

# Fall of high-end vacation club reaches shores of Lake Tahoe

By David Migoya, Denver Post

It was to be a worldwide playground for the middle-class millionaire with nouveau riche vacation getaways for stunningly little outlay.

Denver-based High Country Club and its creator, Christian Kirschner, were tenderfoots in the rising destination-resort industry, a high-flying sector that in 2005 seemingly couldn't miss.

In the time it operated, the club went from the world's fastest-growing and one of the most desirable to a debt-strapped shell operating out of a coffee shop.

Existing clubs had focused on the top tier of the economic ladder, individuals whose income started in the high seven figures. Kirschner keyed in on those a few rungs down.

The one-time commercial leasing agent with a killer smile

had tapped into an overlooked client base – budding executives who had it all but didn't want to spend it all.

Properties in desirable vacation spots were easy to come by, and as the mortgage bubble inflated, seemingly limitless amounts of money were available to buy them.

“He really did have a clever idea and an excellent execution of it,” said William Scherer, a Florida podiatrist who was among the first to join the club and traveled to most of its destinations. “But they got greedy, sloppy and went awry of their business plan.”

While some club members say they got their money's worth, many others say they didn't. Lawsuits and interviews paint a picture of Kirschner living as large as the members he tried to sign up, even as the financial markets pivoted against him.

**Read the whole story**