experts to provide Intercounty Mortgage Network and Creekside Mortgage with an in-depth analysis of the positive and negative factors influencing each applicant’s credit file and scores. Credit Plus also provided the companies with a specific step-by-step plan and timeline for each applicant to follow. Mortgage professionals at both companies used these plans to help educate applicants and monitor their progress in completing the recommended actions.

Alex Ricci, a loan processor with Intercounty Mortgage Network, saw the immediate, positive impact that Lending Hand can make. He cited numerous applicants for whom completing the Lending Hand recommendations resulted in rescoring that ranged from 25 to 110 points higher than their original scores. Each applicant went from a non-qualifying score to a qualifying score.

Lefty Hazimihalis, Vice President at Creekside Mortgage, said that in his experience, nearly 30 percent of applicants whose scores fall below 640 have been able to reach a qualifying level within the first 30 to 60 days by following the Lending Hand recommendations. He also uses the Lending Hand steps with prospective buyers who need more extensive help, ensuring that they are continuing to make progress so that he can help them reach their goal of home ownership.

Lending Hand allows Creekside Mortgage and Intercounty Mortgage Network to work with confidence with their applicants, delivering exceptional customer service that encourages repeat business and personal referrals.