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Photo courtesy of General RV Centers

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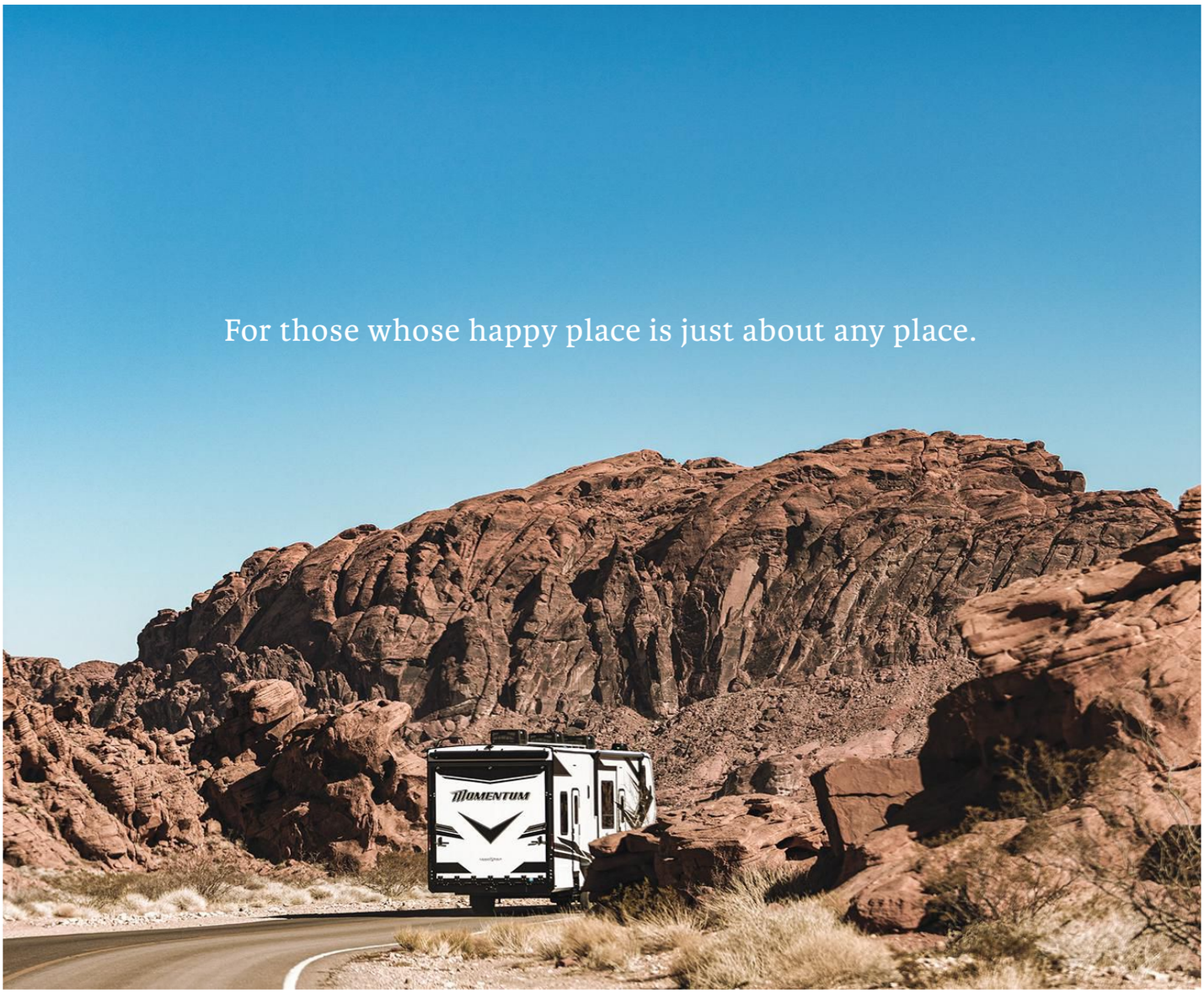
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MORE OF WHAT MATTERS

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Are you a millennial or in Gen Z? A baby boomer, perhaps? Baby boomers were born between 1946 and 1964, according to Pew Center Research reported by USA Today. Millennials were born between 1981 and 1996; Gen Z between 1997 and 2012. I happen to fall into Gen X – born between 1965 and 1980. But since my birth year was actually 1979, I'm on the cusp and also relate to millennials quite strongly.

Why all this talk about the generations? Well, it's important to understand what motivates each generation – especially if you're looking to sell them something. And, as millennials outnumber baby boomers, they – and Gen Z – are increasingly becoming the RV industry's target consumers.

Last fall, Campspot (an online marketplace for RV resorts, campgrounds, cabins and glamping) reported that the second most popular goal for 2023 for these age groups was to go camping more often. In 2022, 25% of travelers between 18 to 34 took an RV trip, Campspot reports. According to RVshare, 47% of younger travelers are eager to take an RV trip in the next year. This data is supported by the flexibility many people are experiencing in their work schedules due to work-from-home policies.

So, what could this mean for the RV industry? As Jeff Cowan, Velarium's business unit manager, said in a recent interview, his expectation for this year is "controlled, sustained growth." And if the industry can appeal to millennials and Gen Z in effective ways, that growth may be realized and brand loyalists may be created.

Winning loyalty from millennials takes "product quality, good customer experience and the brand's support for society," a recent Forbes article says. Gen Z's interest in a brand typically hinges on social issues; if your company is known for inclusivity and treats its employees fairly, Gen Z is more likely to do business with you. RV PRO will have more about business leadership and culture in its June 2023 issue.

Sustainability is another important factor for Gen Z; 60% are willing to pay more with a business with sustainability practices, Forbes reports. RV PRO is proud to feature its first sustainability issue in April, so be sure to check that out next month.

This month, turn to page 14 for our Class A series featuring Shyft Group's Spartan Chassis, Winnebago and Newmar, and Fleetwood. And learn what readers who sell RVs had to say in our annual manufacturers' quality survey starting on page 38.

As always, thanks for reading!

Jennifer King



Hats off to the JR Products team who went all out at its booth at NTP-STAG in Denver in January. They echoed the snowflakes flurrying outside with their snowflake suits and best mascot ever: the Abominable Snowman.

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2022 RV Shipments Third-Best on Record

The RV Industry Association's final survey of manufacturers for 2022 revealed the industry ended the year with 493,268 units shipped, the third highest of any year on record.

"Coming off of the all-time high in 2021, the RV industry continued to post strong shipments through the first half of 2022," said RV Industry Association President and CEO Craig Kirby. "As expected, we saw shipment numbers normalize off of those record highs in the second half of the year as the industry returned to production numbers seen pre-COVID."

In December only, total RV shipments for the month were 19,907 units, a decrease of 50.7% compared to the 40,347 units shipped in December 2021. Towable RVs, led by conventional travel trailers, ended the month down 54.6% against last December with 16,771 shipments. Motorhomes finished the month down 8.8% compared to the same month last year with 3,136 units. Park Model RVs finished December up 56.6% compared to the same month last year, with 382 wholesale shipments. Park model RVs closed 2022 up 20.4% compared to 2021 with 4,723 shipments.

Total RV shipments for the full year 2022 decreased 17.8% from the all-time record of 600,240 set in 2021. Towable RVs, led by conventional travel trailers, ended 2022 down 20.1% against 2021 with 434,858 wholesale shipments. Motorhomes finished the year up 3.9% compared to 2021 with 58,410 units. Park Model RVs finished the year up 20.4% compared to 2021 with 4,723 units shipped.

"Our industry builds a product that allows people to prioritize not only spending time with family and friends but also experiencing the many physical and mental health benefits of being in the great outdoors," Kirby added. "With so many younger and more diverse buyers flocking to RV travel in the past few years, the long-term future of the RV industry remains bright."

Bob Dumm Is Coachmen RV's New President

Coachmen RV has named Bob Dumm, an industry veteran with nearly 40 years of experience in the RV industry, as its new president. In his new role, Dumm oversees all Coachmen, Viking and Shasta divisions, as well as the Forest River Park Model division.

"I feel that our company is well positioned to take advantage of the current industry climate and lay the groundwork for future success and growth," Dumm said.

Dumm first began working at a local RV dealership while he was still in junior high school and continued this part-time work through his college years. Upon graduation from the University of Akron he entered the wholesale side of the industry and never looked back. For the last 14 years, Dumm has contributed to the Coachmen leadership team as general manager of its laminated trailer divisions.

Dumm is taking over for the retiring Mike Terlep. Under Terlep's leadership, Coachmen experienced annual sustained growth since being acquired by Forest River in late 2008.

"My goal is to continue this steady, controlled expansion," Dumm said, "while remaining mindful of the importance of our people, our quality, our value proposition and the long and strong relationships that we have earned and maintained through the years."

In addition to two older daughters, Dumm and his wife of more than 22 years, Lisa, have three grown children.

Tiffin Closing Vanleigh RV, Diversifying Motorized Offerings

Tiffin Group announced plans to diversify its motorized product offerings to focus on the growing Class B and Class C market segments.

To focus on products its consumers and dealers are requesting, the organization is restructuring, including the discontinuation of Vanleigh RV (VLRV) operations, Tiffin Group's towable division in Burnsville, Mississippi, effective in March.

The strategy of streamlining its business is based on consumer data, dealer input and current market conditions, which the company said points to promising opportunities in motorized RV growth categories.

All Vanleigh RV warranty and customer support needs will be honored in a manner consistent with Tiffin's historical practice. Last year, Vanleigh RV's service operations were integrated with existing Tiffin service operations to improve customer care. The centralized service operations will ensure Tiffin's long-term ability to provide customer support and honor all Vanleigh RV warranty needs, Tiffin said.

The Tiffin Group will provide resources to individuals impacted by the plant closure to assist them in their search for future employment, in addition to assistance from the Mississippi Department of Employment Security rapid response teams.

"This decision is especially personal to me since I founded VLRV in 2014," says Leigh Tiffin, president of Tiffin Group, "but we are dedicated to our vision of diversifying our motorized product offering to become the RV industry's premier full-line motorized OEM. We are confident the tough choices we are making are necessary to successfully support our customers, team members, business partners and local communities for many years to come."

67 Million Americans To Go RVing in 2023

The RV Industry Association (RVIA) revealed a recent survey that found 37% of American leisure travelers, representing 67 million people, plan on taking an RV trip this year.

Among leisure travelers, who are defined as any U.S. resident who has taken some type of leisure trip in the past year, the top reasons for RV travel are exploring the outdoors and having additional flexibility through remote work or school. While spending time outdoors has consistently remained a top reason for RVing, the number of respondents who cited flexibility in work have increased by 12% in the past year.

On average, RV vacations cost 50% less than comparable hotel and plane ride trips and a third less than hotel and car ride trips, making RVing an attractive option for people looking for the freedom to travel while also controlling their travel expenses.

The most popular RV trip destinations include state and national parks, with the latter remaining the most popular destination among all age groups.

However, the highest interest in RVing overall comes from the younger age groups: 49% of Gen Z and 48% of millennials plan to take an RV trip in the next year. Their purchase intent is also higher, with 41% of Gen Z and 35% of millennials planning to buy an RV in the next year.

Among RVers, which is defined as people who have taken a trip in an RV they rent, own or borrow in the past 12 months, 50% plan to buy an RV in the next year. This is up 14% from last year.

Commissioned by the RV Industry Association and conducted by Cairn Consulting, 1,212 surveys were completed by a statistically balanced cross section of U.S. leisure travelers. The survey results have an associated margin of error of +/- 2.74 percentage points.

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merger agreement with First Brands Group, a global automotive parts manufacturer that serves the worldwide automotive aftermarket. The terms call for First Brands to acquire Horizon Global and include an all-cash tender offer, which upon successful closing will entitle each stockholder of Horizon Global's common stock to receive cash consideration of $1.75 per share.

According to the announcement, this will lead to some of the top brands in the automotive and RV industry, serving both OEMs and aftermarket customers, under one group.

"Horizon Global's portfolio of pioneering towing and trailering brands and innovative products are complementary to First Brand's well recognized portfolio of braking solutions, filters, wiper blades, gas springs, spark plugs and fuel and water pumps, offering best-in-class technology, engineering, manufacturing and customer service," the statement said.

The combined group will have improved access to capital to ensure the continued growth and product development that has been a long-term strategic priority for Horizon Global, enabling the group to focus on serving its broad customer base without interruption.

"The transaction represents the culmination of a thorough review of strategic alternatives announced in August and represents what we believe is the best outcome for our customers, suppliers, shareholders and employees," said Horizon Global's interim CEO and Board Chair John C. Kennedy. "After consideration of a number of different alternatives, the board believes this transaction is the best path forward for shareholders to address Horizon Global's capital needs while supporting the long-term growth and sustainability of Horizon Global's business."

Added Guy Andrysick, executive vice president for First Brands: "We are pleased to welcome Horizon Global to the First Brands family; we are excited to build on Horizon Global's established products, brands and customers and we look forward to realizing benefits for both Horizon Global and First Brands as we move forward."

Horizon Global expects the transaction to be completed in the first quarter of 2023.

New Co-Op Claims Full Coverage for North America

A group of independent manufacturers' rep firms have come together to launch Venture Co-op. According to Georgiann Voissem, founder of Inspired Rep Group and a member of the new co-op, Venture Co-op was founded to provide the RV industry's first "true representation" of a manufacturers' rep company that covers 100% of North America.

The companies that make up Venture Co-op are: Inspired Rep Group (her company); Vandyke Enterprises; Explorer Outdoors; Recreational Rep Group; Whitlock Outdoors; Fosters of Canada; and Repco, also of Canada.

Combined, Venture's members have 200-plus years in the RV industry, she said, and the group will deal primarily with aftermarket suppliers, not OEMs. She and the others are excited about serving their dealer-partners under this new co-op, she said.

Care Camps Adds New Executive Director, Staff Changes

Care Camps has hired Gwynn B. Sullivan is its new executive director.

Sullivan brings to the position more than three decades of service and leadership nationally and internationally in the healthcare industry, the nonprofit said.

"Bringing inspiration and innovative solutions to large-scale initiatives," said her new organization, "Sullivan has led the development and implementation of award-winning programs to transform healthcare delivery for people living with serious illness. In her most recent position as program director for the National Coalition for Hospice and Palliative Care, she spearheaded the coalition's work to expand national clinical practice guidelines that included integrating quality pediatric care."

As Care Camps' new executive director, Sullivan will facilitate strategic planning, create viable infrastructures, develop key communications and evaluate strategies that leverage sustainability within the charity. Most importantly, Sullivan has the expertise to sustain and build relationships among Care Camps stakeholders.

"Gwynn comes to us with many years of successful leadership positions with nonprofits and has the vision to lead our organization to new heights," said Wade Elliot, chairman of Care Camps board of directors. "The board of directors, Care Camps staff and I are thrilled to welcome Gwynn to Care Camps."

Along with Sullivan's appointment, Care Camps also made the following staff changes: Erica Lanter will serve as communications director, Lexi Bickford is program coordinator, and Jennifer Mercer will continue in her role as development director.

Care Camps is a not-for-profit organization that raises funds to support specialized outdoors-themed oncology camps across the United States and Canada.

Kampgrounds of America Reports Record Revenue

Kampgrounds of America's 60th year of business was capped off with record revenue, with totals beating 2021's revenue – the company's previous highest ever – by 1.3%. 2022 registration revenue grew by 34.3% over 2019, indicating that camping and outdoor hospitality have reached a new level of popularity since the COVID-19 pandemic.

"To finish our 60th anniversary with record-setting revenues is monumental," said Toby O'Rourke, president and CEO of Kampgrounds of America. "The numbers point to the strength of our long-standing brand and the continued preference for KOA by campers."

Looking ahead, KOA's advanced deposits at the end of the fourth quarter were 3.4% improved over this same time period in 2021. The company said advanced deposits are a key indicator of consumer appetite for camping, confidence in the brand and customer experience.

"Especially with fluctuating economic conditions, it's great to see another year of growth in advance deposits as we enter 2023," O'Rourke said.

More than a dozen new campground partnerships launched in 2022. Over the course of the year, nine independent campgrounds joined the KOA system. Additionally, five construction contracts for new campgrounds were signed, indicating continued interest in industry expansion.

"We are seeing an exciting shift between converting and building campgrounds," said Ann Emerson, senior vice president of franchise operations for Kampgrounds of America. "Over the last few years, there has been an explosion of growth in campground construction and these new players are choosing to partner with KOA to help them deliver a top-of-the-line experience that is trusted among campers and travelers."

Kampgrounds of America expanded its campground and land holdings in 2022. Over the course of the year, the company added eight campground locations to its portfolio and two land acquisitions for future development.

"We have an ongoing interest in increasing our owned locations as part of our overall brand growth," said Darin Uselman, chief operations officer of Kampgrounds of America. "This allows us to grow our knowledge of campground ownership while expanding the KOA brand in key markets."

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Shyft Group Specialty Vehicles President Steve Guillaume

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From the Base Up

Spartan RV Chassis continues to innovate with its new Tri-Pod Steering wheel, aftermarket products and more.

BY JOHN MCCURRY

Constant innovation is essential to success in the highly competitive motorhome chassis sector. Spartan RV Chassis, part of The Shyft Group, has regularly churned out key technological advancements over the past several years, enabling it to dramatically increase its market share.

Shyft is the new name for the company previously known as Spartan Motors. The name change followed the divestiture of its emergency response vehicles division in 2020 to the REV Group.

Spartan debuted several advancements during 2022. Chief among them was Premier Drive, designed for each individual chassis it produces. This includes a new 20,000-pound suspension that Steve Guillaume, president of Shyft Group Specialty Vehicles, describes as the "next evolution in world-class ride quality" with an array of new features, including custom-tuned shock absorbers.

"We transitioned to Koni shocks, giving us a nice competitive advantage there," he says. "We have done some significant work in improving the overall level of ride and handling."

There's also the new Tri-Pod Steering Wheel, which made its debut at the 2022 Hershey RV Show. The innovation added nine more controls to the steering wheel.

"Customers do not have to reach up to the dash or to the armrest in order to control a number of functionalities with the steering wheel," Guillaume says. "That was a big one. We are able to customize these to each individual OEM. They are able to make the decision based upon how they want their controls within the coach set up, specifically the ones they want on the wheel."

The additions include wiper controls and the ability to toggle through the high-resolution digital dash, which is customizable. Also included is media volume control and the ability to toggle through specific media and phone controls.

Seeing Into the Future

Product development at Spartan is continuous, following a "road map" that sets an innovation course three to five years into the future. Once a need is established, major advancements, such as the Tri-Pod Steering Wheel, typically emerge from a two-year development



Full view of the Entegra Cornerstone's dash featuring the steering wheel and navigation

cycle from the time Spartan evaluates the need.

"We are looking about three years out for items that are already approved and awaiting execution," he says. "It is more like a five-year window for projects such as improving technology that we are evaluating. As things mature from a technology perspective, we launch them into the three-year cycle."

OEMs and end users both have input into innovations. RV trade shows and trends in the automotive industry often help generate ideas that wind up in chassis improvements.

"The other space that we keep a really close watch on is the commercial vehicle industry, because globally that is a very large space, and has a lot of synergy with what we are doing," Guillaume says.

Guillaume predicts 2023 will see a similar release of chassis advancements. The idea is to keep things fresh by unveiling several developments each year. There has also been a movement of innovations into new models. Similar to the automotive industry, new



The Tri-Pod Steering Wheel in the Entegra Cornerstone

developments debut in higher-end models and over a few years, they transition into lower-price point chassis.

"That happened with our safety system – advance protection – where we introduced collision mitigation and adaptive cruise," Guillaume says.

Spartan prefers to let its customers unveil its innovations, usually at RV consumer trade shows such as the Florida RV SuperShow and the Hershey RV Show. OEMs also debut models with new Spartan technology at their individual company events. For example, the Premier Drive system debuted at the Entegra Coach Diesel Owner's Homecoming event last May.

"We like to remain tight-lipped on new innovations before they are released, out of respect for our relationship with the coach manufacturer, until they are ready to launch," Guillaume explains. "It is exciting to see the end products. We build the high-quality luxury chassis that then turns into a gorgeous motorhome, the finished product with its functionality and overall aesthetics."

Home Base

Spartan builds all of its chassis at its facility in Charlotte, Michigan, a city with a population of less than 10,000 located about 110 miles west of Detroit. Charlotte has been Spartan's home for nearly 40 years and has a well-established supply base in the region. The company builds about 1,300 chassis annually, depending on industry conditions.

Guillaume says Spartan's market share has risen consistently since 2015, effectively doubling. Spartan has more than 30% of the market in the more than 400 horsepower category and more than 20% in Class A diesel, he says.

Until 2020, Spartan had its manufacturing line and sub-assembly located in two separate buildings. The company then consolidated it all under one roof, giving it a continuous flow through the plant. There is also room for expansion, as the company is currently running at about 60% of the facility's capacity.

"All of our sub-assemblies are now line side," Guillaume says. "That was the big update that we made. We build our chassis from the ground up. We do a 100% dyno test on every chassis we build, then take it into final inspection and alignment. Then it is ready to ship to our customers."

With a mantra of "never settle," Spartan promotes itself as a luxury brand.

Guillaume likes to talk about the Spartan experience.

"When you buy a Spartan chassis, you are buying a premium product, with best-in-class ride and handling," he says. "We believe we have the best safety systems in the marketplace and we continue to innovate on those."

Spartan emphasizes customer support, with about 300 service centers across the United States that are certified for Spartan chassis.

"We have a fully dedicated service center in Charlotte where a lot of our customers come back to get their service," Guillaume says. "This includes a training academy, where we do about 25 sessions a year in the spring and summer."

Spartan also views RV consumer trade shows as a vital platform to enhance the brand with customers.

"Attending shows allows us to answer questions our owners may have about their chassis, as well as provide technical support to our dealer and OEM partners when needed," says Keith Shockey, Spartan's vice president and general manager. "Depending on the show, we also make it a priority to offer parts and service for our chassis owners."

Spartan works closely with its four partner OEMs – Entegra, Newmar, Foretravel and Jayco – with the goal of making the integration between chassis and coach seamless. Spartan meets monthly with their customers regarding execution of new technologies.

"We interface very closely with them on the sales and marketing side of things, to be sure we are communicating all the functionalities to our customers," Guillaume says. "We have a nice benefit with our geographic location, being about two hours from Elkhart, where many of the RV manufacturers are."

Adding On the Aftermarket

Spartan recently expanded its footprint in the aftermarket, providing a broader portfolio.

Shockey points to Spartan's new Red Diamond Aftermarket Solutions as an important safety-focused addition to its aftermarket offerings.

"Products like the Red Diamond RunFlat system, that helps drivers steer and brake during a tire blowout, are important safety innovations that we're proud to offer to not only Spartan RV Chassis owners, but all owners across the Class A market," he says.

The RunFlat product offers a solution to guard against front-tire blowouts.

"We have heard about, over the years, the anxiety customers have over having a blowout in the front tires, so this new technology effectively provides sort of an inner doughnut around the rim," Guillaume says. "You can drive on that if you have to, so that assists in allowing them to maintain control until getting the vehicle to a safe location."

Fulfilling Demand

A reliable supply chain is key to any manufacturer's success. Like many companies, Spartan had to navigate supply chain challenges during the throes of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We are a U.S. company and we have a very strong U.S. supply base, so we perhaps had fewer challenges than some," Guillaume says. "There has been some labor disruption across the entire U.S. market, and that has had an impact, but we have worked through it. We have worked very hard to address these issues as they have come up, to make sure we don't disrupt our customers."

Spartan keeps close watch on its supply base to ensure it is able to fulfill its demands. The company recently switched one supplier in favor of one that is closer, about 90 minutes away. Spartan also double sources in some cases to ensure supply continuity.

Looking ahead to the remainder of 2023, Guillaume notes the RV industry is seeing some softening compared to last year.

"Towables have taken the biggest hit, for sure," he says. "With what is going on with general consumer confidence and concerns about recession, and then the significant increase in interest rates, all this will have some impact on our business in 2023. It is being softened somewhat due to some constraints on the motorized segment, so not just Class A, but Class B and C as well." RVP

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Class A

Changing With the Times

Winnebago and Newmar update their 2023 Class A products with a 30th Anniversary package, a 35-foot motorhome and a National Park limited edition.

BY RONNIE WENDT

Winnebago Industries and its subsidiary, Newmar, are two names synonymous with quality in the RV world. Their Class A products are known for their luxury amenities and excellent construction.

But even products with great reputations need updates from time to time. That is exactly what consumers can expect from the companies' 2023 Class A lineups.

Winnebago's Adventurer Class A coach celebrated its 30th anniversary with a complete refresh and anniversary package. The Winnebago Vista received an update and released a National Park Special Edition, and the Newmar New Aire released a completely redesigned product and shorter coach.

While the products changed inside and out, one thing remained the same – the companies' quality and attention to detail, which will appeal to both new and seasoned RVers alike.

Winnebago Adventurer Updates

Winnebago completely remodeled the 2023 Adventurer.

"We started with a blank slate and added all-new exteriors and interiors, bus-style exterior baggage doors with aluminum trim and returned the Adventurer to the flagship premier gas unit customers expect," said John Millis, Winnebago's Class A product manager.

Winnebago brought three Adventurers to January's 2023 Florida RV SuperShow in Tampa, Florida – a consumer-facing event for RV and travel enthusiasts. The company displayed an exclusive 30th Anniversary limited edition and one new floorplan, a 34W, at the show.

"We did that so folks could see the difference between the basic package and the 30th Anniversary upgrade," says Millis. "The response was overwhelmingly positive."

The new interior décor offering, called Bohemian Oasis, made a big splash at the show. The contemporary interior features lower cabinets in Indigo Blue and upper cabinets in Pacific White. The galley wows with "a beautiful combination of colors and an accented tile backsplash," Millis notes, and is coupled with attractive Corian solid surface countertops in the galley and bathrooms.

Millis says Indigo Blue is a popular color in residential kitchen redesigns.

"The two-tone color combination is also very popular, with either white or gray upper cabinets, in the residential world," he says. "We went with Pacific White in our design."

The galley range top offers both LP and induction burners for fast controllable heat. Every Adventurer comes standard with a 110V residential refrigerator and 30-inch convection microwave.

The lavatory and sleeping accommodations also received a lift in the Adventurer refresh. The coach's bathroom has porcelain sinks and elegant





Adventurer





Vista National Park series

tile backsplashes. The 35F and 36Z floorplans offer a bath and a half. The 36Z's opposing slides make for an open floorplan, while the shorter 34W features a single bath, a 50-inch TV in front of the dinette, and a sofa with power-recline, heat and massage features.

"We added the single-bath floorplan because we were getting feedback that customers loved the Adventurer but didn't always need a bath and a half," he says. "The 34W is our answer to those who seek a shorter coach without an extra half bath."

The new Adventurer's standard walk-around king bed with available WinnSleep memory foam mattress and a 600-pound weight capacity on its StudioLoft bed ensure a better sleep for all.

"The WinnSleep mattress upgrade made by our StitchCraft furniture division is very comfortable," Millis says. "And the powered Studio Loft bed upfront has been enlarged to 50-by-80 inches to accommodate two adults. There is an optional sofa/theater seat that has power reclining with heat and massage. It's available as an upgrade on any Adventurer, but comes standard on the 30th Anniversary package."

Frameless, dual-pane windows deliver a sleek exterior while providing enhanced thermal and acoustic insulation inside. There are dual air conditioners on every unit with heat strips in the front and rear.

"We also have factory-installed solar on the roof with a 115-watt-hour panel. There are also available ports to add more panels," Millis says.

All Adventurers have multiple pass-through storage compartments.

"By moving away from the more traditional routed out openings to larger aluminum baggage doors, the compartments are bigger, so there's lots of storage space for longer stays," he says.

The Adventurer's 30th Anniversary Package

As Winnebago embarked on a total Adventurer refresh, Millis said they realized the product was celebrating its 30th anniversary, so they decided to offer a special package upgrade as well.

"We came up with a special exterior paint scheme designed specifically for the Adventurer and added exterior chrome accents, meaning all luggage storage compartment handles are chrome rather than black, as are the mirrors and the special aluminum grill at the front of the coach," he says.

Adding a factory installed Safe-T-Plus steering stabilizer and SumoSprings gives passengers a more comfortable driving experience.

"They give the overall chassis a better ride and a better feel," he says.

Comfort continues on the inside, with driver and passenger seats equipped with power heat and massage controls.

"You have that extra comfort," he says. "The seats even have 30th anniversary badging embroidered on them."

Every 30th Anniversary Adventurer also comes with Winegard Air 360 Dome Antenna with 4G LTE and Wi-Fi Modem.

"All Adventurers also have a Winnebago Control touch screen inside that controls the HVAC, mechanical applications including slide rooms, jacks and the awning," he says. "You can control some of these things with an app you download to your smart device."

Vista National Park Edition

"Baby boomers are still the largest group of buyers for the Adventurer," Millis says. "Those buyers want the larger fridge, washer and dryer, and plenty of storage for longer stays. But for younger age groups or working families, we offer the Vista Sunstar, with shorter floorplans and a few less amenities. These RVers are more likely to be weekend users or going out for shorter camping stays."

For 2023, Winnebago has introduced the Vista National Park edition, which is a limited edition RV offered in partnership with the National Park Foundation.

The Vista National Park model will capture attention as it pulls into a campground with a grand mountainscape painting and National Park logo on the side. The special edition Vista carries on its park-related theme inside with a warm, rustic cabin interior.

The RV has a batwing awning that mounts to the back wall of the coach, and when deployed, wraps around to the patio side.

"When both awnings are out, you have more than 300 square feet of awning or canopy space, which is pretty remarkable for a 30-foot motorhome," he says.

The company also updated the coach's battery power. Winnebago replaced the conventional dual, lead-acid batteries with a single Lithionics lithium 320-amp-hour battery.

"This upgrade gives you nearly three times the usable battery capacity for off-grid use when compared to our standard dual lead acid batteries," he says. "We also couple this super-charged house battery with three 115-watt solar panels on the roof and an extra port in the utility compartment to add another aftermarket panel. You can be very comfortable with this coach in a National Park campground or off-grid."

Updates to the New Aire

When Winnebago purchased Newmar in 2019, the company announced the purchase would strengthen its core RV platform and enhance the scale and profitability of its overall motorhome business. The journey started almost five years ago and continues with the refreshed New Aire.





PHOTOS COURTESY OF WINNEBAGO AND NEWMAR

New Aire

Newmar has offered the New Aire for five years, but it was time for a refresh, says John Sammut, vice president of sales and marketing at Newmar.

On the outside, Newmar retooled and redesigned the exterior façade with a new front and rear cap, new taillight designs and eye-catching graphics. On the inside, the coach has new flooring throughout, a feature ceiling that hides vents without disrupting airflow, new cabinetry and hardware, countertops, slide-out facia designs, new bedding and high-end residential plumbing fixtures.

"This product is a motorhome in a smaller package of 35 feet, 11 inches," Sammut says. "It's also shorter from the ground up. But don't let the smaller package fool you. It has the same luxuries as our flagship motorhome."

The new coach is the company's response to people who sought a smaller size motorhome. Summut explains, "Many people who have been driving 43- to 45-foot motorhomes are looking for smaller motorhome. But they don't want to give up the creature comforts they're used to."

Often those hoping to trade in their larger motorhomes are getting older.

"The 35-foot New Aire is easier to get in and out of. The entry steps are lower to the ground and the main floor also sits lower to the ground," he says.

It is also easier to park at home or at a National Park with a shorter motorhome. However, a smaller footprint does not mean a sacrifice in technology.

"When people see the amenities, technology and innovation this new coach offers, they are pleasantly surprised by all they can get in a smaller package," Summut says.

The new coach features a Wi-Fi Ranger system and a Silver Leaf electronic monitoring system that control the lights, window shades and checks holding tank levels and battery power. The 2023 coach also comes standard with two 340-watt-hour lithium-ion battery packs.

"Lithium-ion batteries have longer life than AGM batteries or cell batteries usually used in motorhomes," he says.

The refreshed coach also has larger monitors on the dashboard, rear vision cameras, top-of-the-line TVs and residential refrigerators. Consumers can control features from the manufacturer's new app.

"We're finding consumers expect their motorhomes to offer what they have at home," Sammut says. "Many people have technologies that allow them to control things in their homes. They want those features in their motorhome. We are responding to that sentiment."

Radiant heat in the flooring is available if people want it – something Sammut says is a really nice feature.

"People like it because the floor isn't cold when they get up," he says. "If they are RVing in a colder climate, it's really therapeutic and can soothe the people's aches and pains."

New Aire's new floorplan, the 3547, offers a bath and a half and a full wall slide, which Summut says came from input from their dealer groups.

A full wall slide makes it easier to offer so many amenities in a 35-foot length.

"When you open it up, the motorhome feels larger than 35 feet," he says. "We got a king bed in every one of our floorplans and spacious kitchens with plenty of counter space."

Most units come with a sofa and dinette, but the New Aire also is available with theater seating, which Sammut says has become extremely popular.

"Even though someone can no longer sleep on the sofa, we find many owners travel with just two people and do not need to sleep anyone up front," he says.

There are cup holders and storage in the center console between the theater seats, which sit across from the dinette, which has a televator (a 47-inch HDTV on a power lift that covers the window when in use and can be stowed away).

The new coach also features panoramic bonded windows that are new for 2023.

"It literally looks like one big window going around both sides of the slide room and then across behind the theater seats," he says. "It brings a lot of natural light into the coach, which is something customers have been asking for."

He says the New Aire offers four interior options, which include neutral tones, grays and some blues, which have become very popular.

"When you get into the price point of the New Aire, people expect to have some choices," he explains. "People can choose different wood and fabrics for their interior décor. We allow customers to do some customization and switching out. They could even choose a material from one of our other brands."

Other amenities include extra storage compartments, exterior entertainment centers with a TV and a soundbar, two-stage Girard Nova awnings, Mobile Eye mobilized lane management systems and adaptive cruise.

"We offer a lot of automotive technology that is incorporated into the chassis specifications of Freightliner or Spartan," Sammut says. "The customer and the dealer can choose which chassis to use." RVP

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Building on an Iconic Name

Fleetwood's 75 years of experience keeps the brand on top for Class A's. RV PRO spoke with Doug Miller, product manager, and Don Gephart, marketing manager, about Fleetwood's brand reputation and what makes Class A's appealing to consumers.



Class A

BY JENNIFER KING

RV PRO: Please tell me about the different Class A models that Fleetwood offers – how would you characterize their differences? What kind of buyer do you think each model appeals to?

Fleetwood: Across the Fleetwood family of brands – Fleetwood, Holiday Rambler and American Coach – we pride ourselves on offering Class A models that fit every budget and every lifestyle. Our Class A models range from 28 feet to 45 feet – and all lengths in between – and they have price tags that span from $150,000 to just over $1 million. Throughout our entire Class A lineup, consumers can find different amenities and features that set one model apart from another. This can include generator or engine size, for example, or maybe the type of flooring or furniture and how many air conditioners a coach may have. Our mission is to develop products that appeal to consumers in each segment – Class A gas, Class A diesel and Class A luxury.

We offer a wide array of floorplans and amenities to appeal to all demographics and RV lifestyles. The Fleetwood Flair and Holiday Rambler Admiral, for example, are great "entry-level" Class A gas motorhomes for families or empty nesters thanks to their versatile floorplan options. We also have higher-end Class A gas models like the iconic Fleetwood Bounder, the bestselling Class A gas in the industry.



Nautica by Holiday Rambler, a REV Group brand

The Holiday Rambler Vacationer is another well-known Class A gas product that showcases our versatility.

Stepping into our diesel line, you will find award-winning models like the Fleetwood Discovery and the Holiday Rambler Endeavor. We've recently expanded our Class A diesel lineup the past few years with the luxurious Armada by Holiday Rambler and the award-winning Frontier GTX with The Corner Office. In particular, these more recent additions to our lineup showcase how we've introduced floorplans specifically designed for the new reality of our post-pandemic, increasingly work-from-home world.

American Coach is our luxury brand that's anchored by its flagship product, American Eagle. The amenities and luxuries found in the Eagle set it apart from the industry. Amenities like exquisite Cambria quartz countertops, residential appliances, porcelain tile flooring, Apex custom furniture and so much more.

These are just a few examples of the breadth and depth of floorplans and features across our entire Class A lineup. We maintain and strengthen that depth by truly beginning every floorplan design by keeping our customers in mind.

RV PRO: What are some of the features that make each

PHOTOS COURTESY OF FLEETWOOD



Fleetwood RV Frontier GTX



American Coach interior

of these models different? What do you think makes a Fleetwood Class A stand out?

Fleetwood: For us, the most critical features start with what you can't see. Our coaches are engineered to be structurally strong and operationally quiet to handle travels across the country with ease and comfort. We use interlocking extrusions that create a unified box for the house, with aluminum framing and marine-grade bead foam insulation for noise and temperature control. Your home is only as strong as its foundation, and the same is true of your RV. This is why we offer exclusive Power Platform chassis on much of our gas foundations, and our exclusive, fully integrated bridge foundations on our diesel products. That diesel chassis offering is led by our industry-leading Liberty Bridge foundation that is only found on American Coach. This exclusive foundation that is integrated with the Freightliner Custom Chassis Corporation chassis provides a smooth and comfortable ride no matter your destination.

As far as what you can see (and touch), as soon as you step inside any of our products you will see our beautiful interiors designed by our in-house interior designers. They do an amazing job making each model feel comfortable and luxurious, with all the touches you would come to expect.

RV PRO: When you're thinking about floorplans or design updates, what are the sources of your inspiration? Where and how do you get your feedback from consumers and dealers, and how is that feedback put into action?

Fleetwood: For our team, inspiration can – and often does – come from anywhere. It could come from something on TV, or something we see while on a road trip, or at an RV show. It can come from a night out at dinner at a nice restaurant or hanging around with family over the holidays. We also listen to and engage with our customers and our dealers extensively. What are people asking for? We also attend kitchen-and-bath shows and are inspired by all of the trends and new things that are on display each year. We really do pull our ideas and inspiration from just about anywhere.

RV PRO: Tell me about Fleetwood as a brand – what is its reputation in the industry? And among dealers? How do your employees try to shape that image?

Fleetwood: Fleetwood is one of the most iconic names in the RV industry, and we've been building class-leading motorhomes for nearly 75 years. We have an impressive lineup of iconic models like the Bounder, Discovery, Vacationer, Admiral and American Eagle.

From Fleetwood to Holiday Rambler to American Coach, we have great dealer partners across the country that are proud to carry our products on their lots. Indeed, many have been partners for decades.

Of course, building a great product starts with great people. Our employees take pride in building not just motorhomes, but creating memories that last a lifetime. We have several generations of the same family who have worked here or currently work here and are proud to build their careers here at Fleetwood.

RV PRO: What does Fleetwood do as a brand to build a community with its dealers and consumers? In recent years, how has it tried to bring in first-time buyers?

Fleetwood: While we view dealer and consumer engagement as a company-wide initiative, our marketing and sales teams in particular are focused on this. They spend incredible amounts of time supporting our owners' clubs, attending trade shows, working with service support, supporting dealer lot promotions, and attending national and regional retail shows.

They have also done an amazing job building these communities through our social media presence, developing engaging, informative and entertaining content covering all aspects of the RV life. For us, it's not just about building RVs – it's about helping build the lifestyle and the experience that goes along with it. We're here for the entire journey, and we want to be a resource for customers for years to come.

RV PRO: From a manufacturing perspective, how have the last few years changed the culture at Fleetwood – what have some of the challenges been?

Fleetwood: The culture at Fleetwood has always been built around our identity as a family, and that's more true now than ever. Over the last few years, our team rose to meet unique and historic challenges – and emerged stronger.

We have many team members who've worked with us for 30 years, 40 years, even longer...and families with multiple generations who've worked here. We're proud of our status as a desirable and rewarding place to work.

Recruitment and retention are both critical initiatives for us. We believe that our recruiting success stems from providing an employment experience that is fulfilling and rewarding. And we believe in continuing to educate and train employees after they join our team.

RV PRO: How has Fleetwood sustained its success throughout the years?

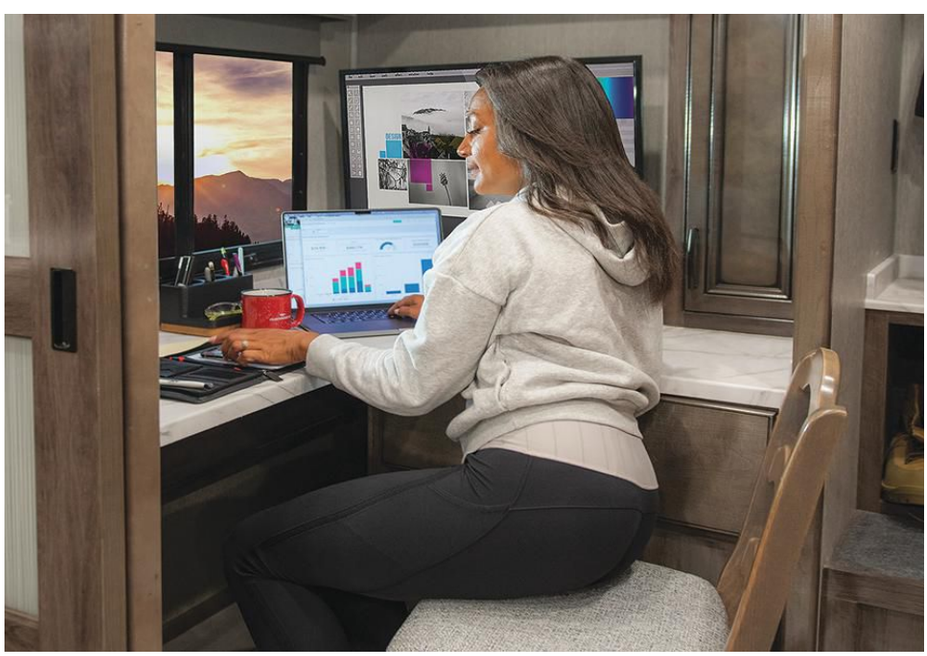
Fleetwood: We are always looking for ways we can continue to lead the industry through innovation, ideas and inspiration. Our commitment to continuous improvement across all of our products is as strong as it's ever been – as is our commitment to continuously enhance the customer experience. We want our Fleetwood family to enjoy our products and promote from within. We encourage our customers to get involved in the clubs and attend events so that we can engage with them and find out what we can do to provide them with the best product, floorplan and features to enjoy the RV lifestyle. RVP



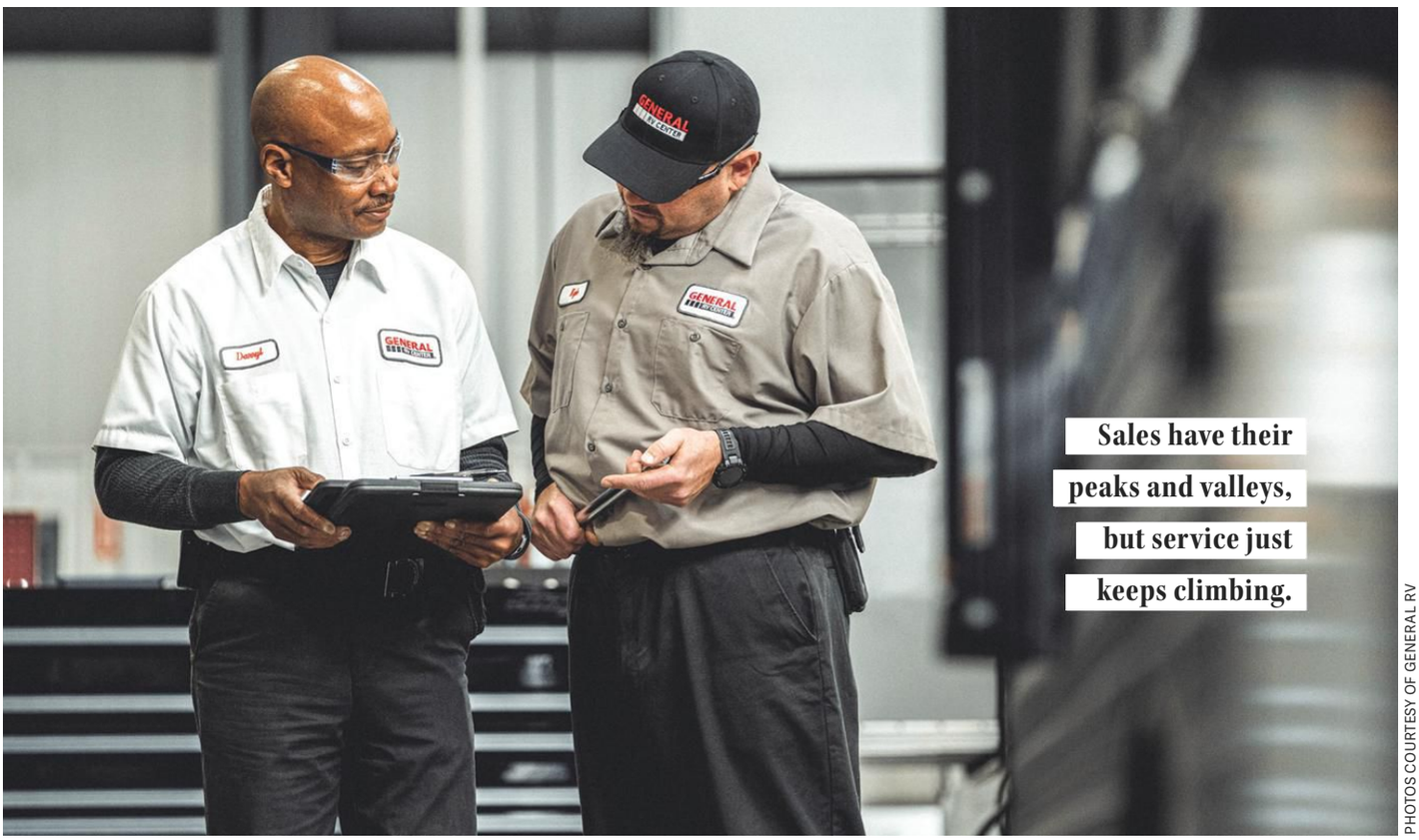
Don Gephart, marketing manager



Doug Miller, product manager



The Corner Office works well for the new work-from-home lifestyle.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF GENERAL RV

Keeping Customers Camping

With more than 500 service bays across the country and a robust technician workforce, General RV Centers sets its sights on keeping RVers on the road.

BY ROB MERWIN

Since the bonanza of RV sales in recent years, service and repair have become increasingly important in the industry, but for General RV Center it's always been that way. Take, for one example, its new inspection facility in Bristol, Indiana, which shines as an example of the company's focus on service, now becoming the epicenter of all its PDI (pre-delivery inspection) work.

"Part of the reason for building the inspection facility was to open up our capacity to take on more service work at our stores," says Corporate Vice President of Operations Kerry Porter, who is responsible for service, parts, IT and fixed operations.

General RV's headquarters are at its Wixom, Michigan, dealership, one of 14 locations across the United States. It's an employee-driven company, led by President Loren Baidas and CEO Rob Baidas who started in 1962, with founder Abe Baidas first operating from a gas station in Detroit.

Today, General RV employs approximately 2,000 team members and maintains a collective inventory of 5,000 RVs across all locations, including its newly minted store in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania. Altogether, there are more than 500 service bays.

"We've also recently opened six more bays in our Chicago location with a paint booth, and 10 additional bays in North Canton, Ohio," Porter says. "We're going to continuously add bays strategically where we see fit – and where the consumers demand it, quite honestly.

"The one constant in the RV industry is service. Sales have their peaks and valleys, but service just keeps climbing – it's a longer hill to climb, but you're still climbing it. The more that we put coaches out over the curb, the more expectations from the consumer have changed."

General RV first noticed the shift in expectations beginning in 2017, and particularly since COVID-19 changed the industry in 2020. The demographics of the customers changed to a degree, with many being first-time buyers who often compare RVs to their experiences in the automotive repair world, says Service and Customer Experience Director Laura Dobbs, who manages corporate policies and procedures for service, as well as General RV Center's Customer Care Department that oversees escalated customer issues for specialized, additional attention.

"We really had to educate the customer about the repair process to help adapt in order to set realistic expectations. It just isn't as easy to do the same repair on an RV as it is on a car – or often they're

not even close to being similar repairs. Setting realistic expectations for first-time RV owners is really important, but we're also in a time today that everything is 'next-day' or within hours. Companies like Amazon really changed expectations for turnaround times in today's world, so it's necessary to explain to customers what it's like to perform RV service while also pushing ourselves to create new standards for timely service. What might have been accepted as 'good enough' as an industry yesterday doesn't hold true for us today."

A scratch on a countertop, for example, doesn't keep RVers from camping, so General RV suggests to owners that something of that nature can wait until after the season, and instead have critical-need repairs take priority. It's those types of conversations that help educate new RVers and set expectations.

"It's what we have to do – and continue to do," Dobbs says.

It's also important to educate customers on basic owner RV maintenance responsibility requirements, which is a message that General RV drives through its marketing, but often occurs when they come in for service. RVers are provided a courtesy lane inspection that covers a number of items considered as customer maintenance.

"It helps them to continue to protect their investment and get ahead of some major issues that could prevent them from using their coach," she says.

Porter adds, "We want them to have as many trips as possible, so that they are really engaged in the RV industry and don't want to leave. It's not about what's convenient for General RV, it's about what's convenient for the customer and being more customer-centric around service. Again, it's education. We have customers who are on their third and fourth RV, and they 'get it.' Some older millennials don't understand life without a 10-minute oil change, and as the world continues to evolve it's important for us in the industry to evolve, too, and push it forward.

"In parts of the U.S., there are many months where people don't use their RV. It's a perfect time to get noncritical repairs done in time for the next season so they can build many more great camping memories."

Prior to the pandemic, General RV averaged eight to 10 days for service and repairs.

Keep You Camping

General RV's "Keep You Camping" program represents the company's overall philosophy for RV service and repair, Dobbs says.

"Our responsibility is to identify – and help our customers identify – items that are critical repairs that prevent customers from using their coach."

The Keep You Camping program covers critical repairs that don't require service appointments, including recalls, LP (propane) leak, appliance failures, no power (110-volt or 12-volt), slideout(s) not functioning, interior or exterior water leaks, trailer brake or brake light failures, head lamps and windshield wiper system not functioning.

"They can come in at their convenience right away so we can inspect their unit. We can make a repair plan for them – whatever it takes to get them camping again, either same day or within 24 hours is our goal," she says. "We want to get them back on the road as quickly as possible."

General RV has conducted data research as it pertains to service and repair cycle times, though COVID-19 has upended some of those analytics.

"We had some really good data on what our cycle times were before and after we launched Keep You Camping in 2018. Comparing them now, though, is like apples to oranges, but we're able to get more consistent parts now – and staff needed – to give customers the fastest possible service. COVID threw a wrench into everything we were looking at analytically."

Having said that, General RV had average cycle times of eight to 10 days by late 2019. But when the pandemic arrived, people were more interested in getting out of their homes, rather than getting their RVs serviced, Porter says. In 2021, the dealership was still having lingering supply chain issues, whether it was a critical part or not.

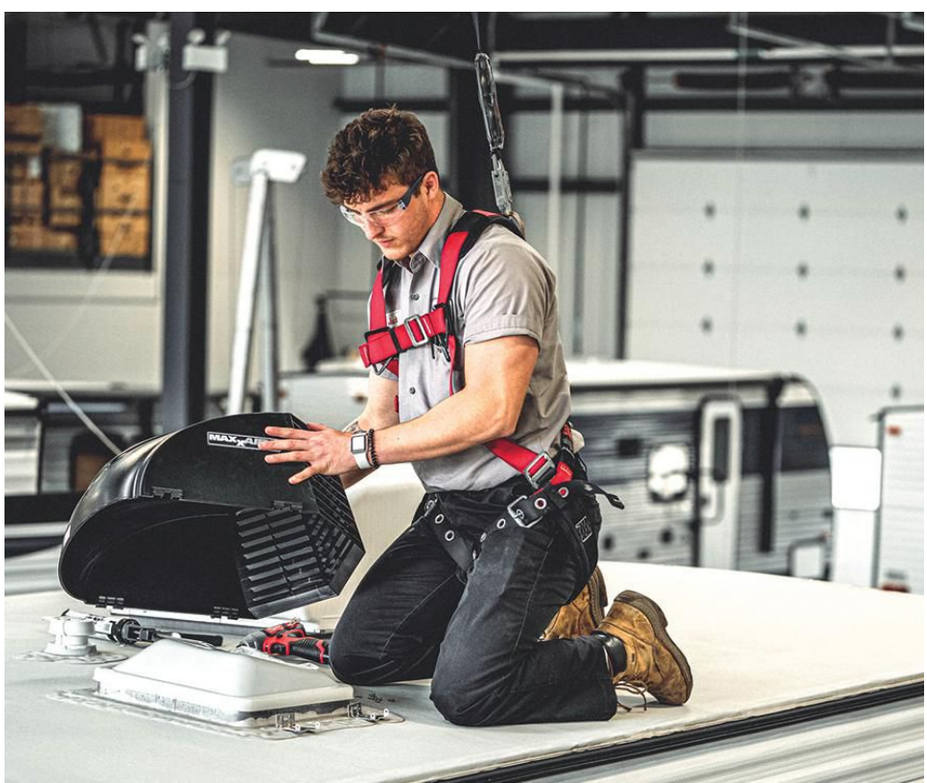
"We had to do crazy things, such as researching and sourcing parts locally just to get the consumer back on the road, because every manufacturer wasn't giving up, for example, a water pump – they had coaches to build."

An Industry Differentiator

The Keep You Camping program has become a differentiator for General RV among the competition.

"There are others in the industry that have plagiarized it and gone down a similar route," Porter says. "But our view overall, and why it makes us different, is we consider it from a customer service aspect – the consumer bought their coach to go camping in it – not to have it sit on our lots for an extended period of time. That's why we've narrowed those Keep You Camping items to ensure people can go out and enjoy their RVs."

He notes that some regions in the U.S.,





The "Keep You Camping" program at General RV sets the stage for how the company handles service and repair.

such as the Midwest, have very short camping seasons – some lasting only 12 to 14 weeks. And consumers are sensitive to that.

"We don't focus too much on the competition; our focus is being the best that we can be to make sure customers maximize their seasons. Everything after that takes care of itself," Porter says.

Building a Skilled Technician Workforce

As General RV continues to ramp up focus on service and repair, as well as adding more bays, there is also a need for more technicians, which are sourced anywhere from Craigslist to relationships with area vocational schools and training programs. Once brought on board, entry-level techs enter the company's apprenticeship program.

"We try to advertise for technicians anywhere we can," Dobbs says. "Including putting up giant banners outside our dealerships – any way we can get the word out that we're hiring. We also have a fantastic recruiting office that continues to spread the word, too."

When it comes to veteran, skilled technicians, they are usually found and recruited through conversations with present staff, who may be friends, family or past colleagues. Both the incoming techs and the recruiting techs are offered incentives.



Staying on top of the camping season for its customers helps General RV make the most of their customers' time.

"We try to get creative in our efforts when we hear about a good prospect. Our biggest focus once we have somebody with the potential and a desire to learn is what we do with them from there."

General RV works with the RV Technical Institute (RVTI) as joint learning partners, invested in educating lead training technicians at each of its locations, who become certified to teach the RVTI



General RV prides itself in working with the RV Technical Institute as joint learning partners.

program from Level 1 to Level 2, and then help facilitate continuing education up to master technician certification.

"Our techs don't have to be sent out of their stores, they can get the training right there, in-house," Dobbs says. "Our goal is to continue to drive that education for our technicians. Sometimes they initially come to us as a cleaner or a porter – it could be any role – and if we see a desire to learn, then we'll give them a shot."

The first 90 days of technician onboarding is largely getting them acquainted with General RV processes and basics, from which they then proceed to RVTI Level 1 and straight into Level 2. Lead training techs are paid hourly to compensate for their time.

"We don't expect them to turn any hours; we actually expect them to turn

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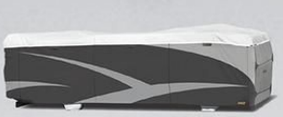
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General RV techs are sent to manufacturer and third-party facilities for training.

hours through training the technicians," she adds.

In addition to in-store lead training technicians, General RV also has a corporate technical trainer, who oversees individual store programs and seeks out more continuing education, for both entry-level and seasoned techs. Suppliers such as Lippert and Winegard also provide in-dealership training, and techs are sent to manufacturer and third-party facilities, though the goal is to keep techs at the dealership location.

"Culture means a lot of things to a lot of different people," Dobbs says. "We're family-owned and we take care of our employees and help them grow – many come here looking for a job and discover a career. So long as there's a desire to learn, we'll continue to invest in them." RVP



Rex & Sons Embraces Cautious Optimism Through Market Shifts

By focusing on nurturing client relationships and educating customers, the Wilmington, North Carolina-based dealer cultivates a passion for RV life.

BY NICOLE WISNIEWSKI

Life's a journey, and Travis and Jonathan Creech from Rex & Sons RV in Wilmington, North Carolina, aim to help their customers enjoy it.

Rex & Sons is a full-service RV dealership, specializing in new and used Class A, B and C motorhomes, lite travel-trailers and ultra-lite travel trailers. The company also offers RV service and rentals, and sells RV camper parts.

Learning how to cultivate customer relationships has been a key part of the company's growth strategy. In its 25 years in business, Rex & Sons has seen many changes in its customer demographic and has continued to adapt to grow.

The Creeches feel that by providing the right customer education and building lifelong client relationships – from RV rentals to sales, service and beyond – they can continue to drive Rex & Sons RV forward.

The Changing RV Customer

Rex & Sons RV was founded in 1997. Travis and Jonathan's father, Rex, had a corporate career and decided he needed a lifestyle change.

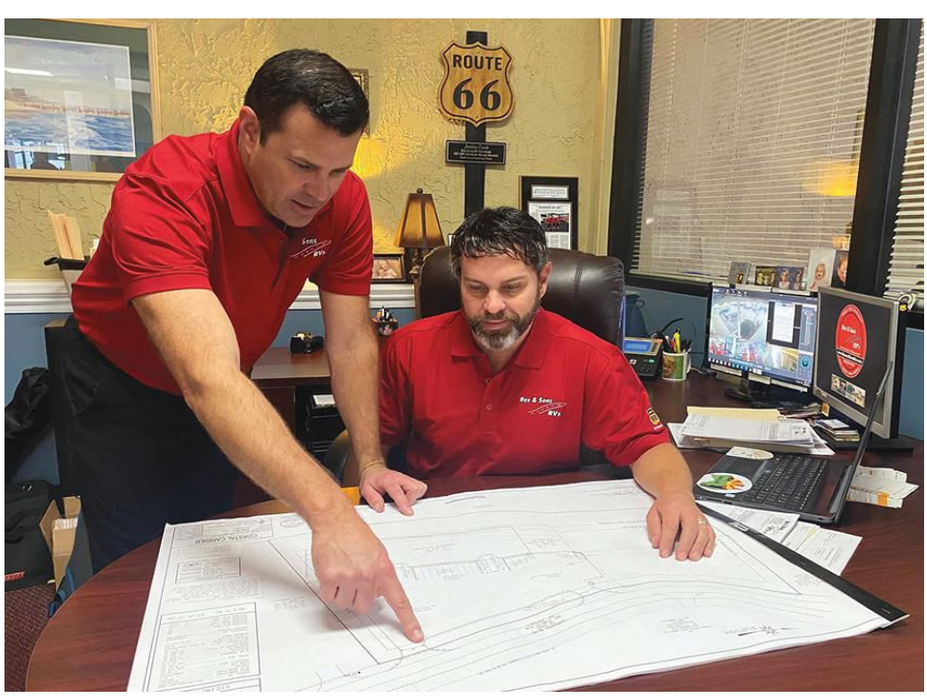
"He wanted to do something that we could experience all together as a family," Travis says. "Our uncle was in the camper business, and we remembered our grandfather had a Winnebago motor home when we were younger, so we decided to explore this opportunity."

They started the business with a few used pieces and then got into new lines, trying different things, including pop-ups, truck campers, diesel campers and destination campers. The business took off.

"Once you get the bug of RVing on any level, you meet diverse types of people and you see how cool the experience is," Travis says. "We wanted to be a positive influence in the market, educated ourselves on the industry and went from there."

Today, the company carries brands including Coachmen, InTech RV, Venture RV, Class B Winnebago, Class C Winnebago, Class A Winnebago, Palomino and Winnebago Towables.

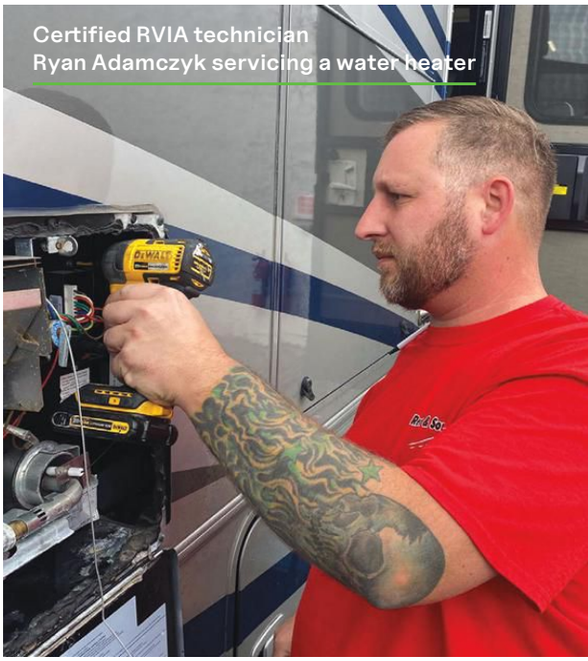
The company's customer base started with the 55-plus demographic, but over their 25 years in business, they've noticed some changes in RV buyers. People in their 20s and 30s, for instance, have been coming into Rex & Sons with memories of RV trips as children and a desire to recreate that experience for



Brothers Travis and Jonathan Creech



Detailing specialist Sammy Brown


Certified RVIA technician Ryan Adamczyk servicing a water heater

their family, putting technology on hold to embrace the open road.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the recent real estate market changes have been big drivers in customer shifts as well.

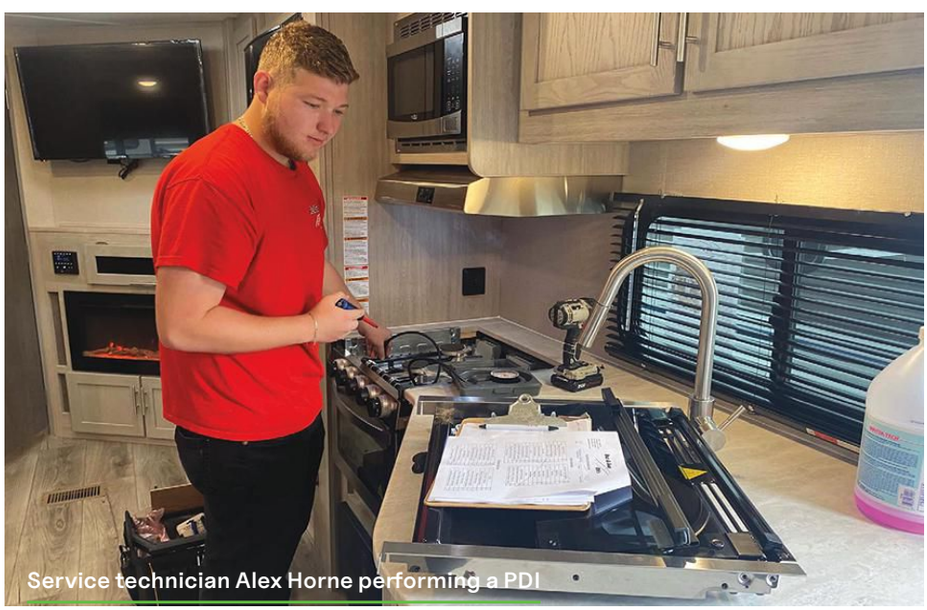
"People learned they wanted to bring the family together and unplug, and they find an RV is the best way to do that," Jonathan says. "Other customers gained the freedom to work remotely, and RVs enabled them to see the country at the same time."

Customers also include people with jobs like traveling nurses and bridge builders who use RVs to take them from one job stint to the next as more convenient solutions than having permanent homes.

Most recently, people were capitalizing on the real estate market and spending their home sale profits to finally achieve their dreams of owning an RV, the Creeches said.

To market to their customers, Rex & Sons builds local relationships and belongs to the Route 66 RV Network and the North Carolina RV Dealers Association. Travis is currently on the NCRVDA board of directors and Rex was a previous association president. Travis also serves the industry as an at-large delegate for the national RVDA.

Additionally, the company is involved in embracing the growing diversity of customers who are looking to enjoy life in an RV. They recently partnered with


Service technician Alex Horne performing a PDI



Talking to consumers at the North Carolina RV Dealers' Association Show

PHOTOS COURTESY OF REX & SONS

Black Folks Camp, Too to help educate diverse communities on the benefits of camping.

No matter who comes into Rex & Sons, the process to build that customer relationship is the same.

"We talk to people at a community event and have a conversation about RVing and what kind of travel their family is into," Travis explains. "Sometimes people start by renting an RV to see what the experience is like, and they fall in love with it from there. Other times, they want to dive right in."

Rex & Sons firmly believes in educating the customer fully, so they understand the maintenance involved in owning and operating an RV. The Creeches believe this will lead to a longer-lasting and positive relationship with the purchase.

"We're in this relationship for the long haul – everything from renting to buying to upgrading to servicing and even helping them sell it later in life when they no longer need an RV," Travis explains.

Tackling One Challenge at a Time

Today's biggest challenge for Rex & Sons is inflation. Whether it's a replacement part or a piece of the RV manufacturing process, inflation is happening in every area of the business.

"We're trying to absorb what we can," Jonathan explains. But in some cases, such as with the overproduction of travel-trailers that happened recently, right-sizing that inventory will be a big challenge for the company over the next four to six months.

"We want to throttle back here and just move the product; this is not a museum, after all," he says. "The motorized shortage is helping us stay in line."

The brothers are also dialing in their supplier partners to limit further supply chain struggles.

Rising interest rates are also challenging as banks tighten up.

"When rates were historically low, we had more room to negotiate, but now our margins are thinner," Jonathan says. "We keep fighting for the customer and fighting for interest rates."

Customers are adapting, too, by offering more money down or paying cash to get the deal and payment that works best for them.

"Since their money isn't performing like it used to, they have cash that they want to use now," Jonathan adds.

Rex & Sons employs 12 people currently, and is adding a technician this year, as well as a customer service team member later in the year.

"We've tried to focus on training to certify our technicians and cross-train all of our team members," Travis says.

Growing the Service Side of the Shop

To grow their business, Rex & Sons secured 7 acres with plans to build eight service bays 10 miles from their current facility, which is only 1.14 acres.

"We turn down more work than we accept on the service side because we don't have the time or manpower to



Travis Creech educating a customer



handle it," Travis says. "A lot of dealerships don't do service and some service only what they sell, so we see an opportunity here. People need good experiences. The ideal service plan is to educate customers on ownership and how to properly use the units and take care of them."

Rex & Sons recommends quarterly checkups on RVs to keep them running smoothly.

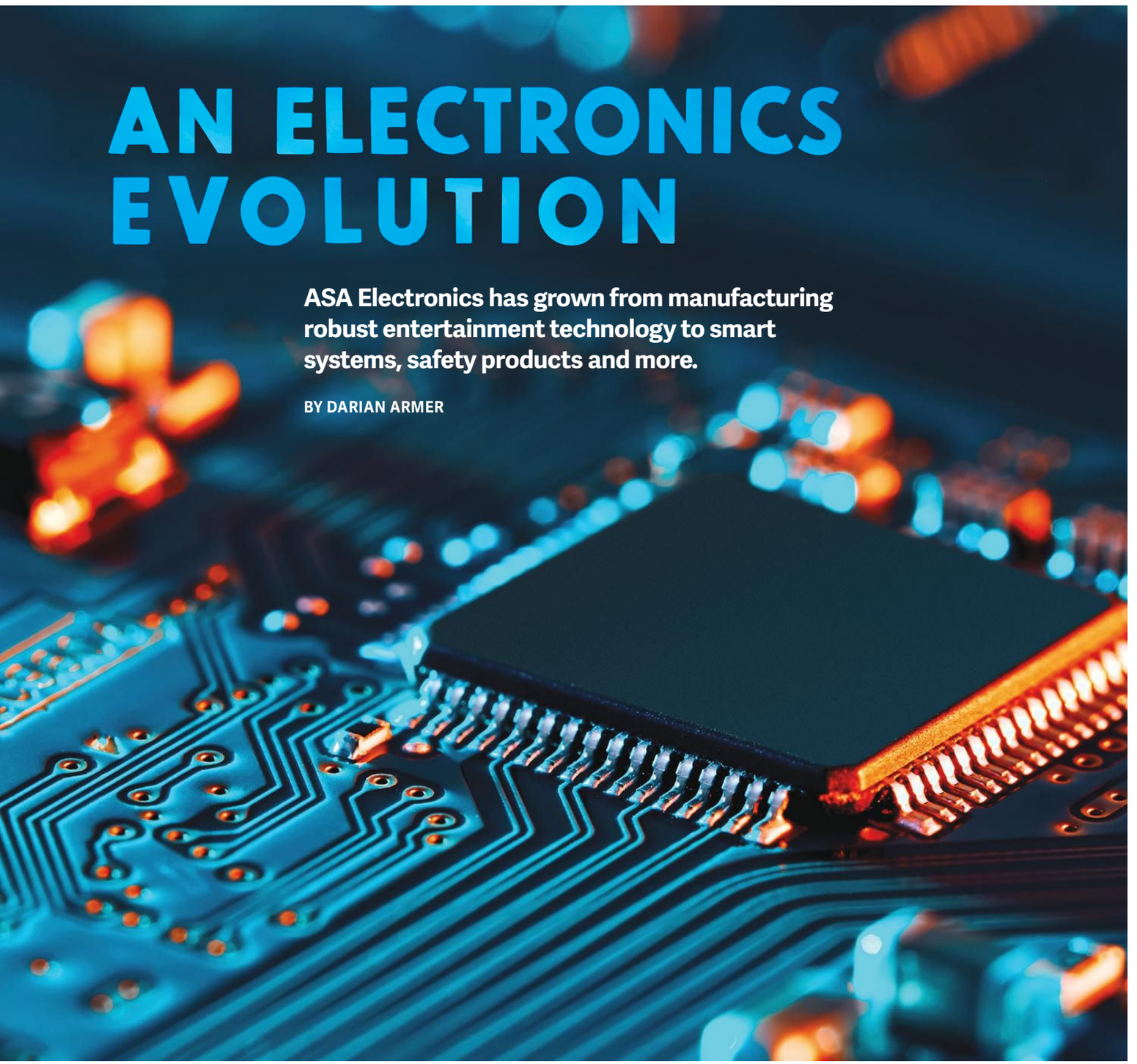
"We give our customers discounts on parts and accessories and provide courtesy checks as well, particularly on seals and roofs, which tend to get neglected," Travis says.

We like the idea of growing our service business because it builds that customer relationship, and this heated shop and state-of-the-art facility can really help us get there.

Rex & Sons had $8.5 million in revenue in 2020, and that grew to $10.5 million in 2021 and $11.5 million in 2022. Winning the Winnebago Flying W award for overall service two years in a row, which is based off random customer survey responses, has given them the confirmation that their sales approach is working.

"Just like when you're traveling on the highway, there's a time when you put your vehicle in cruise control, a time when you accelerate and a time when you decelerate," Travis says. "We're going to keep staying in our lane and doing what we do best and keep treating people right and embracing the work ethic our dad instilled in us, so we can all enjoy life's journey together." RVP





AN ELECTRONICS EVOLUTION

ASA Electronics has grown from manufacturing robust entertainment technology to smart systems, safety products and more.

BY DARIAN ARMER

ASA Electronics knows that to remain relevant they have to adapt to new technology. Since its humble beginnings in 1977, ASA Electronics has evolved and changed to become, and remain, a leading supplier of electronics to the RV industry, and pioneered the way for many technological advances available on RVs today.

What began as a company dealing primarily in entertainment technology, ASA has moved into the safety and observation space while remaining true to its roots.

A History

ASA Electronics was founded in 1977 by Tom Irions, along with his business partner Kelly Rose. They began as Midwest regional distributors of mobile audio/visual products for Audiovox before branching out on their own, opening up in Elkhart, Indiana. ASA Electronics was the response to the request Irions often heard from his clients at Audiovox: They needed tougher electronics. Consumer-grade TVs and stereos weren't surviving





trips in vehicles designed to travel cross-country. There had to be a solution, and Irions was ready to provide it with ASA Electronics.

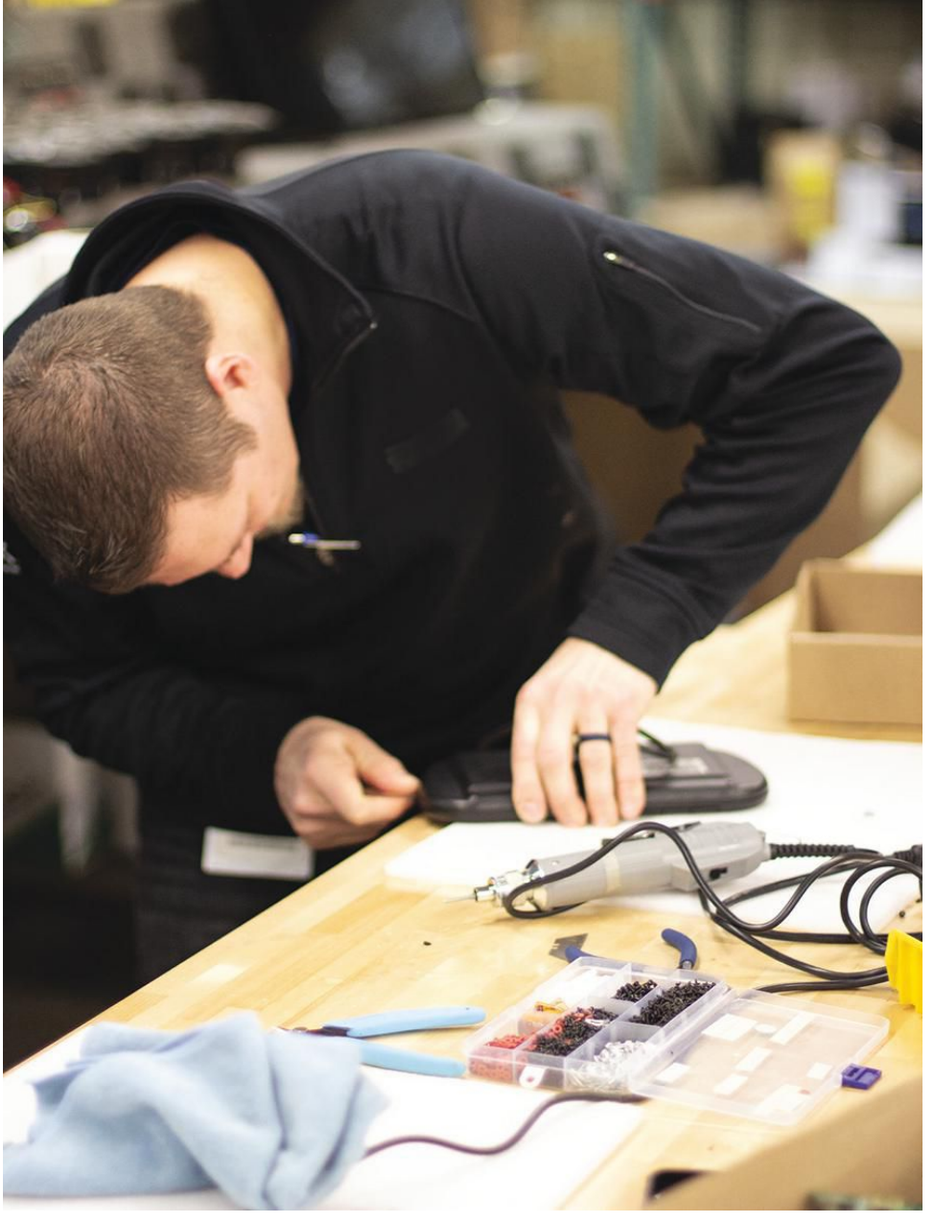
"We've always been an electronics company. They made a shift from van conversions to RVs. They were forced to make a change. We're constantly needing to change, so a big leap to the RV industry was necessary when van conversions started tanking," says Jim Hess, vice president RV division for ASA Electronics.

In 1991, ASA Electronics developed the first-ever 13-inch DC-powered television for mobile use. OEMs were able to install this in RVs without any additional modifications or adapters – the first of its kind and unlike the traditional AC-powered models.

ASA has continued creating advances for the industry throughout the years, becoming a mainstay with OEMs and in units throughout the country and expanded business into China. ASA has invested in an office in China where they employ 24 people.

"We started the office over in China

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• Washers
• Self Drilling Screws
• Sheet Metal Screws
• Wood Screws
• Staples/Nails and Much More
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because typically when you do business in China you work with a broker who's only going to give you information when he has to. By investing in employees oversees we have more of a heads-up of any headwinds coming our way. This way we have a network of people that have our best interest in mind instead of a brokerage," Hess says.

Irions is still actively involved in the company, often coming into work, Hess says.

Innovation for Today

The company has expanded to serve other industries, five in total, including the commercial vehicle industry, marine industry, agricultural industry and the trailering industry. Hess says the RV industry makes up about 40% of the company's total business.

"Eighty percent of all RVs are built in this area. It's easier to serve an industry where the network is already built. The rest of the industries we serve are a lot more spread out and it takes longer to build networks," Hess says.

That being said, ASA Electronics serves big players in other industries, such as Pepsi, John Deere and Case New Holland (CNH Industrial), to name a few. They even have a contract with UPS where every brown truck in the country uses ASA's Voyager wired cameras.

In the RV industry, ASA Electronics works primarily with OEMs, but also does some aftermarket work with NTP-STAG, Meyer Distributing and dealerships. While some of ASA's products can be added after the fact to upgrade systems, most products need to be installed at the OEM level, or at least prepped for them at the OEM level.

"For instance, with the iNCommand system a customer could not add it aftermarket," says Rachel West, marketing director for ASA Electronics. "Now, with the iNCommand prep system, the OEMs will install the wiring necessary for a customer to add the system aftermarket. They can just order a kit at that point. If you don't have the prep system, the amount of time and money it would take likely wouldn't be worth it."

The new iNCommand prep system allows the customer to upgrade to a full iNCommand system afterwards through aftermarket avenues or components like a 7-inch touch screen for the system.

"iNCommand has been imitated a few times with [other systems]. It's been imitated, which is the highest form of flattery," West says.

There's crossover of products between the five industries, Hess says, adding that many products that work well on a boat work well in an RV, too.

"Each product is individually designed for the industry they're in. We design marine-grade speakers that can stand up to sea salt spray on the outside of the boat. They stand up to road salt spray, too, which stands up on the outside of an RV," Hess says.

Innovation for Tomorrow

While the Voyager brand is one of the oldest brands at ASA Electronics, the company has continued to improve upon it, making it relevant with each new adaptation. The newest innovation to the Voyager brand is the Voyager 270 system, born out of the wired version in the commercial truck space.

"We've been in the wired and wireless camera portion of things in the RV industry for quite some time. We took a wired 360-degree system from the commercial space and made it wireless, creating the Voyager 270 system. If you're hauling a travel trailer or fifth wheel you don't need a camera to see in front of you; you need to see around the side of the unit and the back of it. You need a bird's-eye view," Hess says. "Up until now, people were lucky to have a rear camera on their RV. When backing up and into a space, they just had to wing it. The best they could do was a rear camera that gave sight directly behind you, but as soon as you start to angle it gets distorted."

The Voyager 270's technology includes

an auto calibrating system with a camera on each side and one on the back.

"The magic happens when calibration takes place and the side cameras meet the back camera to provide a 360-degree view," Hess says.

The installation and calibration must be done at the manufacturing level where the use of calibration mats is possible and everything can be dialed in.

"Anything that's safety related is important that it's installed properly," Hess says.

"Going forward, we're hoping to create a sense of normalcy and culture of safety and technology in the RV industry," West says. "A lot of consumers are getting used to seeing these types of products built-in to their vehicles in the automotive industry. I think retail consumers are going to start expecting it in their recreational vehicles, too."

Part of safety means rigorous testing, something ASA takes very seriously. Many of their processes are ISO 9000 certified. They have created their own engineering lab for testing in Elkhart.

"We created our own standard for testing for RVs, because a standard didn't really exist. We design and test everything in Elkhart," Hess says. "We test with vibration chambers. We test with salt spray, for extreme heat, cold, humidity and an electrical test for voltage spikes and voltage dumps. It's an upfront investment, but we have very few returns and some of the lowest warranty claims."

Hess says looking to the future he sees ASA moving toward safety products.

"We will still be in the entertainment category, but I see our main focus being on stuff not as easily duplicated and the safety space, such as control systems and monitoring," he says. RVP

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YOUR VIEW

BY RV PRO STAFF



The results are in – here's what dealers had to say about manufacturers they do business with, and the greatest issues they're facing this year.

Manufacturer Quality Survey

RV PRO conducted a survey of dealers during the months of December 2022 and January 2023, promoting the survey via eblasts and in the daily newsletter. We were excited to hear from 201 people who sell RVs to collect information about which RV brands they think are top notch for their warranty policy, quality, procurement of replacement parts and more.

Check out the results.

Best

Which OEM has the **best PDI?**

1. Forest River
2. Grand Design
3. Newmar
4. Jayco
5. Tiffin



Which OEM has the **best warranty policy?**

1. Forest River
2. Jayco
3. Grand Design
4. Tiffin
5. Tie: Airstream, Keystone



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Jayco
KEYSTONE RV COMPANY
KZ RECREATIONAL VEHICLES
STARCRAFT
THOR MOTOR COACH
TIFFIN MOTORHOMES
VENTURE











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Quality

Which **travel trailer** OEM has the best quality?

1. Airstream
2. Forest River
3. Grand Design
4. Jayco
5. Keystone

Which **fifth wheel** OEM has the best quality?

1. Grand Design
2. Forest River
3. DRV Luxury Suites
4. Jayco
5. Tie: Alliance RV, Keystone

Which **Class A** OEM has the best quality?

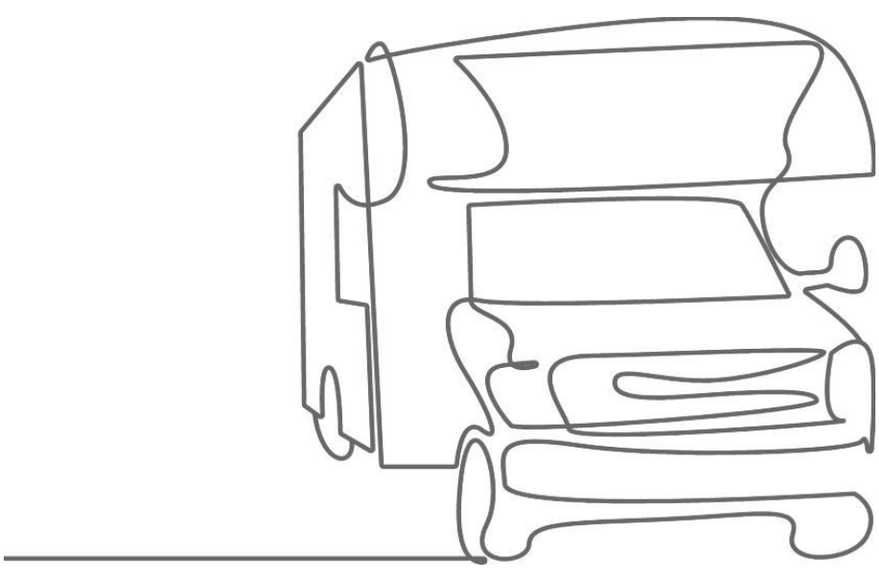
1. Tiffin
2. Newmar
3. Forest River
4. Winnebago
5. Jayco

Which **Class C** OEM has the best quality?

1. Jayco
2. Winnebago
3. Forest River
4. Dynamax
5. Tie: Renegade RV, Thor Motor Coach

Which **Class B** OEM has the best quality?

1. Airstream
2. Winnebago
3. Coachmen
4. Roadtrek
5. Three-way tie: Leisure Travel Vans, Pleasure-Way, Thor Motorcoach



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Brand

Which OEM is it **easiest to get replacement parts** from?

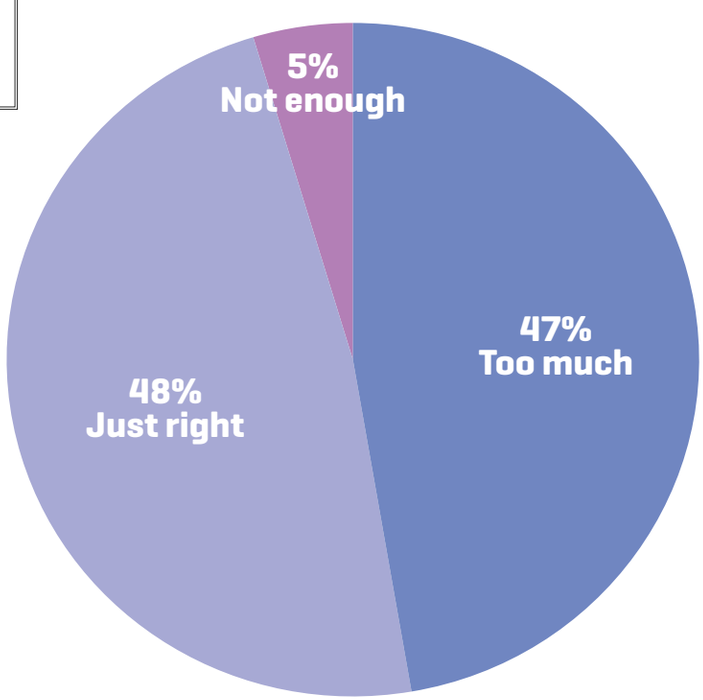
1. Forest River
2. Keystone
3. Grand Design
4. Jayco
5. Winnebago

Which OEM brand has the **best re-sale value?**

1. Airstream
2. Forest River
3. Tiffin
4. Grand Design
5. Newmar

Inventory

How would you describe your **current inventory levels** compared to last year's levels?





If "not enough," what class(es) are you missing that you need the most?

RV Bus conversion Class C
Class A



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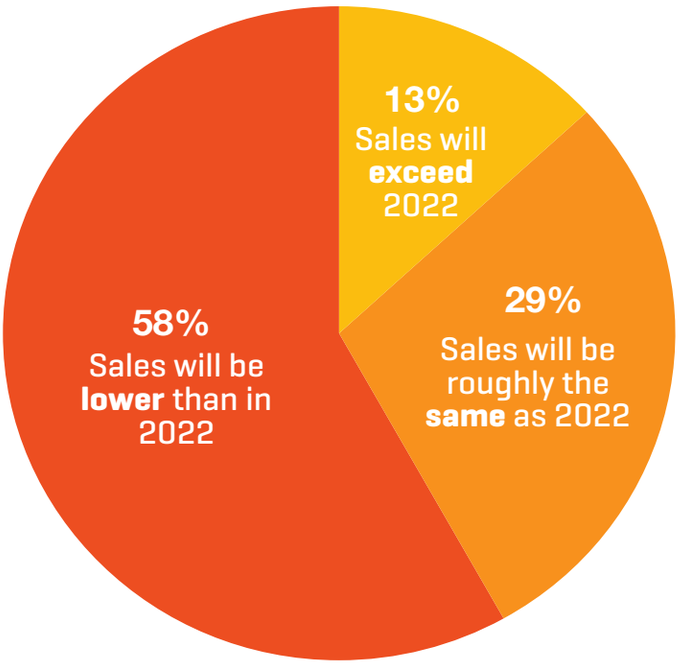
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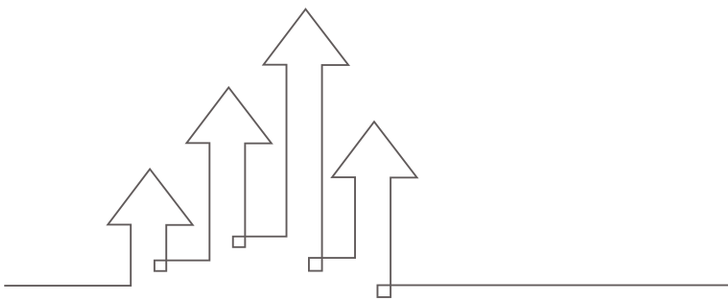
AIRSTREAM OF NEW MEXICO
COLONIAL AIRSTREAM
EWALD'S AIRSTREAM OF WISCONSIN
AIRSTREAM ADVENTURES SPOKANE
AIRSTREAM MONTRÉAL
AIRSTREAM OF DFW
RV ONE GAINESVILLE
WOODLAND AIRSTREAM OF GRAND RAPIDS
WOODLAND AIRSTREAM OF INDIANA
AIRSTREAM SOUTH CAROLINA
AIRSTREAM OF NORTHERN MICHIGAN
AIRSTREAM ADVENTURES PORTLAND
AIRSTREAM ADVENTURES SEATTLE
AIRSTREAM OF MISSISSIPPI
AIRSTREAM ADVENTURES BOISE
AIRSTREAM ADVENTURES FAIRFIELD
AIRSTREAM OF SOUTH FLORIDA
AIRSTREAM OF LOUISIANA
AIRSTREAM OF TAMPA
AIRSTREAM OF NORTH GEORGIA
AIRSTREAM OF UTAH
DES MOINES RV
AIRSTREAM OF WYOMING
AIRSTREAM OF AUSTIN
GATEWAY AIRSTREAM

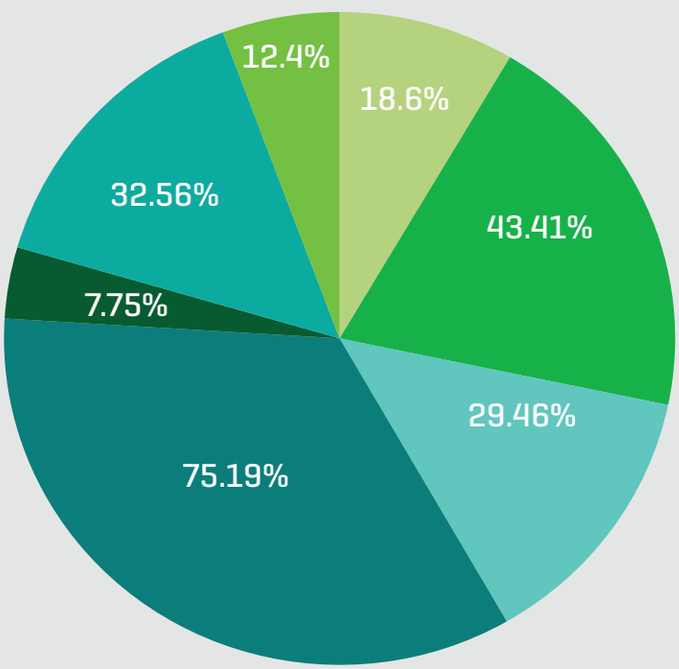
FIVE RIVET DEALER



How would you **expect RV Sales** at your dealership to fare in 2023?

Sales





What are **the greatest issues** facing your dealership in 2022? *Choose 3.*

Competition	18.60%
Labor	43.41%
Inventory	29.46%
Inflation	75.19%
Consolidation	7.75%
Supply Chain	32.56%
Government Regulation	12.40%

Issues



PRODUCT SHOWCASE

Members of the RV PRO team traveled to four distributor shows in December and January and had the privilege of seeing first-hand a number of new products hitting the market. We asked our advertising partners to feature some of those products in this special advertising section – this Product Showcase – so we could show them off to our readers. From hitches to holding tank treatments to anti-lock braking systems and more, here are some of the latest offerings that you must know.

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Southwire ____ 56
Star brite ____ 57

B&W Trailer Hitches







The goal of a weight distribution hitch is getting the correct amount of weight moved from the rear axles to the front axles, keeping the vehicle driving safely. Traditional weight distribution hitches take an all-or-nothing approach: loaded or unloaded. The Continuum weight distribution hitch has several notable features that allow users to better control the towing experience.

Composite spring bars made with LITEFLEX technology from Hendrickson are five times more flexible than steel with similar strength. This allows coverage of tongue weights of 600 to 1,600 pounds with a single bar size.

A closed-loop hydraulic cylinder and pump assembly make it possible to fine tune setup. Adjustment is easy; pump the handle and watch as weight is moved from the rear axle to the front axle. If the trailer load changes, or if steering doesn't feel quite right, users can easily add or subtract weight for optimum towing in just a few seconds.

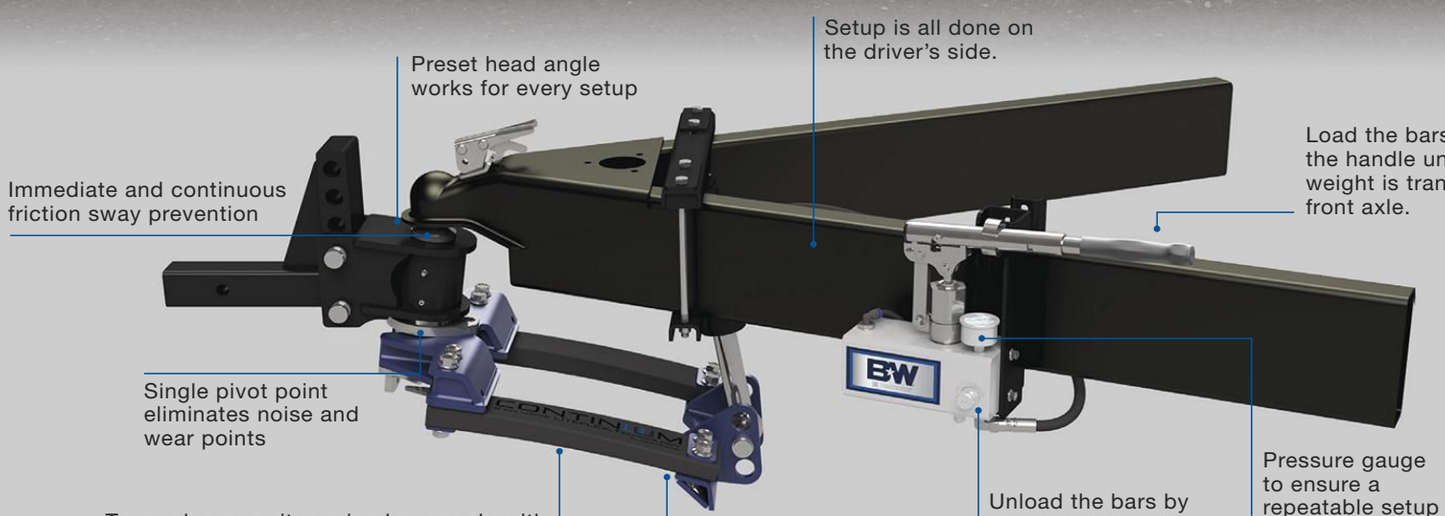
In most cases, the Continuum can be installed in 30 minutes or less, using only a 9/16-inch wrench. The head angle of the hitch is pre-set, and the bar assembly ships preassembled.

For more information about what B&W Trailer Hitches has learned after seven years at the drawing board, visit bwtrailerhitches.com.

CONTINUUM™

The whole point of weight distribution is getting the correct amount of weight moved from the rear axles to the front axles of your vehicle. Current weight distribution hitches take an all-or-nothing approach: loaded or unloaded. Our composite LITEFLEX® bars make it possible to fine-tune your setup with just the pump of a handle.





LEARN MORE

Blue Ox

Patriot Brake



The newly redesigned Blue Ox Patriot Brake (BRK2022) is lighter, more compact and 6.2 pounds versus 9.5 pounds to fit more vehicles. Whether customers are towing a full-size SUV, pickup, compact car, a hybrid or multiple vehicles with different floorplan configurations, the Patriot Brake requires no special brackets to set up in any vehicle.

Braking action provides the same force as a foot on the brake pedal, in the middle of the pedal at the same angle, for true responsive braking. Faster extension of the braking action allows for quicker, more responsive stops.

The brake is all-electric and self-contained. No tank to drain, no pumps or hoses to connect. Set up is quick and easy: plug in the power cord and breakaway switch and push the setup button. The Patriot will cycle once, testing the pressure on the brake pedal. If the pressure is correct, the setup light will glow green indicating that the brake is ready to go.

The compact, dash-mounted, in-cab controller adjusts the braking force, overrides automatic braking and constantly monitors the brake function by providing visual and audio alerts, including a breakaway alert.

Everything required for flat tow braking with the Patriot is included in the box. The brake is lightweight and easy to store in a motorhome storage area or in the towed vehicle.



Blue Ox Fifth Wheel Hitches

Blue Ox has two new fifth wheel hitches, the BXR2100 and BXR2410. The Blue Ox BXR2100 Fifth Wheel Hitch features a true kingpin connection with 360-degree nesting around the kingpin. No adapters are required. A funnel-shaped hitch head helps guide the kingpin into place, significantly reducing the rate of false hookups and trailer.

The hitch head is dual articulating: front, back and side to side. The BXR2100 connects to a 2-5/16-inch Gooseneck with a 21,000-pound gross towing capacity and 5,000-pound vertical load limit. This hitch weighs 122 pounds total and is modular in construction, allowing the user to separate the hitch head from the base for easy, one-person removal from the truck bed. The hitch includes a lube plate.

The BXR2410 features an identical funnel-shaped hitch head design, with the base connecting to standard bed rails instead of a gooseneck ball. It features a 24,000-pound gross towing capacity and a 6,000-pound vertical load limit. The hitch weighs 100 pounds total and features the same modular construction, allowing the user to disconnect the hitch head from the base for one-person removal. The BXR2410 also includes a lube plate in the box.

Other fifth wheel accessories are available: a Universal King Pin Lock to prevent a fifth wheel trailer from being stolen; replacement lube plates; a 6-foot fifth wheel wiring harness; fifth wheel bed mat for the BXR2100 to increase the grip the hitch has on the truck bed; and a lockout kit for Rota-flex pin boxes.

BLUE OX

Towing Doesn't Have to be a Drag™



Adjustable Ball Mounts

For 2" Receivers



BXH10141
4" Drop/Rise
10K

BXH10171
7" Drop/Rise
10K

Included clamshell converts 2" ball to 2-5/16".

Adjustable in height for level towing.

Pre-installed 2" ball.

Will not drag on the ground like dual ball mounts.

All-steel construction.

For 2-1/2" Receivers



BXH12241
4" Drop/Rise
12K

BXH12271
7" Drop/Rise
12K

Century Chemical Corporation

Supreme Green is an enzyme-based holding tank treatment that comes in liquid or water-soluble packets. The product quickly and effectively eliminates odors while providing powerful cleaning power. With a relaxing eucalyptus fragrance, enzymes break down solids in holding tanks, eliminate unpleasant odors and lubricate drain valves. Designed for full-time travelers, the Supreme Green tubs come with 36 water-soluble toss-in packets, helping keep the planet healthy by reducing waste.

Supreme Green comes in a convenient storage size and is made of re-usable and recyclable packaging. It is biodegradable and safe for use in all RV and marine holding tanks. One packet treats a 40-gallon tank and lasts up to one week. Supreme Green helps break down tissue and waste and is safe for all septic systems.

Blue Max Glitter Glamping Edition offers the same superior quality as other Travel Jon products, plus all the fun of glamping. Make your destination come alive with sparkle and glam. With one packet, you can eliminate waste for a full week, helping you enjoy the outdoors to the fullest.

The biodegradable, maximum strength odor-fighting power of Blue Max Glitter Glamping Edition is safe to use in all RV and marine holding tanks and septic systems. This fun, effective cleaning power packet with a burst of glitter will keep your life sparkling.

Users will always be comfortable on the road less traveled with the Travel Jon products' signature fragrance. The different sizes allow easy storage and are tailored to the length of stay in RVs, campgrounds, or anywhere else users like to park during an adventure. They are designed to control odors and keep spaces smelling fresh. Using these products, users can keep pesky odors out of the bus lavatory and ensure that passengers enjoy a smooth and relaxing ride. Travel Jon is available at most destinations and by contacting us directly for distributor information. The company's products are manufactured in the U.S. and provide a fresh smell and robust action to break down waste. For more information, visit centurychemical.com.



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Lippert

Anti-Lock Braking System

Keeping your trailer under control is imperative in slippery road conditions and beautiful days alike, which is why Lippert has your back. Whether you're towing a utility trailer or RV, Lippert strives to create products that make towing safer. We are constantly researching new and innovative technologies to make your ride a safe, comfortable and worry-free experience.

The Lippert anti-lock braking system (ABS) is a towing technology designed to let you travel safer and smarter than ever. It's a ground-breaking initiative that offers confidence to any driver towing a travel trailer, fifth wheel or utility trailer while facing less-than-perfect environmental conditions.

When you encounter irregular driving surfaces like loose gravel, slick or icy roads that can cause an emergency braking situation while towing your trailer, it's not uncommon for the trailer to fishtail off to one side while pulling the vehicle into a dangerous drift. Lippert ABS monitors these conditions and can individually control each trailer brake to maintain control of the trailer. This helps the driver maintain traction, bringing the vehicle and trailer safely to a stop during emergency and panic braking.

The Lippert trailer ABS combines the best of anti-lock braking and connected RV technology to deliver a comprehensive safety platform for virtually all trailer types, particularly those with one to three axles. This anti-lock braking system works with your trailer's brakes to prevent wheel lockup and enhance control over the vehicle-trailer combination, especially in slippery or abrupt braking situations. Plus, it's fully compatible with OEM or aftermarket brake controllers.

The system is also prepped to work with Lippert's OneControl app, part of Lippert's lineup of smart RVing technology that helps turn an RV into an intuitive, intelligently connected vehicle that can be monitored from a smartphone or tablet. Using the OneControl app, users can pair their Lippert ABS to their smart device and easily monitor status and other important towing functions.

Anti-lock braking systems are standard on all passenger cars and commercial vehicles. Lippert is committed to extending the benefits of ABS to trailers and RVs. Through their expert team of product designers and engineers, Lippert developed this product with the goal of making this a new industry standard because safety is always a top priority when it comes to Lippert products. Talk to your RV dealer to find out if Lippert ABS is included on your rig.



Lippert ABS Features at a Glance:

- Promotes exceptional towing safety and driver confidence
- Improves control on slippery roads and in emergency braking situations
- Integrates with trailer brakes to prevent trailer wheel lockup
- OneControl app provides digital odometer, system monitoring and more
- Applicable across virtually all trailer types (one to three axles)
- Works with electromagnetic drum brakes (seven-way wiring connector required)
- Fully compatible with OEM or aftermarket brake controllers
- Nonintrusive system will not interfere with trailer gain settings

For more information, visit lippert.com.



King

Phoenix Automatic Roof-Mounted Satellite Antenna System

With the changing needs of today's tech-savvy RVers in mind, KING has developed another new antenna solution that will provide RVers with the same level of satellite connectivity on the road that they enjoy at home. We are proud to introduce the KING Phoenix Automatic Roof-Mounted Satellite Antenna System. The KING Phoenix is the latest addition to the company's line of industry leading satellite products. This antenna offers RV consumers an easy-to-use, push-button controller, access to full 4K HD programming simultaneously on multiple satellites, and an industry-leading two-year parts and two-year labor warranty. The roof-mounted antenna is capable of powering multiple residential-style satellite receiver/DVR units inside the RV. It is also the lightest weight antenna in class, allowing for greater ease of installation. The residential-style reflector improves satellite signal strength, virtually eliminating rain fade issues and features a stowed height of just 8 inches.





MORryde

Helping RVers enjoy their RV more so they can enjoy the RV lifestyle even more has been the driving force for MORryde designed and manufactured products for over 55 years. It started with rubber suspension systems for trailers, but today MORryde's product efforts include a wide range of products designed for OEM or aftermarket installations on the entire RV market. Each MORryde product is designed with the goal of what can we do to help the RVer even more. Here are two of the latest MORryde product introductions.

The MORryde Safe T Rail is designed to help RVers enter and exit their trailer more safely. The Safe T Rail collapses to the sidewall when traveling and extends out, providing a residential-style stair rail feel when going up and down the RV steps.

The MORryde Latch Extender provides a handle that extends the door latch, allowing the trailer owner to open the door without walking up the steps. This makes entry into the trailer even easier and when combined with the Safe T Rail offers safety, security, stability and simplicity.

MORryde products are manufactured in the USA. For more information, visit morryde.com.





Midland Power

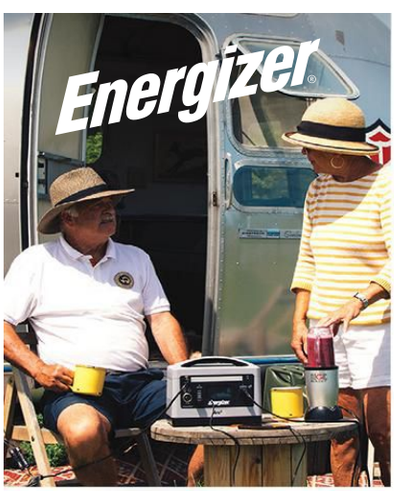
Midland Power Inc. is proud to be a leader in the RV industry, with strategic partnerships in Canada and the U.S. for nearly 20 years. The company's distribution partners, Keller Marine & RV Distribution and Northern Wholesale, bring the best of its Energizer product line to customers everywhere.

Midland Power Inc.'s commitment to quality and exceptional customer service has set the company apart in the RV market. With a complete range of Energizer Inverter Generators, lithium power stations and RV electrical accessories, it has the power solutions users need. The company understands the changing market and strives to provide customers with products that offer peace of mind and reliable power, backed by exceptional warranty and support.

The Energizer product line offers a complete range of inverter generators, from the compact EZV2200 to the powerful EZV8000. The newest addition to its line-up, the Energizer Arc Lithium Power Stations, provide clean, quiet backup power for all a user's outdoor needs, from RVing to home backup and beyond.

Midland Power Inc. is committed to growing its business with its independent RV dealer network and distribution partners. For product questions, warranty information or parts inquiries, please reach out to the company's dedicated customer support team. With Midland Power Inc., you can be sure you're getting the power you need to keep your next adventure rolling.





Clean & Portable Power You Trust



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Battery Power Station 320W
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- Completely Silent
- No Maintenance

Arc⁵
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- No Maintenance

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Battery Power Station 1,000W
- Zero Emissions
- Completely Silent
- No Maintenance

Arc Solar 120
Foldable Portable Solar Panel 120W
- USB Compatible
- Built for Portability
- Use Alone or Pair with a Power Station



eZV2200i
Gas Powered Inverter Generator 2,200W Peak
- 1,800W Running
- Pure Sine Wave
- Compact Size

eZV4500i
Gas Powered Inverter Generator 4,500W Peak
- 3,700W Running
- Pure Sine Wave
- Remote Start

eZV4800
Gas Powered Inverter Generator 4,800W Peak
- 3,600W Running
- Pure Sine Wave
- Ultra Efficient

eZV8000
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Southwire

Surge Guard



Southwire's Surge Guard metrics are at your fingertips, providing easy reading on the go. Compatible with the 34931 and 34951 models, you can now easily access everything you need to know about Surge Guard, wherever your adventure leads.

- Easily monitor the power to an RV
- See errors in real-time
- Know when power will be restored
- Understand and track error history
- Easily access troubleshooting and how-to guides

Southwire's 34931 and 34951 Surge Guards provide the ultimate RV protection by offering low and high voltage protection, surge suppression, low and high frequency protection, open neutral and open ground, as well as reverse polarity protection, over current protection and overheat protection on the receptacle outlet, all while being able to secure it to the pedestal using the integrated lock ring. The 34931 and 34951 come with an industry-exclusive limited lifetime warranty and connected equipment coverage. For more information, visit southwire.com.



Star brite

Star Tron Quick Fix Engine Rescue



Improve sales and customer satisfaction with better performance from your engines. Star Tron Quick Fix Engine Rescue is perfect for helping RVs and generators start up on the first try. It also works powerfully on any other gas-powered engine or motor in use at your dealership or that your customer may tow or leave behind during travel: cars, trucks, side-by-sides, golf carts, landscaping equipment and more.

This powerful treatment blends polyetheramine (P.E.A.) and proprietary Star Tron ENZYME technology to remove harmful deposits and extend engine life by preventing wear and tear. It's easy to use, simply add it to the fuel. It's also compatible with all types of gas engines.

The product's affordable price point makes it an excellent add-on sale, ensuring that all customers' engines run smoothly and efficiently, and keeping them happy with their purchase. Don't miss out on this opportunity for incremental sales and improve customer satisfaction with Star Tron Quick Fix Engine Rescue. For more information, visit starbrite.com.



MOVING MOUNTAINS

The 2023 edition of NTP-STAG's Expo garnered a first-time location in Colorado, new focuses on expanded products and quality networking for RV dealers across the nation.

BY JORDAN BENSCHOP

A massive lodge overlooking the snowcapped Rocky Mountains wasn't the only thing to exceed expectations at this year's NTP-STAG Expo, hosted by Airxcel in January.

The annual two-day event was held in Aurora, Colorado, for the first time, attracting hundreds of dealers from across North America to the Gaylord Rockies Resort & Convention Center. Many attended NTP-STAG's new welcome reception Sunday evening – a few getting to mingle with Super Bowl-winning former head coach Brian Billick of the Baltimore Ravens, who shared "12 Principles of Success" with a full house at Monday's kickoff breakfast.

Dealers eagerly filled seats and left many wall-bound for the event's educational portion, featuring seminars hosted by a slew of leading suppliers.

"RV [University] was extremely well-attended. All the suppliers that did training were really happy," says NTP-STAG President Bill Rogers in an interview with RV PRO.

New products and initiatives, such as additions to four Airxcel brands and more dealership staff training from multiple associations, lent to great feedback from attendees who "really value the opportunity to learn how to sell these products," Rogers says.

In fact, as the red-hot RV industry slows to a simmer among normalizing lead times and inventory levels, there's a focus on selling instead of taking orders, Rogers says during Tuesday's kickoff breakfast.

"Until you get here and talk to everybody, you're a little uncertain. The economy is a little uncertain," he says. "But everybody seems glass half-full, upbeat – much more so than I would've thought."

Many dealers talked about surprising unit sales from recent consumer shows, such as Florida's Tampa RV SuperShow. For suppliers and OEMs flush with inventory, those tied to new units are seeing less product movement, but service-oriented suppliers anticipate continued momentum.

"We expect the aftermarket to do pretty well in this environment, versus if unit sales aren't going as well, because dealerships tend to focus more on that area," Rogers says. "There are so many units out there that'll need service. When one area of the business is a bit down, another one pops up.

"It'll still be a challenging year from an inventory perspective, but now in a different way, having more than the market may need right now," he says.

Rebranding 'Outdoor Rec'

Suppliers offered good feedback on the expansive expo floor, says Larry Montante, NTP-STAG's vice president of category management and marketing – especially on enhancements made to the expo's electronic ordering tools.

"We enhanced some of the features on the supplier side, giving them visibility and the ability to work with a customer directly to add on an order and so forth," Montante says. Dealers can see if a customer has items in their cart to help move the process along. The feature was requested at last year's expo – feedback that Rogers says is always considered.

Between Monday's keynote speaker and Tuesday's special guest – NFL veteran and Super Bowl XVII champion quarterback Joe Theismann, who talked about adapting to the "Challenge of Change" – Montante says the theme



Standing-room only at Go Power!'s seminar on solar power innovations.



Dealers are welcomed to the expo hall by NTP-STAG staff following Monday's slate of seminars.

of being agile and aggressive with opportunity are embedded within NTP-STAG. This year's expo featured a dedicated area for marketing services and tools to help customers, along with a new "outdoor recreation" focus, where OEM units were displayed with various aftermarket parts and accessories to spark ideas.

"It's all about educating our customers about what the opportunity is," Montante says. "We even rebranded it. We called it 'overlanding' and sensed that wasn't connecting with RV customers, who thought that was just for off-grid folks. It's much more than that.

"That's one of the reasons we came up with 'outdoor recreation' as the brand for this show with the RV space, to drive more of that connection."

A focus on pet products and a giveaway for electric bicycles, which are gaining popularity in the RV space, were spotlighted in NTP-STAG's outdoor recreation area. Major suppliers such as Dometic, Airxcel, Lippert, Blue Ox and others drew attention to new offerings in battery management, solar-powered awnings and other accessories, while B&W debuted a new weight distribution hitch.

"Everybody is coming out with camping stuff, not just RVing, which I think is great," Rogers says. "If I were a dealer, I'd be trying to attract the camper, which could turn into the RVer or the overlander or the car camper – I would try to have everybody in there. They may buy an RV, and there's good products to sell in those categories."

NTP-STAG's main initiatives target new product and marketing, Montante adds. A recent upgrade to the distributor's B2B website includes a robust product section where customers can see and filter through the company's latest offerings.

Moving forward, Rogers says the coming year will be "interesting," but many dealers share a positive outlook, despite multiple factors affecting an economic slowdown.

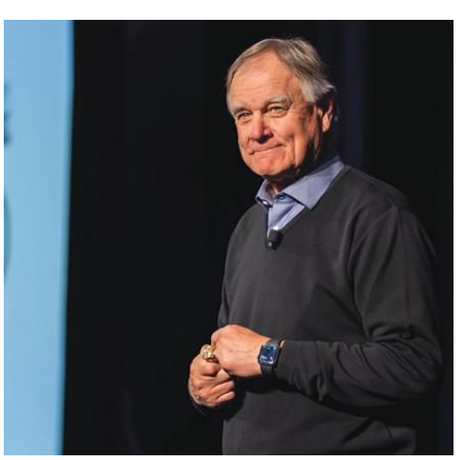
"If you're in an industry that can navigate through that successfully and still keep demand going to some degree, I think that's great," he says. The pandemic-triggered changes in consumer travel habits are keeping outdoor vacations – and RVing – on the wish list. "We think that bodes well for the long-term, even if there's some bumps on the ride."

NTP-STAG's Expo ended with a closing reception, sponsored by Dometic at the Gaylord's Mountain Pass restaurant, just before a Colorado blizzard rolled in.

"From the RVU presentations to the energy on the show floor, it was a busy few days with exceptional enthusiasm for the RV industry reflected by dealers throughout the event," Rogers said in a press release. "Working alongside the Gaylord staff, our team presented an outstanding expo. We are grateful to our events team, activity and event sponsors, our manufacturer and supplier partners, and most of all, the RV dealers from across the U.S. and Canada who took time out of their busy schedules to join us in Aurora." RVP



Joe Theismann



Brian Billick

Attendance Record Set *at* Meyer Mega Show

The January show brought dealers and suppliers together again in French Lick, Indiana.

BY TONY KINDELSPIRE

Putting faces to the names. That was one of the main reasons why husband-and-wife RV dealers Theron and Cynthia Gourley made the trek from their home in Benton, Kentucky, to their first Meyer Mega Show in January in French Lick, Indiana, about a 200-mile trip.

Aside from finally speaking face-to-face with many of the people they had been dealing with only via phone or email, they also took advantage of the educational offerings their first show provided, attending "at least six" seminars put on by vendors.

With those boxes checked off there was only one thing remaining: "We built a new showroom, and I was looking for someone to stock that and get it set up," Theron Gourley said, adding that Meyer helped them locate someone.

So, their Camp-A-Rama store in Benton will soon have a nice orderly parts and accessories department ready to serve customers that come in from southwest Kentucky and the nearby corners of Missouri and Tennessee.

This was the fifth year for the Meyer Mega Show, and its fourth at the historic French Lick Resort Casino, not far up the road from Meyer's headquarters in Jasper. The only show that wasn't held at the resort was in 2021; it was held virtually, due to COVID-19.

"Our dealers absolutely love French Lick," said Ben Johnson, category manager of RV, towing and marine for Meyer Distributing. "All our shows (the one focused on the automobile aftermarket, for example) are at French Lick."

A glance at this year's seminar attendance tells you that Meyer has hit on a winning location for its annual gathering.

To say the show has attracted a loyal following would be an understatement, if you only look at the day's worth of seminars that were held in three exhibition halls on Tuesday, Jan. 10, the day before the actual show floor opens.

"A good portion of them were standing room only," said Johnson, which meant additional chairs needed to be brought in.

In all, 96 vendors were on hand for the show and 22 of them presented at least one seminar that first day, he said.



Star brite displayed their broad array of cleaning and protective products.

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French Lick, Indiana, is only about 20 miles from Meyer Distributing's headquarters in Jasper, but offers a resort setting, along with convention facilities.

Around 104 dealerships were signed up to attend the show, and each one of them brought at least a couple people, Johnson said, setting new overall attendance records for the show.

"We have mostly American-based dealerships, but we have got some dealers from Canada – Fraserway and IBS Automotive," he said.

"It's a fantastic buzz," he added.

Georgiann Voissem, owner and founder of Inspired Group, was repping three manufacturers at the Meyer Mega Show.

"This has been the best show out of all the shows since last fall," Voissem said. "The traffic from the dealers is not what we had seen at other shows.

"There was concern about the industry because of things tightening up a little bit, and this show has softened some of those concerns."

Given the record-setting pace of the past couple of years, it's only normal for the industry numbers to fall back down to pre-COVID-19 levels. But that's OK, Voissem said, if 2022 sales numbers are closer to 2019's than the prior year. 2019 was an "outstanding" year, she said.

Besides, she said, with all the new first-time buyers, that means not only have they been exposed to a brand-new lifestyle and way of vacationing and relaxing, but also their families have, too. That means two generations of people who knew nothing about RVing have now been exposed to the bug. She likes the odds of many of those people and their children sticking with it, despite other travel and vacation options.

Voissem's optimism was shared by a company rep over at the PullRite booth. Though they had heard the



talk Voissem had about the market tightening up a bit this year, PullRite's Doug Kissel said orders have been strong into the early part of this year, although not as "heavy" as years past.

"They're trying to get a pulse for the market this year," he said.

Blue Ox is one of the primary sponsors of the show, and Director of Sales Alex Walker said on the Wednesday of the show that it was a busy day on the floor, and that's after hosting two successful, packed seminars the day prior.

"We had to bring in extra chairs for the first one and the next one we had standing room only," Walker said.

Walker said traffic had been brisk at the Blue Ox booth, a positive sign overall.

Show attendees were able to enjoy not just the world-class accommodations of the historic resort, but drawings were held over the course of the show days that awarded the winner and truck and boat combination, but also some $15,000 in cash.

This is Meyer's lone RV show every year focused on the RV market, which it got into well after it was an established presence in the automotive aftermarket.

Its headquarters in Jasper also serves as a major distribution center, with others in Dallas and Kingman, Arizona. Add in the smaller warehouses around the U.S. and the "crossdocks" – which the company uses to move product from destination to destination quickly and efficiently within a given region – allow the company to reach about 90% of the U.S. with less than a day of shipping time. RVP



PullRite's Doug Kissel, left, and Nick Moreland shown with their new fifth wheel hitch, which is geared toward 5.5-foot bed, half-ton pickups.



Georgiann Voissem of Inspired Rep Group holds the "goop" she touted at the Meyer Show. She said it was the best-attended of any show this season.

rv meyer
MEGA
show 2023

TO OUR VENDORS & DEALERS

THANK YOU!

Meyer sincerely appreciates both our Dealer and Vendor support. We had a record breaking show and are looking forward to seeing more of you in 2024. Meyer continues our open invite for any dealer to visit our headquarters. Connect with your Account Manager if you would like to visit or join us next year for RV Meyer Mega Show 2024!



meyer DISTRIBUTING

Arrow Distributing **Pointing Up**

A well-attended Arrow Distributing showcase spotlights new suppliers, tools to succeed in 2023 and valuable relationships with dealers and their customers.

BY RV PRO STAFF



There was a lot of speculation heading into distributor show season. With industry experts talking of a slowdown, no one knew what to expect when it came to the aftermarket.

If Arrow's Exhibitor Showcase is any indicator, the RV aftermarket will be solid in 2023. Many suppliers brought new products for dealers to consider stocking on their retail shelves.

"We had several new vendors at this year's show. Lots of new products overall, and suppliers like Curt, Blue Ox and PullRite all had new hitches," says Vice President Andy Mullin. "Dealers want to see the latest and greatest to bring in consumers to their shops. A lot of the hitch companies are innovating and it's a core product in our industry."

Supplier PowerMax also spotlighted new products for 2023.

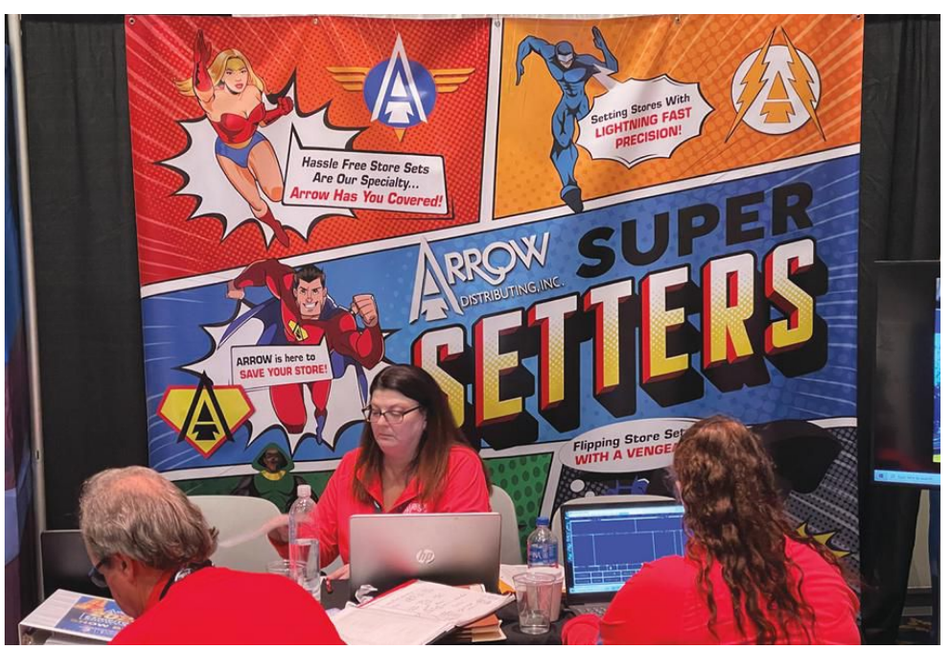
"The show was a great success for PowerMax, with an increase in sales of nearly 300% compared to last year's show. This was in part due to dealers reordering, many new customers and the addition of several new product lines gear towards the RV market, with our Jump Starter and Trickle Chargers. We're looking forward to substantial growth in 2023 with Arrow, along with our dedicated rep team at Derema," says PowerMax National Sales Manager Graham McWilliam.

Attendance for the show was slightly up over last year and many suppliers had numerous quality conversations with dealer personnel. New suppliers to the show included Wacko Products, Century Chemical, Omnia Sweden and Icon Technologies.

"The Arrow Show was a great experience for us as first-time exhibitors," says Denyse Pontius, co-owner of Century Chemical. "Century's newer products to the show, Travel Jon's Blue Max – Glitter Edition and our Supreme Green line received a warm welcome and we had a lot of genuine feedback and conversations with attendees and other exhibitors."

Another first-time attendee, Omnia Sweden, came all the way from Europe to show customers their brand of cooking gear.

"We had our first distributor show experience. We got a lot of help from our rep agency RVLI and a great welcome from the team at Arrow Distributing. The dealers showed great interest and we feel confident on our continued journey in the U.S.



Arrow's Super Setters store sets are for dealers looking to spruce up their retail space.





(far left) Graham McWilliam National Sales Manager Powermax; (left) Omnia Sweden CEO Gustaf Lunden and (right) Reese Bischoff RV Lifestyle

aftermarket," says Omnia Sweden CEO Gustaf Lunden.

"As a Swedish company, coming from much smaller markets, these shows give us a great opportunity to understand the market and learn about the processes, demand and general culture. We are looking forward to next time and everything that will happen as we bring Omnia Stovetop Oven into the U.S. market," Lunden says.

"We are offering the lowest prices we can so dealers can benefit from the margins; better price breaks to encourage buying. And that makes people happy," Mullin says.

Arrow is also offering marketing tools that can help dealers in 2023. Through their superhero-themed "Super Setters" store sets, Arrow is helping dealers freshen up their retail space by redesigning or reorganizing the look of their parts and accessories space.

Arrow also brought in keynote speaker Ron Wheeler, owner of Wheeler Advertising, to address dealers about the competitive landscape they will face in 2023. Wheeler spoke about how different the market will be in 2023 when it comes to sellers. Dealers will need to find a way to differentiate themselves from their competition.

"I met Ron at an industry event. With his experience, we thought it would be good to have him as our keynote speaker, so dealers could learn about how they can gain a competitive edge," Mullin says.



Arrow Distributing show team



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More than 70 vendors participated in this year's Arrow show, held at the Paris Las Vegas Hotel & Casino Jan. 9-10. Eighteen of those vendors led seminars to educate dealers on new products and special show pricing. Lippert's seminar was particularly well attended, with more than 100 participants.

At the heart of Arrow's show has always been the relationships the distributor has with not only vendors, but also their dealer customers – many of whom have loyally attended for years.

When asked about Arrow's relationship with its customers, Vice President Andrea Mullin says, "It's about the relationship you have. We don't want customers to over-buy. It's more about appreciation of the relationship you have and how you treat your customers." RVP



B&W's new weight distribution hitch: Continuum



(left to right) Ty Blisset, national sales manager for Arrow, with Jim and Sharon Walter of Countryside Campers

A Strong Show *at* Northern Wholesale



BY RV PRO STAFF

If there's one takeaway that exemplifies the tone and vibe of the RV industry that came out of the Northern Wholesale Show in December, it would be: "The RV industry remains strong and we are looking forward to a resilient 2023," said Chad Smith, CEO of Northern Wholesale Supply.

The attendees came in strong, too, Smith said, with 300 dealers attending from 119 dealerships, including new dealers signed up from Iowa, the Dakotas, Wisconsin and more.

"We were really pleased with the overall results," Smith said.

The 36th annual RV Supershow took place at the Treasure Island Resort & Casino in Welch, Minnesota, with 29 educational seminars on new power options, towing products, sanitation and satellite technology and more. The reported 225 dealers signed up for educational seminars was the largest total ever and more than a 20% increase over last year.

Northern Wholesale increased the number of seminars to meet supplier demand and all sessions were well attended.

"We did 30 supplier-led product trainings and had the largest participation in trainings that we've ever had," Smith said.

"The vibe was really positive; dealers came to buy, and suppliers came to show off a ton of new products."

New Product Awards

Speaking of new products, 17 products were up for product of the year, which covered categories ranging from hitches and camping to technology and sanitation categories. More than 90 votes were cast in this year's voting by dealers and Dean Kruchten, director of marketing, announced the winners of this year's awards.

In an interview following the show, Smith commented that suppliers were focused on delivering on record demand and battling supply chain headwinds the past couple of years, so the pace of product development slowed. Now, there's a lot more new products and technologies to show off.

"I think there's just genuine interest in a lot of the new technologies that are coming through," Smith said.

The runner-up for product of the year was Blue Ox's new fifth wheel hitch. The Blue Ox BXR2100 with 21,000-pound towing capacity has a clean and simple design. Cameron Jacobs accepted the award on behalf of Blue Ox.

The winner of this year's product of the year went to Kuma's Kozy Bear Chair, which has a cooler in the middle in between the two seats. An elated Harry Allen of Allen & Associates jumped out of his chair at the news and many industry friends stood by to shake his hand. Allen and his son, Jared, accepted the award on behalf of Kuma.



(top) Harry Allen and Dean Kruchten; (bottom) T. Chad Johnson and Scott Sharpley of Tom Manning & Associates;

The supplier of the year award went to AP Products out of Coldwater, Michigan. Scott Sharpley and T. Chad Johnson accepted the award for AP Products.

"The Northern Wholesale Show is a time-honored event that we feel plays a major role in bringing education on new products and market trends to dealers in the upper Midwest part of the country," said Tom Manning, owner of AP Products and Manning & Associates. "From the early days of individual meetings in hotel rooms, to its current format today, the event offers suppliers unique access to dealers in that marketplace. They provide the right balance of education, sales and networking that have not only enabled our company to succeed,but also to build personal relationships that have endured a lifetime."

The best field support award went to the person who successfully supported dealers in the field with their knowledge of the product. Jim Woodruff presented Brad Vander Pol, who is the sales territory manager at Demco products in Boyden, Iowa, with the 2023 award.

Looking Ahead This Year

Normalizing demand and supply chain improvements are encouraging, but Smith says we're not "entirely out of the woods."

He said that dealers are right-sizing their orders, which means suppliers are catching up and getting their customers what they need, when they need it. However, there are still some issues with microchips and raw materials used in some components.

Northern Wholesale is continuing to work on these challenges with its suppliers and dealers, and Smith said they are "worlds better than we were last year."

The show's portal has made the process easier for dealers in that it allows dealers to order the bulk of what they need ahead of time, Smith said. Then dealers can attend the show and focus on learning about new products, as well as having some fun and networking.





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Northern Wholesale Show team

He said their investment in training is really paying off, too – for the suppliers and the dealers.

"They come away getting orders, but also learning something," he said. "Then they can bring that back to their dealerships."

Smith said his takeaway from the show was that the industry is engaged and excited for the future.

"They are ready to go and service the market, now that things are normalizing, and get back to servicing customers better and just keep RVing." RVP



Jordan Martindale and Abbas Fathepurwala of Icon Technologies

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Icon Technologies Ltd., Winkler, Manitoba, Canada, offers its Fresh Water Tank WT3796 – 118 gallons, a large capacity freshwater tank for applications that require high demand such as permanent or long-term boondocking and food trucks. This cylindrical tank can meet high capacity demands while keeping structurally sound with minimal expansion.

icondirect.com



RV WATER SERVICE PANEL

Anderson Brass, Hartsville, South Carolina, presents its MANRV102 RV Water Service Panel, featuring an inlet four-function (four position) low lead brass valve that is used for filling the holding tank, pressurizing fixtures when you have a water supply, pumping from the tank during dry camping and helping with winterizing and sanitizing your unit. The MANRV102 also includes a three-function (three position) low lead brass water heater bypass valve. Normal position when the unit needs hot water to fixtures. Bypass position for maintenance on hot water heater and third position for sanitizing your freshwater tank.

abcorv.com



TRIPLE STAGE RV WATER FILTER

Camco Mfg., Greensboro, North Carolina, presents its Evo X3 Triple Stage RV Water Filter. Experience superior three-stage RV water filtration with Camco's Evo X3. This triple-stage premium RV water filter kit is rated at 0.2 microns to filter and minimize even more contaminates from your fresh water supply, including viruses, bacteria, chlorine, bad taste, odors, sediment and more. The result is fresh, clean, great-tasting water straight from the tap. In addition, it can provide high flow throughout an RV – even allowing uncompromised water flow in the shower.

camco.net



WATER SYSTEM ANTIFREEZE

Century Chemical Corp., Elkhart, Indiana, offers its Winter Pruf. It's time to flush your systems and get back out there for spring. Winter-Pruf is the perfect solution to winterize any potable water system. Provides burst protection up to -50 F when label directions are followed and is made of materials generally recognized as safe (GRAS). It has a wide range of applications, including preventing frozen lines in drinking water systems during winter storage. A ready-to-use -100 F formula and a -50 F concentrate are also available.

centurychemical.com

MULTI-USE SANITIZER

PURE DEFENSE, Camarillo, California, presents its Multi-Use Sanitizer. PURE DEFENSE Multi-Use Sanitizer utilizes pure, high-grade isopropyl alcohol along with moisturizing aloe vera. The fast-drying, nonsticky formula cleans and conditions, removes dirt and grime and helps avoid the spread of germs. Works on multiple surfaces such as plastic, vinyl, leather and metal. Safe to use on car, RV and marine interiors. PURE DEFENSE Multi-Use Sanitizer is not only for many surfaces but is also an effective hand sanitizer, too.

puredefenseproducts.com





RV WATER FILTER SYSTEM

Clearsource RV Water Filters, Rancho Santa Margarita, California, presents its Clearsource Ultra RV Water Filter System. The system uses NASA-developed technology to filter bacteria, cysts and viruses. The five-micron, first-stage filters rust and sediment. Clearsource's 0.5-micron, second-stage coconut shell carbon block filter improves taste and smell and filters chlorine and other contaminants. The company's third-stage VirusGuard filters bacteria and viruses.

clearsourcerv.com

FORCED AIR HEATING SYSTEM

Aqua-Hot, an Airxcel brand, Frederick, Colorado, offers its Gen 1 – a compact, forced air heating and water heater system specifically designed for RVs with an all-in-one unit fueled by diesel, gasoline or propane. The Gen 1 can heat water independently of the furnace for comfortable year-round use and features four heating fan speeds, 10 air circulation fan speeds and an automated timer. Utilizing RV-C Open-Source Intelligence, control of the Gen 1 can be easily integrated into the RV's general control panel.

aquahot.com



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SPRING COIL KITCHEN FAUCET

Dura Faucet, Camas, Washington, presents its DF-NMK504-MBRG spring coil kitchen faucet, now available in matte black/rose gold two-tone finish. This kitchen faucet has a modern industrial design and comes with a detachable pull-down sprayer for total sink access. You can easily toggle between aerated and full spray stream functions with the easy touch button.

durafaucet.com



WATER HOSE

Teknor Apex, Pawtucket, Rhode Island, offers its zero-G PRO Waterhose. The Teknor Apex zero-G PRO hose is 55% lighter in weight compared to commercial vinyl hoses. It is equipped with an abrasion and puncture resistant outer cover for long-lasting performance. The zero-G PRO is compact for easy storage and transportation. The 3/4-inch diameter allows for high water flow and the neon green color provides high visibility for jobsite safety. Commercial-grade crush-resistant couplings meets the demands of all worksite conditions. Available in 50 feet, 70 feet and 100 feet.

apexhose.com

TANKLESS GAS WATER HEATER



Furrion, Elkhart, Indiana, presents the Furrion RV Tankless Gas Water Heater with Antifreeze. Stay comfortable with consistent hot water straight from your RV shower and faucets with the Furrion tankless water heater. The output capacity of 2.4 gallons per minute (gpm) and heating capacity of 60,000 BTUs translates to an RV water heater that is made to keep up with the hot water demands of a busy family on the road. Water temperatures remain consistent thanks to Furrion's Vortex technology, which prevents cold spots and avoids scalding by constantly mixing water before it comes out of the tap.

furrion.com



HOSE/CORD CADDY

Stromberg Carlson, Traverse City, Michigan, offers its Hose/Cord Caddy. The Stromberg HC-75 Hose/Cord Caddy solves the twisted and tangled hose storage problem. Each hose end unwinds while the bulk of the hose remains neat and tidy in the caddy. It holds up to 75 feet of water hose or 50 feet of 30-amp cord. The stackable Hose/Cord Caddy measures 17 inches wide and 6.5 inches tall. Hose accessories can be conveniently stored in the center well. Made in the USA.

strombergcarlson.com

PORTABLE FAUCET

Dometic, Elkhart, Indiana, offers its Dometic GO Hydration Water Faucet. Whether you need enough water to wet your toothbrush or to fill a cooking pot, Dometic's portable Hydration Water Faucet lets you dispense what you need transforming any water container into a running water system with no external power source required.

dometic.com





RV WATER PURIFIER

Lippert, Elkhart, Indiana, offers the Acuva Wanderer 2.0 RV Water Purifier. Most systems available for off-grid living are simply RV water filters, not water purification systems. Average filters don't prevent most bacteria or viruses from flowing through the water lines. The Acuva Wanderer 2.0 water purification system is the most powerful, low-maintenance water purifier specifically designed for RVs and boats. It employs powerful UV-LED technology to eradicate waterborne illnesses. It's also easy to install under the sink of your unit and comes with a smart faucet, advanced pre-filter and all the necessary installation components.

lippert.com

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Noble Pine Products, Yonkers, New York, presents its Sterifab, a disinfectant/insecticide that not only kills viruses (including COVID-19), bacteria, mold, mildew and fungus, but also kills bedbugs (including their eggs), fleas, ticks, mites, flies, mosquitoes and a host of other insects. Sterifab is a ready-to-use, nonresidual product that dries very quickly, deodorizes and can be applied to most surfaces, including mattresses. It is registered with the U.S. EPA.

sterifab.com









DOMETIC TOILET SEAL CAP CONDITIONER

Pure Essence, Boerne, Texas, offers its newly patented OUTHOUSE Toilet Seal Cap with Conditioner, for use with Dometic 300, 310 and 320 toilets. This product lubricates and conditions the seals for the Dometic toilet models helping to prevent the seal from drying up during RV storing. It prolongs the life of the toilet seal and will keep the valve lubricated for a smooth opening and closing preventing any sticking issues. This conditioner is a proprietary silicone formula that is freeze resistant down to -55 F.

pureessence.life

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WATER DEIONIZER

On the Go Portable, Bloomington, Indiana, offers its MB Dbl Std Deionizer with Bypass. This Mixed Bed Double Standard Deionizer works great in a garage, laboratory, on the road or anywhere you need deionized (DI) or spot-free water. While still being compact like the Mixed Bed Standard model, this unit is the same height (22-inch) with twice the capacity. The bypass makes it so you can easily go between deionized and nondeionized water with the switch of two knobs, extending the life of the resin.

portablewaterdi.com

TANK STABILIZER



Star brite, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, presents its Star Tron Stabilizer+. Star Tron Stabilizer+ combines cutting-edge enzyme technology with corrosion inhibitors to make the best option for storing your vehicles and equipment at home while enjoying life on the road. Corrosion inhibitors fortify the Star Tron formula with an added layer of protection for engines prone to rust. Use in RVs, towables, generators and any other tank – especially steel tanks – that needs an added layer of protection during long-term storage. Look for Star Tron Stabilizer+ in the orange bottle.

starbrite.net

BLOCKAGE CLEARER



Valterra Products, Mission Hills, California, offers its Clog Killer. The 60-inch, firm, flexible tubing offers a powerful single downward jet at high pressure to break up the worst toilet and holding tank clogs. Pushing through the blockage, breaking it up and blasting it away. Easy-to-use connection threads onto your hose. Includes quick shut off on the wand for easy setup once the water line is on. Works for all motorhomes and travel trailers, including fifth wheels. Comes with a one-year warranty.

valterra.com



SEWER KIT

Prest-O-Fit Mfg., Chandler, Arizona, presents its Blueline Ultimate Sewer Kit. Contains everything you need for the most simple, secure hookup up to 20 feet. Kit contains the Universal Elbow – securely fits most sewer openings; Hose Adapter – leak-free connection to most waste-valve outlets; two Ultimate Sewer Hoses – have Pushover Quick Connectors installed for simple push-on connections without the need for clamps; Hose Coupler – easily extends hoses up to 20 feet; and four Sewer Seals to create a secure, air-tight seal with hoses and fittings, eliminating unwanted odor and drainage.

prestofit.com





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TANKLESS WATER HEATERS



Suburban, an Airxcel brand, Dayton, Tennessee, presents its Tankless Water Heaters – ST Series. The ST Series of tankless water heaters by Suburban provide an endless supply of hot water at a controlled temperature. Sized to fit standard 6-gallon water heater side-wall cutouts. ST Series features two models (ST42 and ST60) with flame out protection, scald protection, automatic fan monitoring, active freeze protection, pressure release safety valves, voltage protection and a two-year limited warranty built in.

suburbanrv.com

HOLDING TANK TREATMENT



Walex Products Co., Leland, North Carolina, offers its Porta-Pak Premium Holding Tank Treatment in Clean Linen. Walex is the odor control specialist, and Porta-Pak Premium Holding Tank Treatment is the company's flagship product. It is a pre-packaged water-soluble packet that controls odors, breaks down waste and paper, and lubricates valves and seals. Walex created Porta-Pak for the portable sanitation industry before bringing it to the RV/marine market, where it became popular. Despite the many similar products now available, Porta-Pak remains the best-selling drop-in deodorizer worldwide.

walex.com

TOUCHLESS KITCHEN FAUCET

Empire Faucets, Cleveland, Ohio, offers its Touchless Sensor RV Kitchen Faucet. When your hands are full and you need some help turning on the water, rely on Empire Faucets Hands Free Kitchen Faucet motion sensor spout to turn on the sink with just a wave of your hand. Activated spout turns on sink water when you wave your hand in front of the sensor. Use a USB charger (not included) to charge the motion sensor faucet. A single charge can last up to six months.

empfaucets.com





HOLDING TANK TREATMENT DROP-INS

ProPack Packaging, High Ridge, Montana, offers its Kronen Premium Holding Tank Treatment – Drop Ins (10 pack). Kronen Premium Holding Tank Treatments use a potent combination of naturally occurring microorganisms that are specifically engineered to break down and liquefy organic materials. Except for a subtle herbal fragrance, all users are left with is an odorless liquid. As the name suggests, Kronen's Nature Safe products are earth friendly. They are perfect for both gray and black tanks.

rvsbestcleaners.com

RV KITCHEN SINK



Specialty Recreation, El Cajon, California, presents its RV Kitchen Sink. The kitchen sink features a double bowl design with a low-rise center, making it easy to wash and rinse large dishes, all while keeping the two basins separate. Crafted of hand-laid fiberglass for extreme durability and strength. The high-gloss finish is stain-resistant and easy to clean, a combination of beauty and reliable performance. The sink is made to replace many original sinks, comes pre-drilled and includes mounting studs. Part number KS1924W.

specrec.com



LIGHTWEIGHT TOILET

Thetford, Ann Arbor, Michigan, offers its Aqua-Magic VI(R), a space-saving, lightweight toilet. The space-saving design allows for the closest possible mounting to the wall and the foot flush is positioned for minimal floor space interference. It offers a residential-sized SloClose seat and cover and the deepest bowl in the industry. Choose from high or low profile, white or parchment color and optional hand sprayer models. All high-profile models are ADA compliant.

thetford.com







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Pit Stop





A report by RMS North America revealed insight on **millennial and Gen Z camping and RVing behavior.** Survey results include:

- 85% of respondents want more technology at campgrounds
- Only 16% identified as first-time campers within the past three years (majority had camped previously and plan to continue)
- 63% of both generations opt for direct campsite booking via website and a tech-centered approach for communicating with staff

FUNDING THE FUTURE

Millions of dollars were recently approved for projects within the Great American Outdoors Act + Land and Water Conservation Fund. Initiatives include:

- **Deferred maintenance issues** for U.S. Forest campgrounds in CA, OR, UT, MO and ND
- Support for **national park/forest roads and bridges** that RVers rely on for outdoor access
- **Rehabilitation of Mt. Rainer National Park** (Washington)'s Ohanapecosh campground
- **Extending the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act** – authorizes public lands to retain fees for maintaining recreational assets
- Investing in **500 new industry staff** – the largest operations increase in a decade
- $1.5 billion in **disaster relief for parks**



SOURCE: RVIA

Global RV rental market size is expected to reach nearly **$20 billion** by 2027 – an expanded CAGR of 30.14%. The market was valued at nearly $4.1 billion in 2021.

SOURCE: DIGITALJOURNAL.COM

2022 SHIPMENTS

493,268 TOTAL SHIPMENTS FOR 2022

17.8% DECREASE from highest record of 600,240 set in 2021

2022 IS THIRD BEST YEAR ON RECORD

DECEMBER shipments ended month with 19,907 units – a 50.7% decrease compared to December 2021

"Coming off of the all-time high in 2021, the RV industry continued to post strong shipments through the first half of 2022," said Craig Kirby, RV Industry Association president and CEO. "As expected, we saw shipment numbers normalize off of those record highs in the second half of the year as the industry returned to production numbers seen pre-COVID."



THOR Industries is among the first OEMs to offer Elon Musk-owned **SpaceX's Starlink** – fast Wi-Fi for travelers on the move – as an add-on for 2023 models in Airstream, Entegra Coach, Jayco and Tiffin brands.

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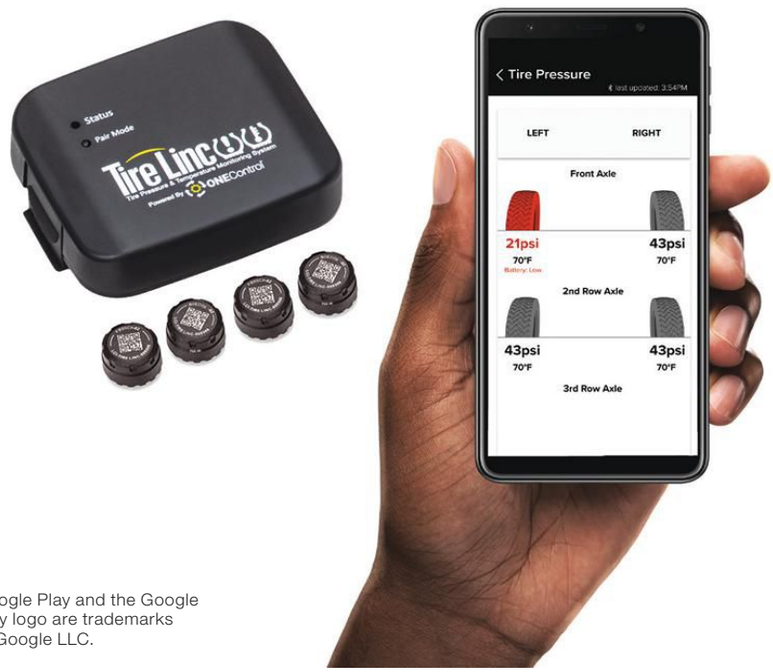


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