



Bennion & Deville Homes declares independence

Established, successful Southern California real estate brokerage leaving Windermere

RANCHO MIRAGE, Calif. – September 26, 2015 – Bob Bennion and Bob Deville, founders and co-owners of one of the largest residential real estate franchisee brokerages in Southern California, Windermere Real Estate Southern California, are going independent starting October 1, 2015. The departure from the franchise network along with the company's name and branding reflects an enhanced focus on the company's ongoing growth strategy.

Both Windermere Real Estate Southern California, in the Coachella Valley, and Windermere Real Estate SoCal, in San Diego and Orange counties, will be operating under a new brand: Bennion Deville Homes. The 29-office real estate company debuted the brokerage's innovative branding in a companywide meeting to more than 1,000 agents on Thursday, September 24, at the Riviera Palm Springs Resort.

“Bennion Deville Homes’ philosophy of supporting real estate agents’ individual marketing efforts coupled with exceeding the expectations of our buyers and sellers is the basis for every decision we make,” said Deville. “Our business model provides a strong, recognizable brand while offering company support through full-service marketing, technology, brokerage and administrative services. This combination has resulted in record-setting sales figures since our company’s inception in 2001.”

Bennion and Deville stress that all aspects of the Coachella Valley-based bedrock brokerage will remain the same. “We have been a self-supported operation for over 14 years. All of our exclusive marketing and technology programs, market stats and data, and every location throughout Southern California will remain with us. The same friendly agents, staff, and Managing Brokers who have been serving our clients since 2001 will still be here come October 1. The only change to the way we do business is the name you call us,” Bennion added.

Deville cited the need for flexibility to meet the ever-changing demands of the marketplace and the sky-rocketing franchisee fees as reasons for going independent. “We have outgrown our franchise and think that this move is in the best interest of our agents and their buyers and sellers, as well as for the future growth of our company,” Deville said.

“Bennion Deville Homes is part of a national trend of franchised real estate companies making a strategic business decision to go independent,” continued Deville. According to an Inman News special report published last year, “The Shift Toward Independent Brokerages,” 65 percent of independent brokers surveyed said the ability to offer a higher level of sales support to their agents gave them an advantage over franchised firms, which tied in with their ability to offer their buyers and sellers a higher level of service.

Of the 297 independent brokers surveyed by Inman News, 80 percent said they operated independently because they liked having the control of making decisions for their company and were not held hostage to rigid guidelines on marketing and advertising.

“We know the brand we developed will appeal to a wide range of home buyers and sellers,” said Bennion. “From millennials to baby boomers and everyone in between, we know our fresh look resonates with every major demographic and price point, and perhaps most importantly, with our agents.”

Bennion and Deville have worked under Windermere Real Estate, based in the Pacific Northwest, for the past 17 years, initially as real estate agents, then as brokers in Seattle. They subsequently opened their first franchised real estate office in Southern California in 2001. Since then, the agent-owned and operated company has posted more than \$16.8 billion in sales in Coachella Valley, San Diego and Orange County.