



Showhomes
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Showhomes-Pensacola/Destin Franchise Opens

Emerald Coast homeowners and Realtors® gain advantage in successfully marketing high-end, vacant homes

PENSACOLA, Fla. — September 27, 2006 — Showhomes, the leader in adding value to vacant home sales, today announces that Sherri and K.C. Nichols have purchased a Showhomes franchise for the Pensacola/Destin area, one of the nation's fastest growing markets for vacation and retirement homes, known for its sugar-sand beaches.

The couple, formerly of Birmingham, Ala., will focus on the Pensacola and Destin area, concentrating on Pensacola, Pensacola Beach, Gulf Breeze, Navarre, Fort Walton Beach and Destin. "With their passion for real estate and proven marketing savvy, we're excited about Sherri and K.C. bringing Showhomes to the Emerald Coast," said Bert Lyles, Showhomes chairman and CEO. "A growing number of international buyers in Florida and the need for high-end rental housing mean this area has significant potential for franchisees, Realtors and home managers."

Most recently, Sherri Nichols served as Membership Director for the prestigious Riverchase Country Club in Birmingham, where she pioneered marketing to the real estate community and broke membership records by generating leads from Realtors. K.C. Nichols, who has a successful background working in large corporate arenas such as Ashland Chemical Co., Quest Diagnostics and ADP TotalSource, brings extensive sales and marketing management experience to the franchise.

The couple was first introduced to Showhomes by their own Realtor, who recommended they contact Showhomes to help market their vacant home in Birmingham. Shouldering two mortgages, double utilities and taxes made the Nichols anxious to sell quickly. They also found out how difficult it can be to manage an empty house long-distance.

Sherri noted, "Knowing a Showhomes home manager was taking care of our home for us really gave us peace of mind. During a storm, a large tree fell, completely blocking the front door. It was such a relief to have Showhomes there to help manage the removal and clean-up. We also had a sprinkler system failure, leaving our lawn baking mid-summer. If our home managers hadn't been there to spot the problem and help us get it resolved, we would have lost our entire lawn," explained Sherri.

KC added, "After the Showhomes Home Manager moved in, our house looked beautiful- even better than when we lived there. And when we got a full-price offer for our home, we realized this was the kind of high-value service business we wanted to bring to Realtors and homeowners in Pensacola and Destin. For us, Showhomes was the perfect opportunity to leverage our sales and marketing backgrounds to move from a corporate to an entrepreneurial environment," said KC.

Home managers play a key role in the Showhomes business model, adding value to vacant listings by living in and maintaining homes in show-to-sell condition. In return, they enjoy living in desirable, high-end homes for fees comparable to moderate rental rates and agree to move out when the home is sold. Home managers also pay utilities and save homeowners other carrying costs, such as inflated insurance premiums on vacant houses.

Pensacola's magnificent Gulf beaches, also known as the Emerald Coast, have made it one of the country's favorite vacation destinations and a hot new market for international buyers. According to a 2005 *Real Estate Outlook*, published by the National Association of Realtors®, 87 percent of Florida Realtors reported at least one home sale transaction with an international buyer. Of those, 66 percent noted that one-quarter of all their transactions were with international clients.

About Showhomes

Since its founding in 1986, Showhomes has helped Realtors and homeowners sell more than 23,000 homes worth more than \$8 billion across the U.S. by transforming vacant houses into valuable homes. The Showhomes business model is based on the fact that well-furnished homes kept in show-to-sell condition sell faster, and for higher prices, than vacant houses. Showhomes provides homeowners and their Realtors a turnkey package that includes whole-house furnishing, professional decorating, staging, a live-in home manager and marketing support services. For more information about Showhomes franchise opportunities, visit www.showhomesfranchise.com. For more information about Showhomes, visit www.showhomes.com.

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