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## Epcon Communities Franchising



# EPCON EMBRACES ACTIVE ADULT BUYERS

Epcon claims maintenance-free communities supplemented by well-researched design

By Tamara Philips

**E**pcon Communities has become one of America's top home builders by focusing on the needs of buyers seeking single story homes who want to maintain active lifestyles and live in maintenance-free communities.

Their commitment to excellent design and quality work highlight their fundamental belief: That the individuals and families they serve have worked hard to earn the best hassle-free, comfort-rich living experience possible.

At Epcon Communities, their mission is to build homes, neighborhoods, and lifestyles that provide one remarkable experience. They



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have followed through with that promise since 1986 by integrating smart, innovative designs with the most desirable of modern amenities. Today, more than 28,000 families and individuals call an Epcon community home.

The Communities are comprised of single family homes, personalized to each owner's taste. The HOA fee covers the exterior maintenance— lawn and landscape care, snow removal, driveway maintenance, and exterior painting.

Today's 55+ homebuyers represent a special opportunity. “Since our founding in 1986, we have considered the needs of mature home buyers,” co-founder and CEO Ed Bacome said.

This generation is in the best position to buy, considering they generally have more equity in their existing homes. Studies project that Baby Boomer buyers will purchase 52 percent of the new homes sold between now and 2019.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are 76 million baby boomers in America; many of them plan to buy new homes to retire in that are smaller, and seek communities that have the amenities they now have the time to enjoy.

Over the next five years, demand for maintenance-free single story housing will exceed supply by hundreds of thousands of units. This generation is downsizing quicker than homes can be built for them. In fact, the

Dallas-Fort Worth market alone is projected to shortfall of more than 41,000 homes. Seeing this need, Epcon has embraced the franchising concept to distribute more homes in more places.

Founders Ed Bacome and Phil Fankhauser granted their first license to use their construction plans and began sharing its system in 1995; they haven't looked back since. Epcon Communities is one of the only franchise home builders in the United States.

These Franchise Builders receive training and support that helps them meet the projected demand for single story, maintenance-free homes that has been created



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by the changing demographics of the country.

For nearly 30 years, Epcon and its Franchise Builders have completed more than 28,000 homes in over 30 states. In 2014, Epcon closed over 1,000 homes and they anticipate closing even more than that in 2015. The homes in these communities range from \$150,000 to \$630,000.

Energy conservation is a prime concern for Epcon: Low-E windows and ENERGY STAR appliances are incorporated in the homes to save homeowners on their monthly utility bills. To conserve further, residents also have the option of employing tank-less water heaters in their homes.

The needs of customers is also a large matter to Epcon. Their designs incorporate intense research and development in which a survey was conducted among 6,000 buyers to ask what features they want in their new homes. The team developed a wish list based on these results and gave the specs to leading architects around the country to execute the plans. The outcome was award-winning layouts that incorporate spacious outdoor

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living areas, privacy, and light-filled rooms.

Most unique to Epcon was to incorporate these private, outdoor courtyard spaces that were integral to each home's design. These spaces allow private outdoor living and a focused view from every major indoor room.

The Courtyards at Pinnacle in Grove City, Ohio is one of Epcon's communities showcasing these roughly 750 square foot courtyards among the freestanding ranch-style homes. Each home is designed with private and large outdoor courtyards, spacious island kitchens, expansive 2.5 car garages, and optional second floor bonus suites—a seamless fit for any buyer seeking luxury finishes, outdoor living areas, and a desire for

privacy.

"Buyers also appreciate the fine craftsmanship of every home," co-founder and President/Director Phil Fankhauser said. Before a home is presented to the buyer, Epcon's QualityMark process is completed to ensure that every home is move-in ready with virtually every flaw eliminated.

All of the building and design processes that go into these homes are meticulously thought out. "We have a passion for great architecture and designing homes that live well," Bacome said. "What some call 'feng-shui,' we call years of development with the best designers in the industry."

One of Epcon's newly completed

communities, The Crossing in Fitchburg, Wis., boasts two beautiful, award-winning open floor plans: The Canterbury, roughly 1,800 square feet, has two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a sunroom, den, and outdoor patio. The Villa, roughly 1,400 square feet, has two bedrooms, two bathrooms, breakfast bar, owner's suite with walk-in closet, and outdoor patio.

Since Epcon is focused on a maintenance-free lifestyle for their homeowners, most communities offer walking/jogging trails, ancillary community facilities like a clubhouse with exercise equipment, an outdoor swimming pool, and an entertainment room with kitchen facilities.



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Continuing to expand and improve design even further, Epcon is planning for approximately 30 new communities in 2015, mostly in the Midwest and Southeast; and a number of new Franchise Builders are in the lineup for this year and 2016.



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