Planet Hires Derek Vandlen as Regional Sales Manager to Lead Multistate Growth



MERIDEN, CT, UNITED STATES, September 22, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Planet, a leading specialty finance company focused on the servicing and production of mortgage loans, welcomes Derek Vandlen (NLMS #6409) as Regional Sales Manager in Tennessee. Vandlen brings 28 years of mortgage experience and a strong track record of building high-performing teams and long-term relationships with borrowers, real estate professionals and builders.

Vandlen leads a growing team across Kentucky, Tennessee and Alabama, with plans to expand Planet Home into additional markets, including the Carolinas and Mississippi. His team currently includes more than two dozen producers across six locations.

As a U.S. military veteran, Vandlen has built much of his career around helping fellow veterans achieve homeownership and helping borrowers better understand their financing options. His team also provides educational programs for real estate professionals and consumers, including VA renovation and first-time homebuyer classes.

“Derek is exactly the kind of leader we want to build with at Planet,” said Matt Payan, SVP National Production Distributed Retail at Planet. “He’s a proven producer who knows how to develop MLOs, recruit experienced talent, and build strong branches. Planet’s role is to give leaders like Derek the pricing, products, technology, marketing and operational support they need to spend more of their time producing, recruiting and expanding into new markets.”

That combination was an important factor in Vandlen's decision to join Planet. The company's Distributed Retail platform gives originators access to a broad range of loan products, including Buy Now. Sell Later™, non-QM, renovation, manufactured home, business purpose and One-Time Close construction loans.

Just as important, Planet retains servicing on the majority of its loans. Automated marketing campaigns fueled by customer insights and lead management technology help connect originators to customers at the right time.

"Planet gives MLOs the technology and marketing resources they need without asking them to build it themselves or pay extra for the tools," Vandlen said. "We have dedicated marketing strategists working with our branches, along with technology that helps us find and act on opportunities. That's real support that lets our MLOs focus on customers and growing their business."

Vandlen began his career in the mortgage industry after serving four years in the military, including time in the JAG Corps. After quickly establishing himself as a high-producing loan originator, he moved into leadership and has spent approximately 26 years in regional management roles.

"Seasoned branch managers know what they need to grow, and Derek came to Planet with a clear vision for what he wanted to build," Payan said. "Planet provides the platform to execute it."

Vandlen and his team will operate as Honor powered by Planet Home, maintaining the relationships and local presence they have established while expanding into new markets. "After 28 years in this business, I'm excited about the opportunity and what we can build with Planet," he concluded.

About Planet

Planet is a leading specialty finance company focused on the servicing and production of mortgage loans to support homeowners and investors. Our vertically integrated services span origination, servicing and affiliated services. Planet's scalable solutions combine a deep understanding of our customers with market-leading expertise, responsiveness and commitment to reliably deliver time and again as our customers' needs change throughout every stage of life and business. Planet Home is a DBA of Planet Home Lending, LLC (NMLS#17022). Planet Financial Group, LLC, is the parent company of Planet Home Lending, LLC.

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