



Lakefront Living Eyes Lake Keowee for New Franchise Territory

The lake-home realty business is seeking new franchisees to service the South Carolina vacation and retirement destination.



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Franchisor Spotlight

Lake Keowee, a man-made reservoir in South Carolina's Oconee County, has long been one of the premier vacation destinations in a region with an abundance of options. Located near the base of the Blue Ridge Mountains and within a few hundred miles of three states and eight major cities, the area has seen upwards of 100 communities established since the 1970s. Soon, realtors looking to take advantage of Lake Keowee's evergreen market will have a powerful new partner, as real estate franchise Lakefront Living seeks to enlist new franchisees in the area.

Scott Freerksen, CEO of Lakefront Living International, said his team has pegged Lake Keowee as the ideal location for new franchise operations.

"Lake Keowee meets all of our criteria for a successful franchise location," he said. "Market size, location, diversity of real estate offerings, attractions, climate, accessibility — it checks every single box."

The lake's key feature, what will allow a franchisee to thrive season after season, Freerksen said, is its size. With more than 300 miles of shoreline, Freerksen's team estimates there may be up to 1,000 - 2,000 properties up for sale at any given time. And crucially, the vast majority of those properties are undeveloped, meaning realtors can expect long-term growth in the market.

“About 10% of Lake Keowee’s properties are direct lakefront properties, but the bulk of the properties there are still raw land and lake-access properties,” Freerksen said. “Developers and realtors are going to be capitalizing on this market for decades to come.”

In addition to vacation homes, Freerksen also pointed to the growing number of full-time residences popping up in the area to explain why right now is the perfect time to break into the market.

Because of the region’s year-round temperate climate and increasing access to high-quality amenities, the lake has become an increasingly attractive destination for retirees. That creates a “tremendous opportunity for new franchisees,” Freerksen said. “We’re seeing new buyers flocking to the market from across the country — and not just seasonally, but every day of the year.”

A realtor specializing in lake-adjacent properties has a particular edge in the Lake Keowee market, and by tapping into the resources afforded to all Lakefront Living franchisees, Freerksen indicated that franchise operators in the area have a unique opportunity to dominate one of the most promising growing markets in the U.S.

“A niche-focused lakefront specialist using our proven systems in this market will have a profound competitive advantage,” he said. “Our resources will allow the right franchisee to completely dominate the listing market.”

Chief among those resources is Lakefront Living’s consumer-facing listing site, LakefrontLiving.com, which Freerksen said attracts nearly 100,000 new visitors every month, providing a constant stream of leads for franchisees in every market.

Lakefront Living franchisees also benefit from the business’s Growth by Referral© (GbR) program, which allows brokers to expand their territories quickly and easily.

Effective territory expansion is one of Lakefront Living’s key areas of focus, and one of the primary benefits offered to franchisees, Freerksen said.

“We believe in territory expansion, not saturation. We empower our franchisee partners to develop into neighboring lakes and markets, and tools like GbR allow them to do so without ever increasing their workload.”

Lakefront Living’s first franchisee partners in each market are offered the right of first refusal for new territories in their region, which may be an especially appealing benefit in a market like Lake Keowee, which is surrounded by a number of other promising lakefront markets, including Lake Murray and Lake Hartwell.

As Lakefront Living searches for its first franchisee partners in the Lake Keowee market, Freerksen said the trait he’s pursuing is passion.

“We’re looking for brokers who have a true passion for lakefront properties,” he said. “We’re all about letting our systems run the business and having the right people run the systems. We can teach those systems to anybody, but we can’t teach passion. As our partners become dominant in their market, that passion is going to be essential to growing their team and benefiting from our larger community of brokers across the country.”

Lakefront Living is currently accepting franchisee inquiries in Lake Keowee and expects to introduce its first franchisee partner to the market within the year.