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JUNE 2025

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ON THE COVER
One of Great Outdoor Cottages' coastal-style park models. *Photo courtesy of Great Outdoor Cottages and edited with AI.*

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Jennifer King

When our Leadership & Culture special section rolls around each year, I stop to think about the type of leader I am and want to be. As executive editor of this magazine, a mother and a member of my community, I am a leader who wears many different hats, as most of us do. At times I need to be straight forward, decisive and unwavering in my standards. I also need to be a good listener who's willing to hear feedback and course-correct if need be. I work on being self-aware and keeping my eyes open to others' perspectives.

There are so many things a good leader must be and do to inspire others. Thankfully, people much smarter than I have studied what makes an effective leader today. I found these tips from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Sloan Management Review especially helpful:

1. Articulate leadership values and hold yourself accountable. What principles and metrics guide your team's decisions and actions? What values do you prioritize?
2. Delegate and consider the level of trust you have in your team. Trust in the organizational process is important to be able to delegate, but do you also trust the people?
3. Get honest input — be willing to ask people to say what seems unsayable.
4. Adopt big C and small C cultures — the big Cs are the company's values, while the small Cs are the exchanges that show how to effectively accomplish work tasks.

You can find more helpful tips from the leaders we feature on pages 36-48. Coley Brady of Alliance RV shares how a culture that recognizes its employees has made his company a sought-after place to work (page 37). Amber Selking explains how Lippert puts its mission of "business as a force for good" into action (page 40). Susan Carpenter and Tracy Anglemeyer of the RV Women's Alliance speak on breaking the glass ceiling with integrity, with input from Little Dealer Little Prices Vice President Debbie Brunoforte and Forest River CEO Doug Gaeddert (page 44).

Don't miss the dealer profile on page 22 — Jeff and Bob Pastore of Hartville RV Center in Ohio have shown that treating others as you want to be treated is a surefire way to build success. Also, get an inside look at the park model segment from two pioneering companies (pages 15-21).

I hope you embrace being a leader in the RV industry — we need people like you to show us the way!

As always, thanks for reading!

Jennifer King

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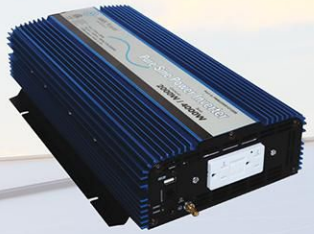
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Building on a Legacy



RV PRO spoke with Newmar's **Matt Ellinger,** vice president of sales, on the company's 2025 Dealer Meeting and how it continues to carry forth a legacy with "jaw-dropping" updates.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NEWMAR CORP.

RV PRO: How was the turnout for this year's Dealer Meeting?

Ellinger: We probably found that we had 95% attendance from dealers who were invited, which is usually what we average. With the exception of some Canadian dealers who couldn't make it, and we do have some here. Most if not all our dealers came, which is a testament to the brand — what Newmar means to them. It's a family event that that feels more like a reunion than it does a dealer meeting.

For [dealers], it's like, 'We're going to strategically plan out our year, but we need to see the interior of a King Aire because we may want to use that floor on a Dutch Star.' It's for them to have at their fingertips, right? You can go from a King Aire to the Essex to the new Summit Aire, and kind of mix and match and build what they think will be one-of-one on their lot. They need this event to do that. It's great for us, too, because we get feedback from them. And so far, the feedback's been really good on our 26th model year.

RV PRO: What's new that Newmar is most excited to spotlight?

Ellinger: [President] Casey Tubman highlighted 16 things that 'we're going to hang our hat on.' That includes developing and offering a new wood color, which separates the two model years from each other. It could be as small as we added a patio on the back of our Canyon Star — so it's not a new Canyon Star, but the new feature is something we never used to be able to position right. It was always just a ramp. So, to be a ramp and an active place where you can hang out and enjoy the outdoors, that was a big deal for us.

The revamped Super C line is something we are conveying to not only our dealers, but also to the public. We see a very long runway in the segment. We have a price point, a horsepower, a chassis and an interior for every person who wants to buy a Super C, from the smallest one at 34 feet to the biggest one, our Summit Aire, at 45 feet. That for us is really exciting. We want to capture that market.

The big one is unveiling a compact Class C that's never been done at Newmar before — we've never built on this chassis. That's a lot of hard work that a lot of people at Newmar have put in the last two years. We had it culminate to showing it off to dealers, and had those dealers share positive words of affirmation with us after they saw it.

Another of the unique things we instituted this year was an Artisan series, where a dealer or customer can sit down with their consultant to create and look through a catalog of different graphics, and they're beautiful. These artisan graphics aren't offered in our standard paints. The unique thing about that is, once you've picked one of those graphics, it comes out of the catalog never to be put back again. So, it is truly a special paint that only that customer will have. Our customers in that stratosphere — on London Aire, King Aire and Essex — really do feel like they want to be one-of-one, and now they can help create a masterpiece on the exterior of their coach. So, a dealer could bring it in as a stock and sell it that way — 'Hey, we customized this paint and you're going to get something that no one else will have.' Or if someone's putting in a retail order and they designed the interior, they can now design the exterior.

RV PRO: Tubman touched on tariffs and legislative changes. What other hurdles is Newmar facing moving forward?

Ellinger: What I've heard from dealers and the overarching message is, 'We've worked through a lot of the [models] that were aging. We're ready to get some new models on the lot.' The problem we're facing now is just a lot of uncertainty, and uncertainty isn't the greatest for us in the RV industry. That's what I'm hearing from the dealer network — 'When this calms down, we kind of expect a pretty good summer. Or maybe it's fall.' So, we've had good retail — not great, but good, and we certainly haven't lost market share. Matter of fact, even as [one] brand kind of stayed flat, we've gained market share. That's a testament to Newmar and what we offer, the coaches we build and how we service those coaches. It's consistency. From a dealership level, I think all they want to know when will the price go up, and how much? The problem is when you don't have those answers, it's kind of uncertain for everybody.

RV PRO: What has Newmar heard from dealers regarding what they're looking for, or feedback on new products?

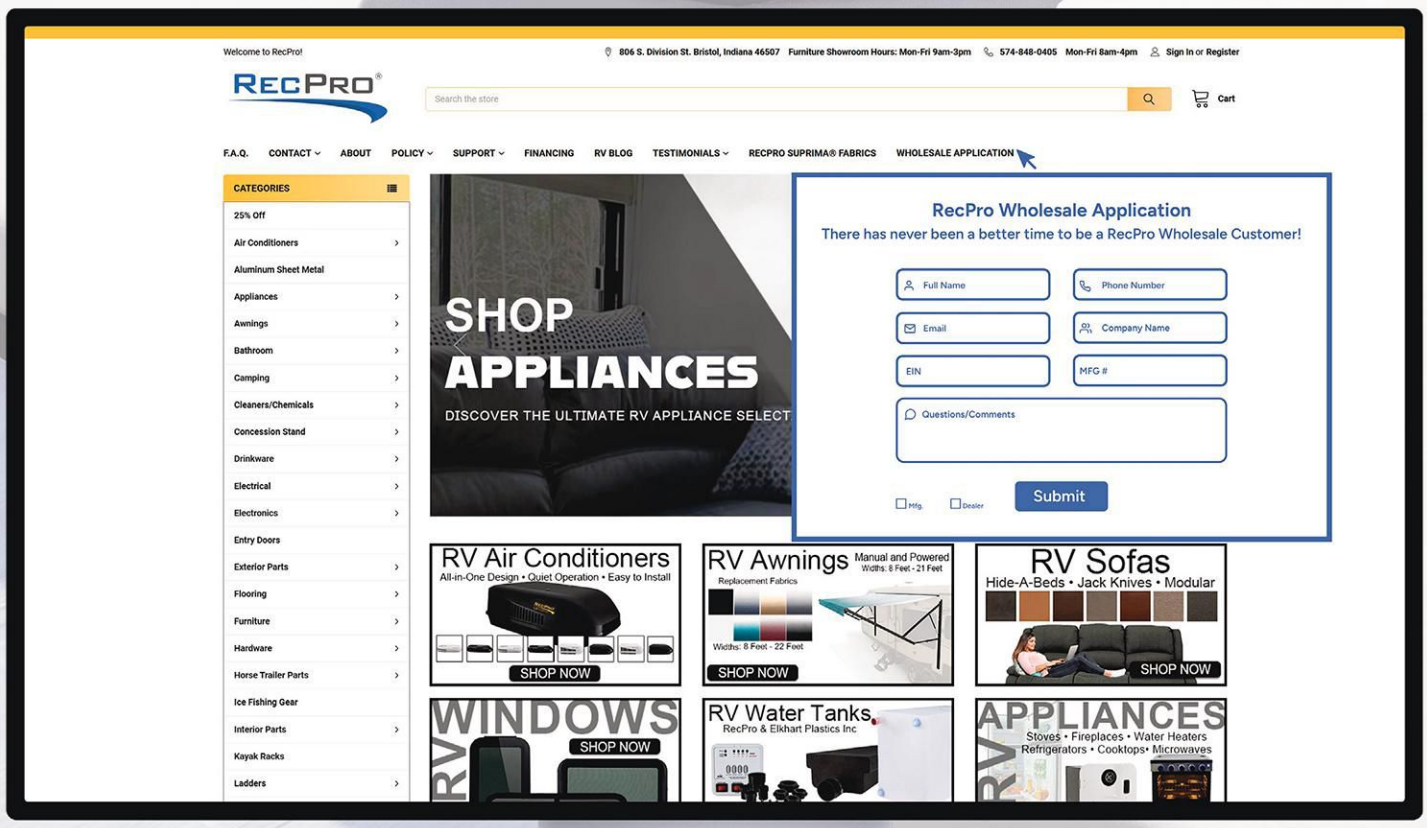
Ellinger: A good example is, we had some dealers stay on the sideline and not be 100% sure on the Super Cs. But once they came out and saw exactly what we offer and what they can offer from a lineup standpoint, they got on board. They were like, 'We're finally going to get in on this because you don't have just two models, you have five models where we can have a customer walk up and even down the ladder.' I think that was cool to see in the first two days of this show. We've had some people sign on for new products that they've never sold before, and specifically the Super Cs.

RV PRO: Are dealers hesitant to try new products if there's

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not a lot of variety within that category?

Ellinger: There's not a lot of data. I mean, they get used to selling this floorplan at this time, and it looks like this. It's like clockwork. They know when it's going to sell. So, when there's not a lot of data behind a new floorplan or a new model, that's something new to them in their geography and their market, and they tend to be a little hesitant. But with the excitement we've created and the interiors and the price points that we're going to offer these at, I think that's really pushed them over the edge, so they're going to dive in with both feet.

That's why it's key for 95% of our dealers to be here, because it's hard to sell that over a phone, on a brochure or in a video online. When they can get in that coach and sit in the Italian leather in the Freedom Aire or the Summit Aire, that's a feel. And this is still a feel business. There's a relationship in a feel, where they're going to go, 'OK, we can convey this to the customer.'

RV PRO: What does Newmar foresee for the marketplace this year and beyond?

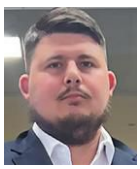
Ellinger: The overall tone for us and a good goal for us as a company is for our dealers to continue making the margins that they should on Newmars. I think that's where we're going to be probably throughout the end of the year. I'm hoping I'm wrong and we see something that really spikes the interest of our consumer. Our consumer is probably a little more insulated than some other OEMs out there. We saw the luxury market grow last year. We saw the Essex have a really good year, London Aire had a great year, and for us, those are coaches that MSRP cresting a little over a million dollars. Those [lineups] having a good year is a testament again to the people who design them, people who build them and people who service our Newmars. I think that affluent customer said, 'We're going to vote with our pocketbook, and it's going to be a Newmar.'

RV PRO: What other changes, opportunities or news should our readers know about?

Ellinger: Our executive team has had a lot of changes. We had a few people retire. Simone Silva [vice president of customer experience] joined us. JP LaPorte [vice president of engineering] joined us after Paul White's passing. Bruce Alexander [manufacturing strategy and excellence] joined us to shore up production after Kevin Bogan retired. So really, it's that change in management in our executive team that is different than what we saw last year. The way [LaPorte] said it was excellent — we had to be where we were to get where we are today. RVP

NEWS

RV/MH Hall of Fame Names New President


Milnikel

The RV/MH Hall of Fame and Museum announced the appointment of Daryll A. Milnikel as its president.

Milnikel served with distinction in the United States Marine Corps in a range of roles, including recruitment, human resources, transportation and security operations. His military service includes multiple combat deployments in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Following his military career, Milnikel transitioned to the private sector where he led product design and portfolio management initiatives for commercial and group insurance carriers, including G.E.H.A. and Humana. He also held business management roles supporting government insurance programs with WPS.

Joe Stegmayer, chairman of the board, said, "The RV/MH Hall of Fame and Museum is in the strongest position in its 53-year history. As we enter the next era of growth, Darryl brings the skills and experience that will assure sound guidance for continued mission progress and development."

Ryan Szklarek, executive vice president, added, "Our objectives are to preserve the histories of two industries that have had meaningful impacts on the lives of families throughout North America, recognize its leaders and innovators, and educate and entertain the public. Our team looks forward to working with Darryl on the continuous improvement of all phases of our operations."

Winnebago, Leave No Trace Promote Environmental Stewardship

In celebration of Earth Month, Winnebago Industries announced a partnership with the nonprofit Leave No Trace to promote environmental stewardship in boating and RV activities. At the heart of the partnership, the 7 Principles of Leave No Trace have been adapted into guidelines to help RVers and boaters protect the outdoors while enjoying all the benefits of our country's parks, campgrounds, roads and waterways.

"At Winnebago Industries, we want to ensure the outdoors remains a place to find health, happiness and connection, and we want to empower our customers to do the same," said Stacy Bogart, chief legal officer and corporate responsibility lead at Winnebago Industries. "Our partnership with Leave No Trace supports our efforts to protect people and planet by promoting education on how to be good stewards of the outdoors while using our products."

Leave No Trace provides education, skills, research and science to help people care for the outdoors. Its 7 Principles give outdoor enthusiasts practical, easy-to-use guidelines to enjoy the outdoors with minimal impact to the environment.

Winnebago Industries and Leave No Trace adapted the 7 Principles into guidelines tailored specifically for RVers and boaters. The RV guidelines offer best practices to protect campgrounds, parks and other outdoor areas, including parking only in designated RV locations or on durable surfaces, keeping pets leashed or inside the RV to protect them and surrounding wildlife, and driving slowly and cautiously in campgrounds and shared spaces.

"Responsible recreation is key to preserving the outdoor spaces we all enjoy," said Leave No Trace Executive Director Dana Watts. "These new guidelines equip RVers and boaters with simple, effective ways to minimize their impact while still embracing adventure. We're proud to

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partner with Winnebago Industries to bring these best practices to the community."

Bogart added, "We know our customers and communities share our passion for the environment. Our partnership with Leave No Trace is another way we are elevating every moment outdoors and helping RV and boat owners make the most of their time outside."

Harbinger Launches Serial Production of American-Made Electric Vehicle

Harbinger, a California-based electric vehicle (EV) truck manufacturer, announced it has achieved the official start of production for its American-made electric vehicles, and has manufactured more than 100 units for customers. First in line customers and dealers for these vehicles include THOR Industries, ETHERO Truck + Energy, Bruckner's Truck and more. The company has reached this production milestone just four years after it was founded in February 2021.

"Our ability to design and move our vehicle into production this quickly is a testament to the creativity and diligence of our world-class team," said John Harris, co-founder and CEO, Harbinger. "Completing production of 100 chassis is an important achievement for Harbinger. We chose to announce the start of production only after reaching this milestone to highlight that we are producing vehicles at a volume and scale that is truly impactful for our customers and the industry."

Harbinger manufactures its electric vehicle platform, also known as a stripped chassis, in Garden Grove, California. The chassis is designed specifically for medium-duty vehicles, such as walk-in vans, box trucks, RVs, delivery vans, emergency and disaster response vehicles and more. The chassis includes all major vehicle systems, including the electric drivetrain, high voltage (HV) battery system, steering, brakes and more. Notably, Harbinger is one of the only truck manufacturers building electric drivetrain systems in-house.

"From the moment Harbinger was founded, we took a deliberate approach to building a scalable production foundation," said Gilbert Passin, chief production officer at Harbinger. "A lot of the experience that helped shape Harbinger's manufacturing processes came from the experience our team brought from other EV manufacturers and automotive brands. We learned what didn't work elsewhere, and we adopted what worked best."

Vixen Composites Promotes Ty Miller to National Sales Manager



Miller

Vixen Composites, an Airxcel brand, announced the promotion of Ty Miller to OEM national sales manager. Miller began his tenure with Airxcel in 2023 as the outside sales representative for Dicor Products and Vixen Composites.

Marc Brunner, president of Vixen Composites, said, "Ty has demonstrated exceptional sales acumen, contributing significantly to Vixen's market share growth over the past year. His disciplined approach, strong customer focus, advanced organizational skills and keen market awareness have been instrumental in driving success, and I am confident he will continue to lead Vixen's growth in this new role."

Commenting on his new position, Miller stated, "The RV industry offers a wealth of knowledge and opportunities, and I'm enthusiastic about continuing to grow and contribute to such a dynamic and innovative field. I'm excited about my future at Airxcel and within the RV industry as a whole."

Northern Wholesale Supply Appoints New Head of Sales



Augst

Northern Wholesale Supply (NWS) announced the appointment of Adam Augst as the new head of sales. With over a decade of extensive experience in the powersports and marine industries, Augst brings a wealth of expertise and a proven track record of success to NWS.

Augst joins NWS with a robust background in network and dealer development, sales and international business leadership. He previously spearheaded the international business portfolio for a multibillion-dollar global specialty vehicle manufacturer where he successfully commercialized products through dealer and distribution channels. His hands-on approach, working directly with dealers, has equipped him with deep insights into fostering strong partnerships and driving sales and operational excellence.

In his new role, Augst will oversee NWS's wholesale sales and customer service divisions. His leadership is expected to propel NWS and its dealer network to new heights, the company said.

"We are incredibly excited to welcome Adam to the NWS family," said Chad Smith, CEO of Northern Wholesale Supply. "His extensive experience and dynamic leadership style make him the perfect fit to guide our wholesale sales strategy. We look forward to the positive impact he will have on our company and our dealers as we work together to achieve new levels of success."

Cummins Taps New Vice President, Chief Legal Officer



Gaidoo

Cummins Inc. announced that John Gaidoo has been appointed as vice president and chief legal officer. He succeeds Nicole Lamb-Hale following her transition to chief administrative officer and corporate secretary.

"Throughout his 14-year tenure at Cummins, John has significantly impacted our company's success, the teams he leads and the communities he supports," said Jennifer Rumsey, chair and CEO, Cummins Inc. "He has held various legal positions, showcasing his proficiency in both internal and external legal services. His counsel spans numerous specialized areas including intellectual property, labor and employment, litigation, mergers and acquisitions, procurement, regulatory compliance, and administrative legal services."

"A seasoned leader and former United States Marine Corps veteran, John believes that every employee has the power to contribute to a team's success. He is an innovative thought partner and is deeply committed to our values," Rumsey stated. "John's unique skills and extensive experience make him the ideal candidate for the role of chief legal officer, poised to lead our vital legal function through a significant period in Cummins' history. I am excited to welcome him as a member of the Cummins leadership team and look forward to his ongoing influential counsel." RVP

GOT NEWS? Send your company news items to jbenschop@cahabamedia.com or mmoore@cahabamedia.com.



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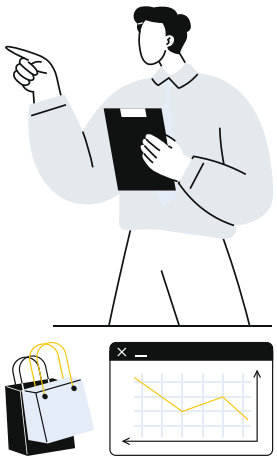
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RV CONSUMER TRENDS: MIDYEAR REVIEW



The first quarter of 2025 brought a dynamic start to the year for the RV marketplace, with consumer activity reflecting cautious optimism and evolving travel trends. As inflation continued to moderate amid the uncertainty of potential tariffs, buyers' interest in used RVs grew across all RV classes, echoing growing shares of used inventory. These first-quarter insights from RV Trader give a glimpse into consumer interest so far this year and how it has aligned with inventory shifts over time.

TOP RV MAKES IN Q1 2025

The following are the top RV manufacturers based on search activity on RV Trader from January-March.

1. Forest River
2. Winnebago
3. Thor Motor Coach
4. Keystone
5. Jayco

During Q1, the ranking of the top five most popular RV makes remained similar to last year's list, led by Forest River and Winnebago. The only change came from Jayco, which overtook Coachmen for the fifth-ranked position.

TOP RV MODELS IN Q1 2025

The following are the top RV models based on search activity on RV Trader from January-March.

1. Forest River Cherokee Grey Wolf
2. Grand Design Reflection
3. Jayco Jay Flight SLX
4. Grand Design Imagine
5. Keystone Hideout

Jayco's Jay Flight SLX has kicked off 2025 with an impressive showing, surging from a ninth-place ranking in 2024. Forest River's Cherokee Grey Wolf is also making a reappearance in the top five, after falling out of the top five in 2024.

RV TRADER INVENTORY INSIGHTS FOR Q1

In the first quarter of 2025, total RV inventory across all classes rose 23% compared to the same period in 2024. Buyer engagement kept pace, with listing interactions up 11% — a trend largely fueled by a 25% surge in activity around used models. Nearly every RV class saw increased interest in used listings, aligning with a broader shift in inventory composition as used units continue to make up a larger share of the market. On the next page are the class-specific insights driving these trends.

INSIGHTS



CLASS A
Although Class A inventory saw a modest year-over-year decline of 4.6% in the first quarter, consumer engagement was on the rise, with listing interactions increasing by more than 18%. A key driver of this surge was a 26.5% jump in clicks for used Class A models, highlighting their growing appeal. This heightened interest aligns with the shift of used units taking up a larger portion of Class A inventory, up from 56.5% in 2023 to 67.6% in 2025.



CLASS B
Similar to their Class A counterparts, Class B inventory saw an 8% year-over-year decline in first-quarter inventory. Despite this, Class B listings saw a 9% increase in online interactions, driven largely by a 25.6% surge in interest for used models. This growing attention toward used units coincides with the broader trend of used Class B models claiming a larger share of overall inventory, rising from 25% in Q1 2023 to 36% in 2025.



CLASS C
Class C inventory has seen consistent year-over-year growth since at least 2023, with Q1 2025 inventory rising 10.5% compared to last year. Listing interactions jumped more than 24%, fueled by a modest 2% increase for new models and a striking 33% surge of clicks for used listings. As with other RV classes, the increasing consumer interest in used Class C models aligns with its growing share of inventory, now making up nearly 46%, rising from 41% in Q1 2023.



FIFTH WHEEL
Fifth wheel inventory has grown nearly 17% year over year, reflecting strong supply-side gains. Consumer engagement for fifth wheels has also ticked up, with listing interactions rising 3.5%, largely driven by a 15% increase in clicks for used models. This growing interest in used units parallels the share of used fifth wheel model inventory climbing from 25.5% in Q1 2023 to 35.6% in 2025.



PARK MODEL
Park model inventory has steadily grown each year since at least 2023, with Q1 2025 showing a 17.3% increase over 2024. Listing interactions have surged 97% year over year, impacted by a whopping 209% jump in clicks for used models and a 64% rise for new. This significant interest in used park models is despite the inventory mix remaining relatively stable; the share of used listings increased by just 0.4 percentage points compared to 2024.



POP-UP CAMPER
First-quarter inventory for pop-up campers held steady year over year, slipping by just 1%. Listing interactions also remained relatively consistent, edging up 2% compared to 2024, supported by a 27% increase in clicks for used models. Since 2023, the share of used inventory has grown steadily, climbing from 31% to 45.6% in 2025.



TOY HAULER
Toy hauler inventory saw a modest 6% increase in the first quarter of 2025 compared to last year. Listing interactions also rose by 6%, driven in part by a notable 37% jump in clicks for used models. Coinciding with this growing consumer interest in used listings, the share of used toy hauler inventory has climbed significantly since 2023, rising from just under 23% to nearly 40%.



TRAVEL TRAILER
Although total travel trailer inventory rose by more than 38% year over year, buyer engagement remained flat, with listing clicks inching up just 0.1%. This minimal growth reflects a decline in interactions with new listings, balanced by a 10.5% increase in clicks for used models. While used travel trailer listings have grown each year since at least 2023 — including a 34.6% jump from 2024 — it was the only RV class where the share of used inventory actually declined, though only slightly, by 0.75 percentage points.



TRUCK CAMPER
Despite a 9% year-over-year decline in total truck camper inventory, listing clicks rose by more than 22%, driven by a nearly 40% increase in interest for used models. The share of used inventory has continued its steady climb since at least 2023, including a gain of nearly 2 percentage points over the past year.

MOST POPULAR RV LENGTHS

The following are the most popular lengths (in feet) for RVs from January-March on RV Trader.

1. 29
2. 32
3. 30
4. 25
5. 36

TOP SLEEPING CAPACITIES FOR RVS

From January-March, consumers were most interested in RV with sleeping capacities of three to eight people, with units accommodating four the most popular.

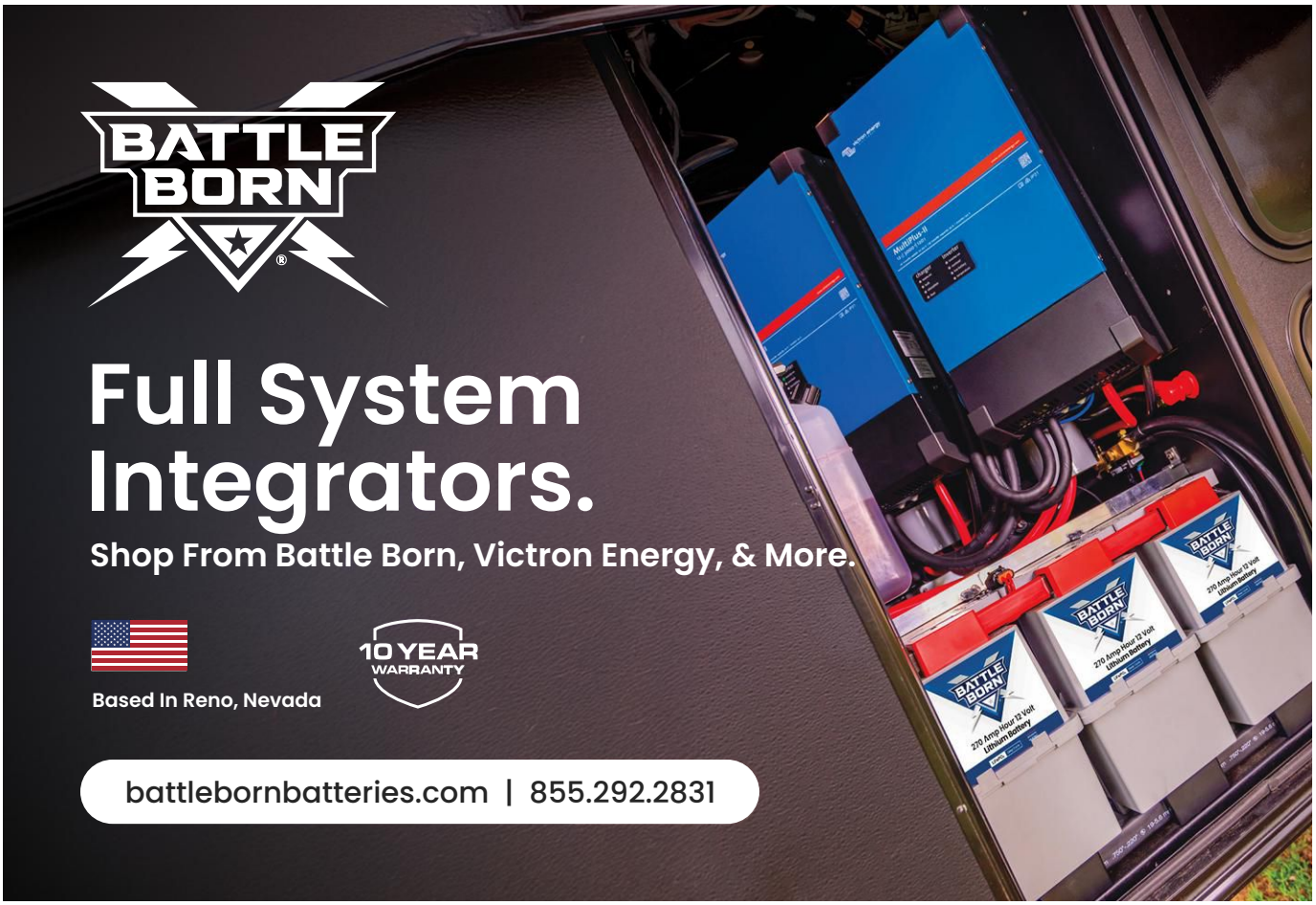
1. 4
2. 6
3. 5
4. 8
5. 3

About RV Trader
RV Trader, a part of the "Trader" family of brands and owned by Trader Interactive, is the leading marketplace for advertising RVs, motorhomes, and campers. With an average of 6.5 million monthly visitors, RV Trader offers innovative tools to help manufacturers and dealers make connections with customers, increase sales, and maximize profits. For more information, visit rvtradermediakit.com.

**SOURCE: RV TRADER SEARCH ACTIVITY FOR TRAVEL TRAILER RVS FROM JANUARY-MARCH 2023-2025.

CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC

As the RV industry moves beyond the first quarter of 2025, signs point to a trajectory shaped by consumer adaptability and a sustained appetite for travel freedom. While fast-changing economic factors may influence purchasing decisions, the steadily growing interest in used RV models suggests that RV buyers are cautiously optimistic. Dealers and manufacturers who can respond to shifting concerns — especially around affordability, sustainability and longevity of technology — are likely to enjoy the greatest momentum as we approach spring and summer.



SIMPLE LIVING, BIG DREAMS: Park Models Reshape the Vacation Home

Delaware-based Great Outdoor Cottages offers park models with high-end finishes and all the amenities of home.

BY JOHN MCCURRY

PHOTOS COURTESY OF GREAT OUTDOOR COTTAGES

The desire for simplification is a chief motivator in the park model business. Just ask Matt Kraeuter, CEO of Great Outdoor Cottages — a Delaware-based park model builder launched in 2021, in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I think a lot of people are looking to simplify," Kraeuter says. "It is more simplifying than downsizing. There are enough complications and confusions in this world, so there is an appeal to a simpler lifestyle."

Kraeuter says a lot of his customers use park models as vacation homes. The economics are favorable. Whereas the cost of a two-bedroom, two-bath condo in a resort community tops $500,000, a park model can be purchased in a beach town for $125,000 to $140,000.

"When they come into one of our park models, it feels like a house, like a home, more than an RV," Kraeuter says. "That is due to the trims, appliances, fits and finishes that we use. That is how we have been able to outpace some of the market."



Blue Water Development, based in Ocean City, Maryland, manages and develops recreational properties like campgrounds and hotels. Blue Water founded Great Outdoor Cottages in response to an unprecedented demand for park models during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was a sensible investment, as RVs and camping in general provided an outlet for people to get back outside again.

"People could leave the house and get out and do things," Kraeuter says. "During that trend, park models in the larger campgrounds became a viable and attractive alternative. It created a bigger demographic."

Kraeuter, a practicing attorney for more than 20 years, joined the company in September 2023. He had been general counsel to a large federal defense contractor and came to Great Outdoor Cottages with a manufacturing background.

The company started out in a temporary facility in Millsboro, Delaware, while the current 45,000-square-foot factory was



being built, opening near the end of 2022. While it was under construction, the company built up back orders that took it well into 2023. A 25,000-square-foot expansion is now underway.

"The first thing we did was expand the retail network, so we have dealerships now up and down the East Coast," Kraeuter says. "We ship regularly from Florida to Maine. We created a dealership network, and then we looked into some other opportunities, in which park models made a lot of sense. Some of the areas that have become really interesting are folks who are converting transient campgrounds to full-time seasonal campgrounds with park models."

Defining 'Different'

The company currently has about 20 dealers in its network. Top states for the retail market are North Carolina, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Connecticut and Maine. Park models are also sold by campgrounds around the eastern U.S. The network and campgrounds provide valuable input for model development.

"We try to communicate regularly with our dealer network and our larger developers and customers," Kraeuter says. "We want to know what they are seeing, and what they want to see in the market. Two years ago, there was a big price push, and I think now people are looking for a little bit higher level of amenities, so we try to answer to that. We try to deliver a quality product at a fair price. We are upfront and honest with our customers. We want to make it attainable for people. People like the extra touches, like a small wine fridge, nice appliances, and the washer and dryer — all the home amenities, but in a park model. You have to get creative to fit it all in."

Kraeuter touts the high-end products used to build the company's park models as a chief differentiator. All showers are tiled, and LP SmartSide siding is used for its exteriors.

"We have all high-end finishes that we provide at a very competitive price," he says. "I think that has set us apart. We build a high-quality product.

"We have an in-house design team, which is where we have been able to win some pretty great business," Kraeuter says. "We are big enough that we can produce at scale and meet volume requirements, but we are simple enough that we can produce designs quickly and get them on the line."

Kraeuter recalls one project that quickly moved from concept to product on the manufacturing line within two weeks.

"We had someone come to us and they had a problem they wanted to solve, and we went through that whole process fast, because we have our team in-house and they can handle it all. We are nimble enough that we can be creative and answer people's problems."

Great Outdoor Cottages builds 20 to 25 different models. It also builds the house part of houseboats for a couple of customers, which Kraeuter describes as an exciting opportunity.

While business has generally been good the past few years, the looming challenge is tariffs.

"We get notices of implementing a price increase, [and] then we get a notice pulling it back. So, it can be confusing and concerning. We get lumber from Canada and some components from overseas, but we try to source things locally whenever we can."

Kraeuter cites the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act as being a big help to the industry.

"There were some pretty significant tax advantages to a park model for the operators, because you could take them as equipment and fully depreciate them in one year, under the bonus depreciation plan that was a part of that tax act. We will see if it gets re-upped again this year. During COVID, there were the highest average daily rates that campgrounds had ever seen for park models. So, there were a lot of reasons why park models made sense for these campgrounds







as an alternative to transient pads."

There has also been a shift in campground preferences among older RVers.

"We are seeing some older folks who are looking into moving away from a transient campground situation into something a bit more passive," Kraeuter says. "A park model community makes a lot of sense for them. The park model fits really nicely into that."

Opening Doors for Diversification

Kraeuter was hired to look at the business holistically. At that time, Great Outdoor Cottages was building primarily for Equity LifeStyle communities and for Blue Water Development.

"Those were pretty much our primary customers. We felt as if we did not have a retail base. We had to rethink the business going forward and what we could do. You don't have to change zoning — it is still zoned a campground because park models are still classified as RVs. It took areas where you had lots of check-ins and check-outs, which is a lot of work, into a bit more of a passive income. Many of these older campgrounds are being converted."

This makes sense for campground owners, Kraeuter says, because they are selling park models and are getting long-term revenue from seasonal visitors. So, it becomes more of a vacation house than a campsite for many people. There has been an upsurge in that market.

A recent development is a move into to modular home construction. This can help address the need for affordable housing across the country. Great Outdoor Cottages has been tackling this issue — Kraeuter prefers to use the term "starter home," or a simple home for those seeking a simpler way of living.

"We build anywhere from 550-square-foot up to 1,400-square-foot modular homes," Kraeuter says. "People can own a home and buy an asset. I do not like to see people stuck in that rental cycle, because you are never going to create wealth from renting. We are focused on building something that is an appreciating asset, and you own the land as well. You are paying down a mortgage and creating wealth.

"We partnered with a couple of developers, and we are working on some projects in the mid-Atlantic area with these modular homes."

Kraeuter views this new market as a big opportunity. It's currently a small part of the company's business, but he expects it to grow in the coming years.

"It has been an exciting time. We have pivoted from where we were manufacturing short-term rental cabins for large campgrounds to retail, which has been very strong for us. Our developer partners who are developing new campgrounds for us are doing great.

"With this, plus the modular homes project, we have diversified quite a bit over the last year and a half. We have built up a substantial backlog and are looking great for this year."

Kraeuter describes his company as being well positioned for the future. He has fun with his job, helping to sell a dream and a lifestyle.

"I have big plans for the future, including exploring more geographic growth. It is going to be a great rest of the year. We are going to keep pushing and make sure we deliver the best products we can," Kraeuter says. RVP



Putting the Premium in Park Model

Lancaster Log Cabins pioneers rustic, modern park models for a growing outdoor hospitality market.

BY RONNIE WENDT

PHOTOS COURTESY OF LANCASTER LOG CABINS

When Dan Smucker founded Lancaster Log Cabins in 2016, he had a simple vision: craft high-quality log cabins on wheels that delivered durability and rustic charm to the outdoor hospitality industry.

Fast-forward to today, and that vision has matured into one of the most respected park model RV manufacturing operations in the country — serving RV parks, campgrounds and private buyers with over 600 units annually from its facility in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

Smucker's almost decade-long journey actually started much earlier, when he worked with his father in the traditional log home kit business.

"It was just the two of us for a while," he recalls.

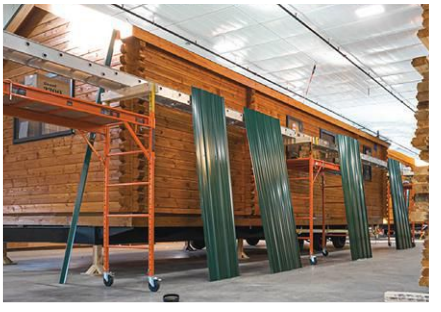
It wasn't until the 2008 recession rattled the housing industry that Smucker first considered a pivot. Instead of shipping out kits for on-site assembly, he soon began manufacturing fully finished, towable log cabins. With that, Lancaster Log Cabins was born.

A Niche in a Growing Industry

The cabins from Lancaster Log Cabins are classified as park model RVs — mobile units designed for temporary recreational use, a classification that offers a few regulatory advantages for campgrounds.

Smucker, president and owner of the company, explains that park models are officially designated as a park model RV by the RV Industry Association (RVIA).





"So, they have a VIN number and a Manufacturer's Certificate of Origin (MCO)," he says. "It just makes it so easy on the campground, because they don't have to worry about permits and property taxes and jumping through all those hoops you normally would for a permanent structure."

However, despite their mobility, these park model cabins are built with permanence in mind.

"We basically build cabins on wheels, with the rustic charm and outdoorsy look of a log cabin," Smucker says.

That combination of authenticity and convenience has made Lancaster Log Cabins a popular option in the outdoor hospitality market, serving campgrounds, RV parks and short-term rental platforms like Airbnb and VRBO.

"For campgrounds and RV parks, these units are ideal," Smucker says. "They don't require the same red tape as permanent buildings, and they're ready-to-use right off the truck. They can just park them, and they are ready to go."

Smucker emphasizes that Lancaster Log Cabins builds with quality and durability in mind — differentiating his product from





other park models on the market.

"Other park models are built like a mobile home with cheaper materials that do not hold up as long," he says. "Ours are built like a real home, and campgrounds appreciate that because they hold up so well."

While the majority of their business still serves the campground industry — roughly 400 of the 600 units built annually — Lancaster Log Cabins is also seeing a growing retail market. The remaining 200 units are purchased by private customers who use them as hunting cabins, in-law suites, guest houses, Airbnb rentals or simply as a peaceful weekend escape.

"More people are looking for that simple escape," Smucker says. "It's a piece of paradise without the million-dollar price tag."

Still, Smucker urges customers to remember these cabins, while robust and comfortable, are not intended for permanent residential use. "People will try to blur these lines because our units are made for year-round use," he says. "But the Park 1 RV classification limits them to recreational, temporary use."

Built To Last, Built With Style

Lancaster Log Cabins distinguishes itself by using traditional log home construction in its mobile structures, creating park models that feel like authentic homes rather than mobile homes.

"Our homes are built like real log cabins — solid, durable and beautiful," says Smucker.

That commitment to craftsmanship continues inside each unit. From live-edge tables and hickory cabinetry to handcrafted log furniture, the interior finishes reflect the natural, rustic aesthetic that customers seek.

"People staying at a campground more often than not want an outdoorsy feel, inside and out," he says.

Functionally, the cabins operate much like RVs, with utility hookups designed for simplicity and ease. Each unit includes water, sewer and electrical connections at the rear.

"Campgrounds just connect them to the electric, water and septic on-site, and they are ready to go," Smucker explains.

The cabins are also designed for minimal maintenance. Smucker notes that the logs are finished with the highest-quality stain available and sealed with a thick clear coat for protection.

"We recommend that they re-stain it every five to seven years," he says. "But a lot of parks never stain them again. I wish they would, because they would look a little nicer if you keep up with that."

From Frame to Finish in 10 Days

Lancaster's product line is evolving to reflect a wider range of design preferences, according to Smucker. The company has recently introduced coastal-style cabins, Scandinavian-inspired models and sleek, modern high-end designs.

"Not everyone wants a log cabin. Some people want a more modern-looking park model," Smucker admits. "Especially in beach communities or for luxury resorts. So, we've responded with more variety. These models will have a more traditional build, with framing and siding, rather than a log cabin structure."

This expansion in style was made possible by a major operational investment: a new 15,000-square-foot facility dedicated exclusively to manufacturing these contemporary models.

"The new facility was needed because we cannot do anything other than log cabins on our log cabin lines," he says. "It's not as efficient as our main assembly line yet, but we're getting there. The goal will be for it to become as efficient as the process for our log cabins."

That efficiency will be critical, Smucker predicts, as demand continues to grow.

"There is a lot of interest in these innovative designs. They are selling really well," he says.

Looking ahead, another shift may involve building out a dedicated design team. Currently, Smucker handles most of the design work himself — a process that involves significant collaboration with customers.

"At some point, I'd like to hire a designer to take that on," he says.

At the heart of Lancaster Log Cabins' operation is its streamlined manufacturing process. Housed in a 45,000-square-foot manufacturing facility, the company uses a 10-phase assembly line that produces two fully finished cabins per day.

"From trailer frame to complete cabin in 10 days," Smucker says proudly. "It's old-school manufacturing efficiency."

The assembly-line setup enables the company to fulfill large-scale orders for major campground operators. Sometimes that means producing 50 to 100 cabins for a single client, he says.

Though Lancaster Log Cabins prefers to stick to standardized models for efficiency, Smucker says the company occasionally takes on custom projects, especially when large orders justify the extra effort. Smucker remains hands-on in these cases, guiding customers through every detail, from floorplans and finishes to fixtures and siding.

"It's time-consuming," he says, "but when someone is ordering a significant number of units and wants something that fits their brand, we're all in."

Delivering an Experience

Whether customers are buying one cabin or 100, Smucker emphasizes service and integrity as the company's core values. From fast response times to clear communication and prompt service on warranty issues, Lancaster Log Cabins strives to make each interaction count.

"When customers come to tour the factory and show cabins, we want them to feel appreciated and valued," Smucker says. "We believe in doing the right thing — even in the little things no one else might notice."

Service is a big part of the company's success, he adds.

"With every phone call and every email, we get back to customers within 24 hours," he says. "If someone says there's a faulty range or fridge, we're going to replace that item quickly. Little stuff like that goes a long way."

One thing that makes Lancaster Log Cabins stand out is its direct-to-customer business model. The company doesn't work with dealers.

"Customers like buying directly from the builder," Smucker explains. "They can tour the facility, meet the team and see exactly how their cabin is made. We have show cabins on-site."

This approach has served the company well, but it may evolve as they scale. A new 70-acre site has already been purchased to support future expansion, including plans for a 150,000-square-foot building.

The move is still at least two years out, but it signals Lancaster Log Cabins' ambition to remain at the forefront of the park model RV market.

As outdoor hospitality continues to grow — driven by rising demand for unique accommodations, short-term rentals and the ongoing appeal of tiny home living — Smucker is optimistic about what lies ahead.

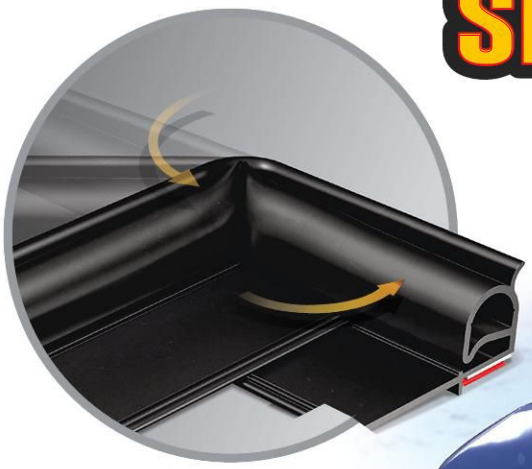
He forecasts continued market growth, mirroring Lancaster Log Cabins' expansion from producing 15 park models annually and having a handful of employees to manufacturing over 600 models a year and having 60 employees.

"People just want to get away," he says. "And park models offer an affordable, comfortable way to do that — whether it's at a campground or on a piece of private land. The park model market will continue to grow as the hospitality industry grows."

With a focus on quality craftsmanship, expanding design options and a customer-first mindset, Lancaster Log Cabins is well positioned to meet that demand — log by log, cabin by cabin. RVP



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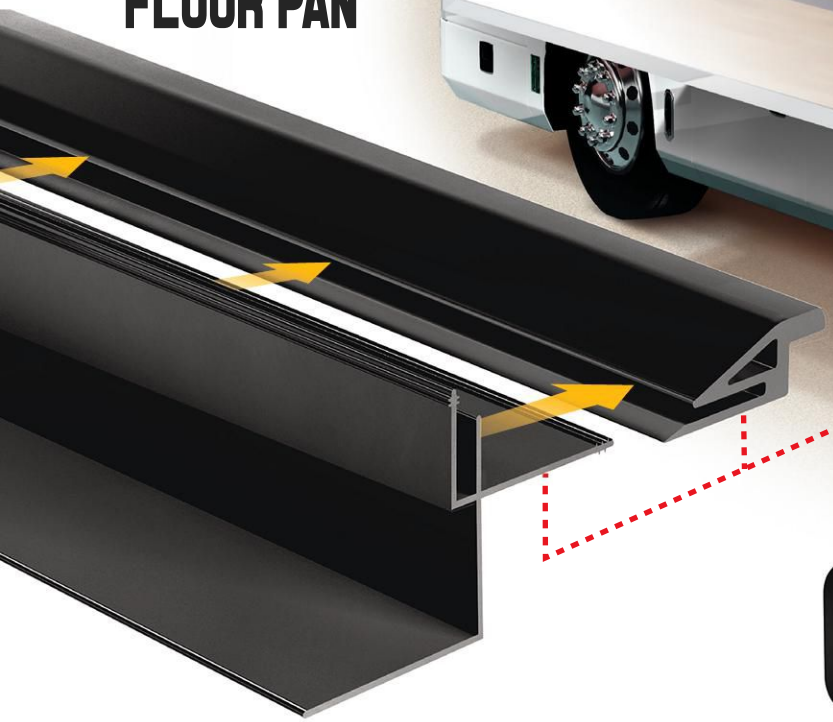


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HARTVILLE RV CENTER: A Family Tradition of Customer & Community Service

Living by the **golden rule** and **giving back** has brought this Ohio dealership continued success.

BY LISA DICKSTEEN

PHOTOS COURTESY OF HARTVILLE RV CENTER



"No hassle, no pressure and the golden rule."

This is the original philosophy that Jeff and Bob Pastore's parents started with when opening Hartville RV Center Inc. 54 years ago, and they still stand by that philosophy today.

As Hartville RV Center has grown, so has what Jeff calls their "ability to give back for the many blessings we have received over the years."

They organize this charitable giving and community involvement into three threads: time, talent and treasure. Together, those three words form the fabric of the dealership's presence in their community.

Time refers to the staff they send to assist at local charitable events, parades and other community affairs. Once someone has committed to an event, they choose how to give their time. Some might like to work behind the scenes setting up or tearing down, while another team member might choose to work at an occasion in a more public-facing way.

The team includes nonstaff as well. For example, Jeff and his family work at Matthew 8:20, a local organization that distributes food and clothing to the homeless in nearby Canton, Ohio, and volunteer at the Lake Township FISH food pantry.

Talent refers to the staff who volunteer with Junior Achievement, reading enrichment and "get out and play" programs at local schools.

Additionally, team members volunteer at the local YMCA for 5K races, Healthy Kids Day and other special events.

Within the industry, Jeff has served as the chairman of the board for the national RV Dealers Association (RVDA), was inducted into the RV/MH Hall of Fame in 2020 and is currently the chairman of the Mike Molino RV Learning Center. Bob is the former president of the Great Lakes RV Association.

Treasure refers to financial donations — some of which are local, such as community sports teams, scout troops, the police department's K9 "Officer Bill" program, the FISH G.L.O 5K and Festival, and playground equipment for Hartville Elementary.

"We also support scholarships for academics, sports and the arts through our local schools, providing kids who otherwise may not be able to participate the ability to reach their full potential," Jeff says. "We even take an RV to the school to show kids one of the great ways to enjoy our beautiful country."

On the national level, contributions include the American Heart Association, the American Cancer Society and the American Red Cross.



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Empowered by PATRICK





(left to right) Bob Pastore, secretary/owner; Jeff Pastore, president/owner; Dennis Combs, lead salesperson

One thing that weaves together time, talent and treasure is Hartville RV Center's participation in the RV industry's Care Camps Foundation, an organization that helps kids affected by cancer experience camping. Hartville's employees have organized fundraisers such as "a community event inviting families to dress their pets in Halloween costumes, bringing together pets and all types of people of all ages and raising awareness and money for Care Camps," Jeff says.

In addition to working with these children, the dealership also works with a nearby college where employees participate in various campus and community projects and organizations.

SMALL BUT MIGHTY

All of this giving comes from employees at Hartville RV Center's one location. The dealership currently has 18,500 square feet on 7.5 acres in what Jeff calls "a quaint village that has an oversized reputation for commerce." He says they have expanded over time as need and budget permitted. The dealership has an additional acre they can use to expand their lot when the time is right.

Their choice of what to carry at the dealership is small, but intensely curated, Jeff says. Stocking Jayco and KZ, Jeff says those brands are "very market-driven companies with a vastly better warranty and price-point selection than the competition." Also stocking Bontrager Outdoors and Vista Cruiser, Jeff says these lines are "more niche and offer something that many other companies do not."

During a typical year, Jeff says Hartville RV Center will move 200-plus units. He notes that 2024 was "a little soft, due in large part to election uncertainty and high interest rates."

A STEADY, STABLE TEAM

The dealership consists of 12 employees, many of whom have been with Hartville RV Center for over 10 years. Jeff points out that Dennis Combs in sales has over 25 years with the company.

When considering new staff, Jeff says they look for "stable individuals that have a desire to grow, learn and help others. We look for team players."

And then they support them with continuing education. Many of their service technicians are Level 4 Master Certified, Jeff says.

The dealership's long and involved history with the RVDA started with a desire for more education for new hires and answers to challenging business questions. Much of this is available to the employees without anyone leaving the office as there are webinars available in the areas of human resources and dealership management, environment and safety, F&I compliance, service operations, and sales and internet marketing.

In addition, Jeff says they found membership with RVDA offered better access to business partners, suppliers and other dealers.

"Really, it is a one-stop for all of your management needs," he says.

PUTTING THE CUSTOMERS FIRST

In the early 2000s, Hartville RV Center began offering storage in response to customers' desire for convenience in the face of more and more neighborhoods restricting at-home RV storage. Sensing an opportunity, they began planning.



It took a lot of time and effort, but today, customers who store an RV with them can call 24 hours before they want to pick up their unit. Then the staff kicks into gear, looking over the unit, noting any areas in need of repair or service, and making sure it is ready for use.

This process automatically "generates parts and service business and delivers a better customer experience," Jeff says.

"The original philosophy is really the same today as it was 54 years ago when we started. It is timeless," Jeff says about the family-centric business. "Treat others as you would like to be treated. Put your customers' needs first. Welcome your customers' business and treat them as if they are the most important person to your business. Make them feel adopted and part of your family.

"This was our foundation, and it still works today." RVP

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3 THINGS PEOPLE GET WRONG About Power Solutions

Use real-time data to monitor power systems and tap into reliable energy.

BY KENT ANDERSON, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, WESCO

PHOTOS COURTESY OF WESCO; ADOBE STOCK



While much of our daily lives are centered around technology, we don't often give much thought to the energy that powers our various devices, vehicles or homes. We simply expect it to be there and view power as a ubiquitous resource.

RVers don't have that luxury. From stop to stop, they need to find ways to "plug in," no matter where the journey takes them. But as more and more RV manufacturers incorporate smart appliances and innovative technology into their motorhomes, reliable power sources are in more demand than ever — yet not every source is created equal.

Before you set out on your next adventure, understanding which elements you need to power your RV and how to access them are critical. Here are three things people get wrong about power solutions and what to do about it.

1 Solar Power Wasn't Designed for RV Use

Although everyone talks about solar as a key part of the recent clean energy revolution, the first modern solar cell was developed back in the 1950s. Many are surprised to learn that the technology hasn't changed significantly since that time. Solar panels were initially designed for wide open spaces with no shade and static scenarios, hence their popularity on top of buildings (like the White House) and the push to construct massive, open solar fields.

However, not every journey in an RV takes you through wide-open spaces. Many RV sites are shaded by trees or in the shadow of towering landscapes. Shaded cells cannot produce the same amount of power as nonshaded cells. If one solar cell atop an RV is impacted by shade — one wayward leaf, or shadows cast by an air conditioner, vent cap or other roof architecture — it can force nearly the entire panel to shut down, reducing power output by almost 90%. This is due to an important safety feature of the solar panel. If one cell stops working, the others may overheat and cause a fire hazard, so instead they shut down to preserve the integrity of the panel.

Picture Christmas tree lights — if one light goes out, they all go out. Solar panel technology was initially developed with the same mechanism in mind. Unfortunately, that's little comfort for those relying on solar to power their journey.

Thankfully, there are new innovations that let the flow of current continue through even with a shaded cell — and do so without any safety hazards.

Balancing technology is one such example. With this innovation, shaded cells can "borrow" power from nonshaded cells to open a current path. Standard panels will shut down completely when two to three cells are shaded. With balancing technology, panels can perform at efficient levels even when shaded.

Balancing technology also eases the burden on an electrical system such as the charge controller, battery or inverter. By eliminating the voltage spikes and throughput that is common with standard panels, balancing technology can extend the lifespan of solar panels and help keep the panel working at peak efficiency. Plus, there's no need to deal with bypass diodes, which are often the first components to fail on a solar panel. This technology enables a more dependable and reliable source of energy, even for those going off-grid for extended periods of time.

2 Power Generation Is Not as Reliable as You May Believe

As any RV enthusiast can tell you, finding an independent power source and a

working shore power connection are not always a guarantee. Your transfer switch may be ready to receive power, but if there's a faulty connection or issues with the campground's power pedestal, you're out of luck. Stable power resources are vital, especially if you are looking to take your RV off-grid.

Stored power solutions have emerged as a way to mitigate those issues. Featuring integrated battery-powered systems, chargers and monitoring solutions, these energy systems can provide a reliable source of power when other options aren't available. Working in tandem with the RV's electrical system, these components can capitalize on the solar power accessible (as mentioned above) and not only provide emergency backup power but also serve as a consistent energy source.

3 Power Monitoring Is as Important as Your Power Source

As mentioned, manufacturers are increasingly incorporating smart technologies into RVs so consumers can enjoy the convenience and improved experience that these innovations may bring. However, such advancements require owners to pay even more attention to power sources and their lifespan. One underutilized way to ensure you have all the power you need to use your smart appliances and other innovations is to consider power monitors.



Using real-time data, these systems can regulate power in the RV even while you sleep. For example, power monitors can take a temperature check and lower the thermostat to a targeted level, so the air conditioning isn't running high all night. They can also instruct the systems to run off battery power if shore power isn't an option. These systems are easily run from a touchscreen inside the RV or through an app if Wi-Fi isn't an issue in your location.

Access to reliable power sources is an essential element for an efficient and enjoyable RV trip. However, the only way to save more energy is to generate more energy, and traditional solar panels may not be able to handle today's power demands. By considering innovative technology applications that are built to support how RVs operate — complete with smart appliance technology — you can tap into more power and more reliable power no matter wherever the journey takes you. These applications not only perform more efficiently — even in shade — but also produce more energy, with the same input, giving RVers a chance to truly take advantage of eco-friendly power options. RVP



Kent Anderson, senior business development manager, began his career with Wesco in the manufactured structures division and has since held positions in administration, sales and management. In 2019, he helped establish a business development team focused on off-site construction, retail/commercial, and specialty vehicles (including RVs). He sits on the Modular Building Institute's Board of Directors and serves as treasurer.

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Key Electrical Safety Products & Info for RV Dealers

Educate your customers on what they need to stay safe on the road.

BY KENNY WRIGHT, RV FIELD SALES MANAGER, SOUTHWIRE

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SOUTHWIRE

When it comes to modern RV travel, electrical safety isn't just a luxury — it's a necessity. Whether your customers are weekend warriors or full-time RVers, they rely on a safe, stable electrical system to power everything from air conditioning to kitchen appliances. As an RV dealer, your role goes beyond selling RVs. You're also a critical educator in helping customers understand how to stay safe and avoid costly or dangerous mishaps.

This article provides critical information dealers should share to promote responsible RVing, along with a breakdown of essential electrical safety products every RV dealership should stock.

Common Electrical Hazards for RVs

There are many issues an RV owner will come across during their travels. RV dealers can help promote safe travel by educating their customers on a few key hazards before they hit the road. Common issues include:

Power Pedestals

Power pedestals are the single largest threat to an RV's electronic circuitry. The pedestal could be miswired, old or simply outdated — all of which can result in faulty electrical power, causing potentially dangerous voltage surges and spikes. Ensure the RV owner has the proper equipment to be able to handle the spikes and surges it's likely to receive from these pedestals.



Plugging & Unplugging

It is important that RV owners know to turn the breaker off when plugging in and unplugging their vehicles. This not only helps prevent power surges but also protects the owner from potential electrical shock. Additionally, turning the breaker off helps avoid unnecessary wear on the pedestal connections, which is why it's becoming a requirement at most campgrounds.

Cords & Prongs

There are countless cases where cords are left plugged in while the RV owner drives off, the prongs on the cord can become corroded or cords get damaged from improper unplugging techniques. It is a best practice to inform all RV owners on how to take care of their cords as well as to check their cords and prongs before plugging in their RV and before they leave for their next destination. This can help alert the owner if the prongs on the cord are corroded.

The National Electric Code, the benchmark for safe electrical design, installation and inspection to protect people and property from electrical hazards, is published by the National Fire Protection Association and updated every three years. The 2026 edition will be released this fall. According to a report from the RV Industry Association (RVIA), the updated 2026 edition will "finalize the requirement and electrical evolution of protecting RV owners and users from the occurrences known as 'hot skin.' All RVs with 30A or 50A electrical service will be required to install a grounding monitor interrupter (GMI), which is a loss-of-ground device."

"Hot skin" — when metal components of an RV become electrified — is a serious safety hazard and caused by improper grounding or electrical faults. A GMI, which will detect incorrect wiring or a loss of ground connection, won't allow electricity to flow through it or will disconnect power should a loss of ground connection occur.

For more information, visit the RVIA's report at https://tinyurl.com/5ft27xnp.

Safety Equipment for RVs

There are many safety tools and products that bring peace of mind when traveling in an RV. These are just a few of the tried-and-true products that help RV owners keep themselves and their belongings safe.

Surge Protectors

Spikes and surges can cause severe damage to all electronics, even if they're not close in proximity, making it crucial for RVs since they're more likely to receive inconsistent power. Surge protectors are the first line of defense in ensuring important appliances such as air conditioners, microwaves, TVs, computers and hair dryers stay safe. It is strongly recommended that an RV owner invest in a surge protector as extra protection for all their electronic assets.

Multimeter Electrical Tester Kit

RVs have complex power systems. Owning a multimeter test kit is incredibly beneficial as it allows the owner to test the voltage of a power source, like an outlet or a power pedestal, and helps them gauge if it is safe.



This not only saves time and money on RV repairs but also helps prevent bigger issues that could arise from unnoticed electrical faults.

Camper's Tool Kit

A well-stocked tool kit is essential for any camper. A basic tool kit with some screwdrivers, wrenches, socket set, utility knife, flashlight, cable ties, tape, hammer and more will prove useful when unexpected repairs and maintenance tasks arise while out on the open road or at a campsite. Campers are often far from professional help, so being able to make minor repairs adds a layer of self-reliance and safety.

Electrical safety can be one of the most overlooked aspects of RV ownership, especially for new buyers. By carrying the right products and having knowledgeable staff who can guide customers through their use and importance, RV dealers play a crucial role in preventing accidents and protecting lifestyles. Help customers hit the road with confidence in their electrical setup so they can travel safely with peace of mind. RVP



Kenny Wright is the RV OEM channel sales manager at Southwire. Having held numerous leadership roles throughout his career, Wright has worked in the RV industry since 1999, starting at Georgie Boy Manufacturing and then working at Monaco Coach plant in Elkhart, Indiana. He went on to Jayco/Entegra Coach where he spent seven years overseeing the entire Jayco Motorhome Groups Factory Service. Wright joined Southwire in the spring of 2022. He and his wife, Ashley, have two children, Cora and Caiden, and currently live in South Bend, Indiana.



POWERING THE FUTURE: Insight on RV Energy Solutions

9 organizations comment on the challenges and opportunities in the field of RV energy.

BY MICHELE MOORE

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF RESPECTIVE COMPANIES



EcoFlow offers a suite of power solutions products, such as its 48-volt Power Kit.



RVMP's 4500ies portable generator

To explore the current state of RV power solutions and what's to come in the future, RV PRO asked industry experts to weigh in.

What's new & innovative in power solutions for the RV industry?



Eric Meadows, Lithionics, president: The most exciting innovations revolve around the higher voltage applications. More electrical components are being launched at 48-volt versus the traditional 12-volt components. For instance, Lithionics launched a 48-volt Smart Alternator that can produce almost 7,000 watts, which can charge one of our 8.4kWh batteries from zero to fully charged in about 75 minutes. You are also seeing 48-volt air conditioning and other appliances that offer fantastic efficiencies with a 48-volt battery system. Efficiency in our world equates to more power for longer.



Andrew Stiebler, RVMP, GM of aftermarket sales & marketing: We're seeing a shift toward smarter, more adaptable solutions — things like EFI-equipped generators that optimize fuel use, ultraquiet inverters with clean power output for sensitive electronics and integrated solar-hybrid systems that extend off-grid capabilities. The real innovation lies in flexibility: giving RVers the ability to switch between power sources, monitor usage via connected apps and reduce emissions without compromising performance. It's not just about more power — it's about better, cleaner and more user-friendly power.



Matthew Bondie, Revatek, director of sales: Lithium-ion batteries are becoming increasingly popular due to their longer lifespan, lighter weight, higher energy density, faster charging times and ability to discharge 100% of their capacity safely. It's very important that the relationship between the alternator and

battery bank is regulated efficiently, ensuring the longest lifespan and best performance from your power system. Revatek's … Altion optimizes your power system, ensuring your batteries charge faster and last longer. The Altion possesses differentiators such as 20%-35% faster charging using excess engine power; universal compatibility with all major battery chemistries (lead-acid, lithium) and 12-48-volt systems (8.5-60-volt operating range); app-free Wi-Fi connectivity and automatic software updates; and Boost Mode, which harnesses the full power of the alternator to charge the batteries when the Altion senses that the engine has excess power available across the full RPM range. We also offer a premium version — the Altion Max — [with] advanced control for up to two alternators and two battery banks. It also features a built-in screen to monitor system status, including state of charge, charge stage, voltage and more.



Daniel Clarkson, Navico Group, VP & GM, Navico Connect: Recent innovations in power solutions for the RV industry are transforming the way users manage their energy needs. … Fathom's user-friendly graphical user interface ensures customer success with intuitive controls — simply push a button and it works. This interface optimizes charge settings for various shore power stations, ensuring efficient energy use. Additionally, Fathom's advanced load management and shedding techniques help alleviate range anxiety by prioritizing essential functions and conserving power. The integrated lithium-ion technology provides reliable, long-lasting power without the noise, vibration or fumes of traditional generators. Proper storage solutions for both short-term and long-term needs further enhance reliability, making RV travel more convenient and stress-free.

How have state regulations & federal legislation impacted your company & the RV industry at large? Where do you see it heading in the future?

Meadows: The RV industry is experiencing a significant transformation driven by evolving environmental regulations at both state and federal levels. Initiatives like California's Advanced Clean Trucks regulation mandate that manufacturers progressively increase the sales of zero-emission vehicles, aiming for substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from medium- and heavy-duty trucks by 2035. In Canada, numerous municipalities have implemented idling control bylaws, typically restricting vehicle idling to three minutes in a 60-minute period. These measures are designed to reduce fuel consumption and lower emissions, contributing to improved air quality and environmental health. These regulatory trends underscore a broader shift away from reliance on combustion engines for house power, compelling the RV industry to adopt alternative power solutions. Lithium-ion energy storage systems have emerged as a pivotal technology in this transition, offering efficient, reliable and environmentally friendly power sources for RVs.



Xponent Power's Xpanse solar system expands to 7 feet and can also work as an awning.



Lithionics works closely with OEMs and dealers to ensure systems are properly sized, installed and supported.



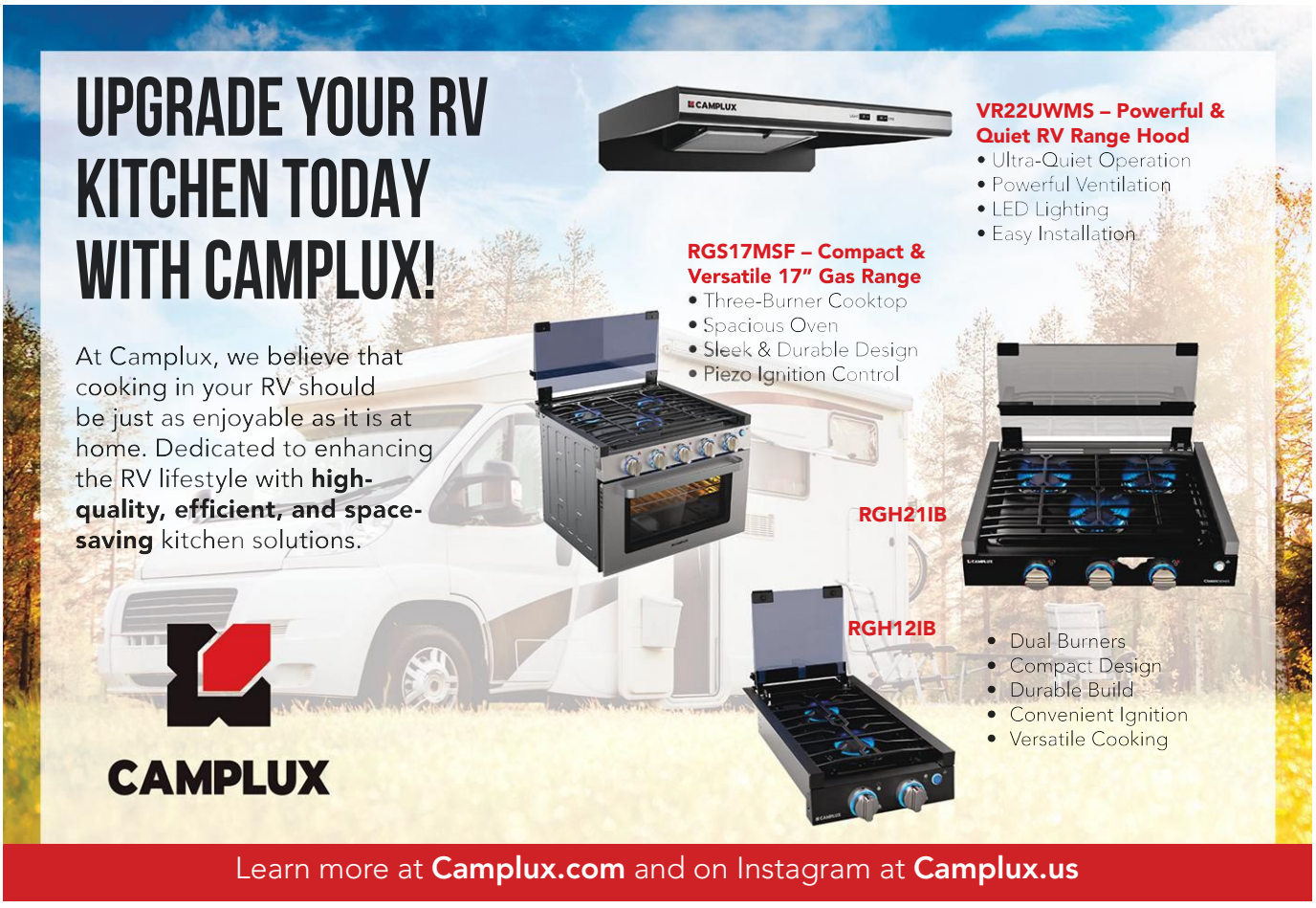
The BLUETTI Apex 300 provides a portable power station for RVs, off-grid life and more.



Mike Kurtz, REDARC Electronics, North American OEM sales leader: With a push to remove emissions in California and the desire to be off-grid, the ability to lean on lithium and solar will become an even larger opportunity in RV. Lithium has become more affordable, and technology has advanced to the point that there is no longer a need for a generator or to have the vehicle plugged in to shore power. REDARC has the ability to educate the consumer on why they no longer need a generator and why lithium can be a better solution to keep you on the move and unplugged.

EcoFlow Technology Inc.: As more states adopt stricter emissions standards, there's been a significant push toward cleaner, more sustainable energy solutions for vehicles and mobile living. This shift aligns with EcoFlow's mission to deliver innovative, eco-friendly technologies that reduce reliance on fossil fuels and support off-grid independence. Incentives for renewable energy, such as solar tax credits, have accelerated consumer interest in portable, modular power solutions — especially among RV owners seeking to reduce their carbon footprint without sacrificing convenience. For example, because of the Inflation Reduction Act, as of now RV owners can now get 30% of the price of a solar system returned as a credit on their taxes. At the same time, stricter idling and generator use restrictions in campgrounds and public lands have made quiet, emission-free power alternatives not just desirable but necessary.

Stiebler: Yes, we've seen increasing pressure around California Air Resources Board (CARB) compliance and evolving state and federal regulations. We've used this as a catalyst to stay ahead of innovation — investing in EFI technology, advanced inverter systems and solar/hybrid-ready solutions. These shifts aren't roadblocks for us — they're opportunities to make our products more efficient, powerful and lightweight. Our EFI models, for example, deliver better fuel economy, increased output and weight savings.



Bondie: Tariffs by far are the largest issue for the RV industry. We have global supply chains built over decades to provide high-quality components at low cost. If tariffs persist, they will disrupt production and consumer pricing negatively. Many specialized components cannot be built in the United States in the near term.



Rohini Raghunathan, Xponent Power, CEO and founder: Regulations are having two major impacts. The first impacts the use of gas generators, with some states applying stricter emissions standards on portable generators, culminating in a full sales ban by 2028. The second impacts the electrification of RVs, with manufacturers needing to increase the percentage of zero-emission vehicles sold each year, including those used for motorhomes. Both of these situations will increase the need for clean solar power solutions.

Clarkson: State regulations and federal legislation continue to impact our company and the RV industry at large. One notable change is the upcoming requirement for a permanently installed ground fault monitoring device that complies with UL2299. This device will be required to interrupt the ungrounded conductors if grounding is lost and additionally monitors and interrupts the grounding conductor if a potential is present on the grounding conductor. This presents a substantial opportunity for companies that can provide compliant solutions, enhancing safety and reliability for RV users. Additionally, CARB's zero-emission generator requirements are accelerating the shift from internal combustion generator sets to quieter, fume-free power options. These regulations are driving innovation in the industry, pushing manufacturers to develop more sustainable and user-friendly power solutions. Looking ahead, we anticipate continued advancements in eco-friendly technologies and stricter safety standards, ultimately benefiting consumers with safer, more efficient and environmentally conscious RVs.

What is a challenge that OEMs, dealers & end users face regarding adopting alternative power sources?

Meadows: The [situation] is similar to when LEDs first came to the scene to replace incandescent light bulbs. Everyone knows the new technology is better, but it functions completely different than the incumbent technology. Lithium battery systems all have circuit boards and computer chips running the show whereas AGM batteries and even generators are pretty basic in this regard. Any time there is this big of a technology shift, everyone from the engineering leader at an OEM to the salesperson at the dealership to the person selecting their next RV must be educated. The new lithium technology also allows for a lot more power storage in smaller packages. This allows for a lot more energy … but also it requires greater attention to safety when installing these larger systems. It's common sense, but when you're storing more energy, designing around safety





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REDARC's Van Power Solutions kits are tailored for the end user's style of travel.

becomes increasingly important. At Lithionics, we work closely with OEMs and dealers to ensure systems are properly sized, installed and supported, so the end user gets the full benefit of clean, quiet, reliable power.



Tony Yerman, RV Dealers Association, fixed operations consultant: The major challenge for motorized vehicles is range anxiety — 250 miles is the most so far. Cost would be another challenge. Lithium-ion batteries are quite expensive.

Kurtz: One of the primary challenges is a lack of understanding about the benefits that lithium and solar technologies offer to the RV lifestyle. Many consumers, and even some OEMs and dealers, are unfamiliar with how off-grid power systems work and the freedom they can provide.

Stiebler: One of the biggest challenges is the balance between innovation and infrastructure. OEMs and dealers are eager to adopt alternative power sources like lithium battery systems or solar hybrids, but integration can be complex, requiring new training, support models and design standards. For end users, the learning curve and upfront costs can be barriers. It's not that the technology isn't ready — it's that the ecosystem needs to catch up. Bridging that gap takes collaboration across the supply chain, clear education and products designed to plug seamlessly into existing RV platforms.



Ellen Lee, BLUETTI POWER Inc., PR specialist: From the OEM perspective, I think one of the biggest initial hurdles is the sheer investment required for research and development and establishing reliable supply chains. At BLUETTI, we take pride in our significant investment in in-house research and development, coupled with our own manufacturing facilities and a robust, self-controlled supply chain. This vertical integration allows us to innovate rapidly in battery technology and ensure the quality and availability of our components, which are crucial for seamless integration into future RV designs.

For RV dealers, they're facing a bit of a learning curve. Their teams need to get up to speed on these new technologies. That's why BLUETTI is committed to providing comprehensive information and support to our dealer partners, ensuring they can confidently explain the benefits and features of our power solutions to their customers. We see education as key to overcoming any hesitations.

Finally, for the end users, I think the upfront cost and range anxiety are significant concerns. While BLUETTI doesn't manufacture the entire RV, our high-capacity, portable power stations offer a more accessible entry point into cleaner energy for RVers. They can supplement existing power systems, reduce reliance on generators and provide power in off-grid situations. Ultimately, BLUETTI's goal is to empower RVers with reliable, clean and portable power solutions that enhance their adventures and contribute to a more sustainable way of exploring.

Bondie: I think for the OEMs, there's always going to be increased production costs when it comes to implementing new technologies like advanced battery systems or sophisticated solar setups, which can significantly increase the initial manufacturing costs of RVs. The dealers need comprehensive training for sales and service teams to understand the intricacies of alternative power systems, including the benefits, limitations, maintenance requirements and troubleshooting to ensure they can educate customers about the benefits and trade-offs of alternative power sources. For the end user, battery life and replacement costs since RV batteries, especially lithium-ion batteries, have a finite lifespan and can be expensive to replace. Understanding battery management and degradation is crucial.

Clarkson: One of the primary challenges … is the price. Currently, tariffs on imported components exacerbate these costs, making it difficult for many to justify the investment. However, as technology expands across various industries, economies of scale will drive costs down, making alternative power sources more accessible and affordable. Another significant hurdle is the fear of new technology. Many stakeholders are hesitant to adopt unfamiliar systems due to concerns about reliability and performance. This apprehension often stems from the high initial costs and uncertainty about long-term benefits. Overcoming these fears requires education and demonstration of the technology's advantages, which will become more apparent as prices decrease and adoption rates increase.

What else do our readers need know about RV power solutions?

Yerman: RV electrical innovations are happening in most aspects of the RV: drivetrains, appliances, energy storage and power production. It can take considerable research to understand what's new and how it will work with what is already in place.

EcoFlow: As RV enthusiasts seek greater freedom and flexibility, off-grid power solutions are becoming more desirable. Traditional gas-powered generators are being replaced by solar systems, batteries and hybrid solutions that allow RVers to remain self-sufficient in remote areas. The shift toward alternative power

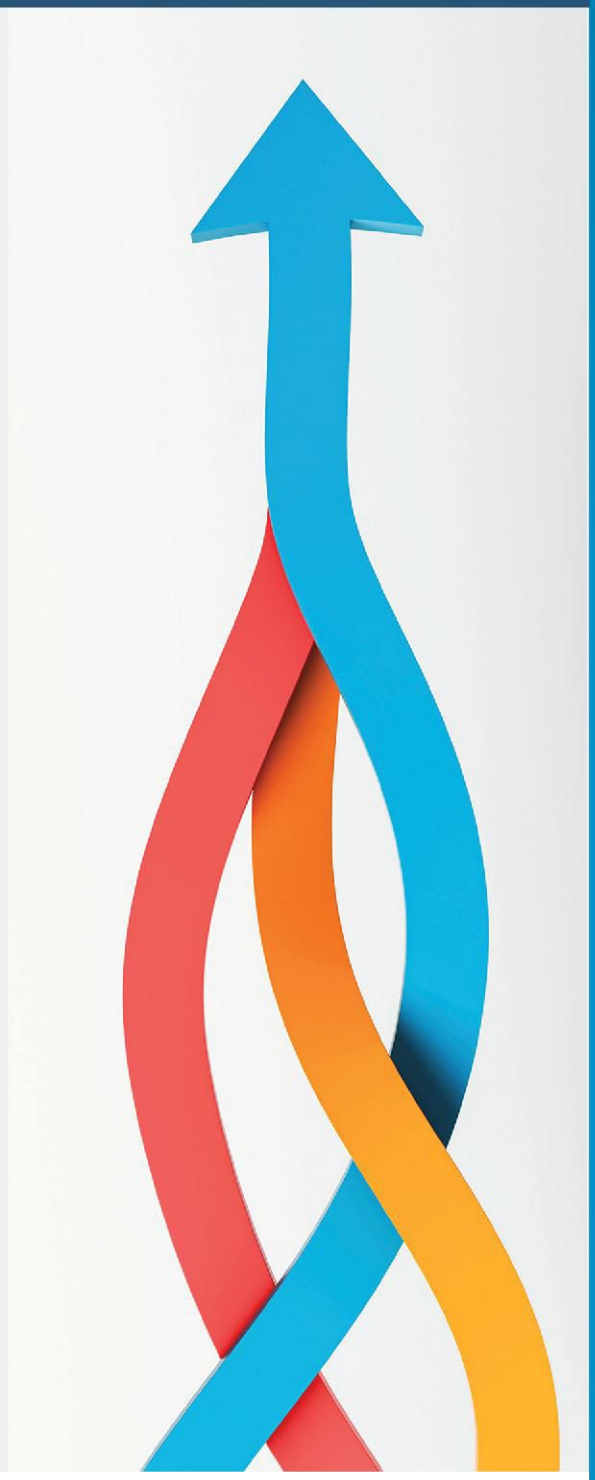
solutions in the RV industry is more than just a trend — it's a response to changing environmental regulations, consumer demands for sustainability and meeting the demands of a mobile lifestyle. Battery-powered solutions, like those offered by EcoFlow, provide a wide range of advantages for RVers. They operate quietly and cleanly, without the noise, fumes or fuel consumption associated with traditional gas generators. They integrate seamlessly with solar panels, enabling longer off-grid stays. They can be recharged quickly and flexibly through multiple sources, including solar input or a vehicle's alternator. They are modular and scalable, making it easy to customize a power system that suits any lifestyle.

Lee: At BLUETTI, we believe it's wise ... to think beyond just the initial cost. It's more about making a thoughtful, longer-term decision. We'd gently encourage people to ask themselves: How durable is this? We strive to build our products to last, and we hope users consider the lifespan of their investment. What are the less obvious expenses? Things like ongoing maintenance for generators can really add up over time. How will this impact their overall experience? The peace and quiet of battery power is something many people really value. Can their power setup adapt if their needs change? Having some flexibility can be really beneficial down the road. And, if it's something they care about, what's the environmental side of things?

Raghunathan: Especially with solar solutions, products are becoming more sophisticated and intelligent that empower OEMs, dealers and end users with the ability to have more control over their energy generation and use. More control means less dependence on solutions that restrict travel because of refueling requirements or pollute the environment and are toxic to people's health. Solar has now become an undeniable viable option that gives people the freedom to explore, adventure, and figuratively and literally recharge as never before. RVP

Find more answers on this topic on RV PRO's website at rv-pro.com/tag/2025-powering-the-future





Leadership & Culture

In this year's Leadership & Culture special section, RV PRO sought advice from RV industry organizations and individuals who are focused on one major component that makes their endeavors successful: the people.

According to the Duke Fuqua School of Business, one of the qualities that makes a leader highly impactful in 2025 is emotional intelligence. Leaders need to be able to show self-awareness, empathy and social skills in order to foster trust and engagement, an article from the school says.

"Emotional intelligence enables leaders to build more authentic connections with their teams, fostering a sense of safety and open communication."

Another quality necessary to be an effective leader today is the ability to inspire innovation and growth. Creativity thrives when diverse perspectives are encouraged and conventional thinking is challenged, according to the Duke Fuqua School of Business. To be at the forefront of today's successful businesses, companies must emphasize the "triple bottom line": social, environmental and financial performance.

"Leaders who champion purpose-driven innovation inspire their teams to achieve meaningful outcomes that resonate with customers and stakeholders alike."

So, what do these two qualities have in common?

People, of course.

Emotional intelligence and the ability to inspire innovation all comes down to how leaders relate to their employees and foster a culture that promotes growth — for the company and for the individual personally.

Learn more from the impressive leaders on the following pages. We hope you will be motivated to bring some of their thoughtful, practical and energizing ideas into your workplace.

> **"Emotional intelligence enables leaders to build more authentic connections."**

ALLIANCE OPERATES ON 'DOING THE RIGHT THING'

Five years after launching, Alliance finds focusing on employee retention and following its core values is a recipe for success.

BY JENNIFER KING

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ALLIANCE RV

Flash back to 2019 — just as Alliance Recreational Vehicles was beginning its journey as a new RV manufacturer in Elkhart, Indiana. Twelve of the company's top leaders, including co-founders Coley and Ryan Brady, met for two days to hammer out a mission statement and a set of core values.

"There was a lot of back-and-forth and ideas we shared," Coley says. "This was before we even built our first RV — I'm talking ground zero.

"The mission statement for everybody was fairly straightforward, fairly simple. It's something that everybody can follow on our team, and we're up to almost 900 team members now."

That mission statement?

Do the right thing.

"It's do the right thing when it comes to trying to deliver the most exceptional product that we can build," Coley says. "It's do the right thing in how we treat others in the company. And those things play over into many different facets of our life and, in many ways, as we go about our day-to-day business."

Alliance RV sits on 147 acres in Elkhart, and the company goal is to form "long-term alliances with our family of product owners and dealer partners."

Coley and his brother Ryan grew up around the RV



Coley Brady, one of Alliance RV's co-founders



Coley and Ryan Brady started their company with the mission to "do the right thing."

industry, inspired by their father's work. Eventually Coley, Ryan and their father, Brian, worked together at Heartland for a time period. Then in 2019, the brothers set off to create Alliance. One of their first tasks was to look for leaders that shared the Bradys' ethos.

"We were really culture-minded. We obviously needed strong leadership skills," Coley says. "But you want to attract good people to the team — generally good people that treat others as they want to be treated. That's a very key thing for us as far as fitting into our culture — being likeable and working well with others. I think that's very important.

"And we want our team to work freely, be empowered and [not] be afraid of making a mistake because they do happen. It's how you learn from those mistakes and continue to get better."

Employees who are willing to embrace Alliance's core values is another thing the company leaders are looking for, and those values are communicated to employees in different ways. Through notice boards posted in every manufacturing plant and at regular quarterly meetings and internal



emails, those core values are at the heart of the company's messages, and Coley says he believes this contributes to the company's low turnover rate.

"We've got a number of people that have been here for a very long time, and we've only been in existence for just over five years. When we bring a new [employee] on board, we're able to communicate that mission statement and core values — in fact, it's in our orientation room," Coley says.

Customers and owners can see these values manifested in the quality of their products, Coley says.

"It speaks for itself when you see the response from dealers and the end consumer," he says.

Employees are empowered to speak up when something doesn't seem right, Coley says, and that attention to quality resonates with customers and dealer partners.

"If an end consumer has a problem, we have a team of people here that is willing and ready to answer any

> **I think rewarding longevity is really important to us because ... they help drive our culture."**

questions the consumer might have," the co-founder says. "Whether it's troubleshooting a question they might have, a problem they're encountering or if it's trying to file a warranty claim or find a mobile service tech, we're very forward-facing to the end consumer to help in any way.

"If we can take care of our consumer, that word of mouth is very quick to travel in the campgrounds."

Alliance's owner group has approximately 32,000 members, and their products are featured at 240 dealerships in the United States and Canada.

Coley says being part of a winning team is attractive to the company's employees, and helpful with recruiting new team members.

"It's pretty clear based on what we're doing and the numbers that we're producing that we're growing and thriving and grabbing market share," Coley says.

In addition, having a good compensation and benefits package is appealing. Additional recognitions, such as the $5,000 bonus the company awards once an employee has five years with Alliance, helps show employees they are valued.

"I think rewarding longevity is really important for us because, like we mentioned, they help drive our culture," Coley says. "They have knowledge — the tribal knowledge — of how these RVs are put together. They know the quality standards we're looking for. I think when you have less turnover, ultimately you deliver a better product.

"But you have to create a great environment. That's one of the things we've done very well here at Alliance."

Part of Alliance having a happy workforce, Coley believes, is attributed to having an enjoyable work setting.

"Almost all of our buildings are brand-new — high ceilings, LED lighting, nice bathrooms and nice break spaces," he says.

It's important to put their team into an environment that's primed to help them succeed, he says.

"Then the culture's there, [and it's] flowing."

This infrastructure has helped Alliance attract a younger workforce — Coley says the average age is close to 30.

Post-purchase support for their end consumers is something Alliance prides themselves on, and keeping trained technicians up to date on what they need to know is part of that equation.

Coley says around 30 people at Alliance have been trained at the RV Technical Institute, just 2 miles down the road from the company's headquarters.

"Especially if you have a younger, newer person in the RV industry, it's a very good education for them," he says. If an employee expresses interest in receiving the technical training, Alliance will try to provide the ability for them to go, Coley says.

Coley says he hopes Alliance's workforce and company culture helps communicate to their consumers and dealer partners that they are dedicated to producing "an exceptional product and exceptional service."

"The RV manufacturing space is very competitive; there's a lot of options," Coley says. "We realize that, and our culture and core values and team try to display to both the dealer and the end consumer that, one, we're humble, and [two], we're also very hungry to earn their business." RVP



Alliance team members at a volunteer project

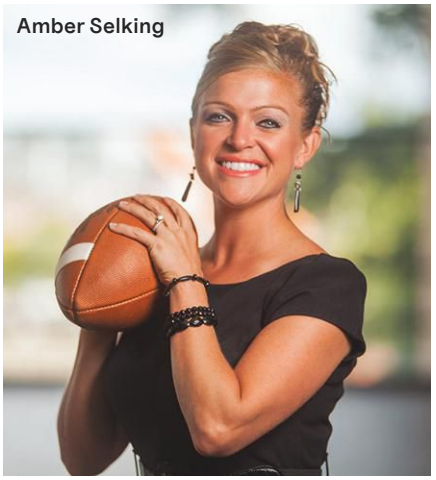
BUILDING LEADERS FROM WITHIN

How Lippert uses its culture and goal-setting to create a workforce of business leaders with an eye on the future.

BY JENNIFER KING

PHOTOS COURTESY OF LIPPERT





Amber Selking



LIPPERT'S ETHOS

Mission: Making lives better by developing meaningful relationships with our customers, our co-workers and our communities.

Core Values: positive attitude; passionate about winning; honesty, integrity, candor; team play with trust; caring about people

Leadership Qualities: motivator, humble/coachable, courageous, servant leader, effective communicator

Learn more at corporate.lippert.com/about/culture

At Lippert, leadership comes from the inside out.

"We believe that if you're stronger on the inside, it really impacts how you show up to the roles that you play in the world," says Lippert's Chief Culture and Leadership Development Officer Amber Selking. "We challenge our leaders to operate out of the lens of our core values and our leader qualities. These guiding principles help our leadership development directors to drive accountability and support growth for our leaders to lead themselves, their team and their business with purpose and for performance."

Selking joined Lippert seven years ago, already aligned with the company's evolving vision, she says. With a business degree from University of Notre Dame and a master's and doctorate in sport and performance psychology, she brought experience in high-performance coaching from college and professional football. A meeting with Lippert CEO Jason Lippert revealed a shared perspective on the potential of business as a vehicle for high performance and meaningful impact.

"Helping leaders make business a force for good has been one of the most rewarding parts of my journey here," Selking says.

When she first joined, the company's culture was very different.

"We've come a long way from the days of the old-school shop floor — where yelling and chaos were the norm."

At that time, Lippert faced a staggering 130% turnover rate. Today, employee retention holds steady at 70%.





POURING FROM A FULL CUP

The reason why they strive at Lippert to be "a force for good," she says, is partly due to the number of hours people invest in their workplace.

"We spend 40 to 80 hours a week with our teams. What are we doing with that time?" she asks.

While other institutions struggle to create systemic change, businesses are uniquely positioned to support personal growth.

Lippert's approach is to foster environments where people feel valued, cared for, and empowered.

"When individuals feel their ideas and contributions matter, their self-worth increases — and they take that positive energy home, into their families and communities," she says.



Referencing the Business Roundtable's evolving definition of a company's purpose — from maximizing shareholder wealth to serving all stakeholders — Selking says Lippert is putting that principle into action every day.

SET UP TO SUCCEED

The culture and leadership department at Lippert consists of several groups, including Leadership Development, Corporate and Community Impact, Chaplaincy and the Lippert Academy of Leadership. These teams focus on four main objectives:

1. Developing leaders
2. Stewarding company culture
3. Supporting personal growth
4. Advancing the idea of business as a force for good

"We know the world needs this right now," Selking says. "We haven't arrived, and we aren't perfect — but we are committed to the journey."

Programs focus on building intentional leadership and equipping team members with practical tools. BFG Teams across locations include "Be a Force for Good" champions who promote the mission through networks like the Lippert Women's Network and the Military Engagement Team.

Each team member also completes a Leadership Action Plan (LAP) annually — three personal and three professional goals. This tool fosters coaching

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AUSTRALIAN MADE

conversations and supports meaningful development.

"We believe that action creates traction in the human spirit," she says. "When people start accomplishing goals in their lives, they realize how much autonomy and power they have within themselves to be a force for good in their own lives.

"Eventually that translates into how they show up and lead our business. The innovation, quality and safety has just continued to increase at our organization because we have people growing as people and as professionals."

IMPRESSIVE ACHIEVEMENTS & ENGAGEMENT

Selking has seen extraordinary results through the company's focus on individual goal setting — from health improvements and financial wins to repaired relationships and professional advancement.

"People are transforming their lives with a simple 5-by-7 goal card," she says.

CEO Jason Lippert also conducts weekly listening sessions where team members share these stories.

"It [may] seem unusual for a big corporation, especially the size of Lippert, to be so personally invested in each individual … [but] I think it's refreshing to a lot of people," Selking says. "I think we've seen a lot of healing that's happened in people's lives and minds because we believe in what work could be and what work should be in all of our lives."

A recent engagement survey that Lippert conducted saw a 90% participation rate and a 78% favorable rating.

"We attribute that to the fact that we listen to our people and we respond to their feedback," Selking says.

THE POWER OF POSITIVE THINKING

Drawing from her experience in sport psychology, Selking champions the power of positive thinking.

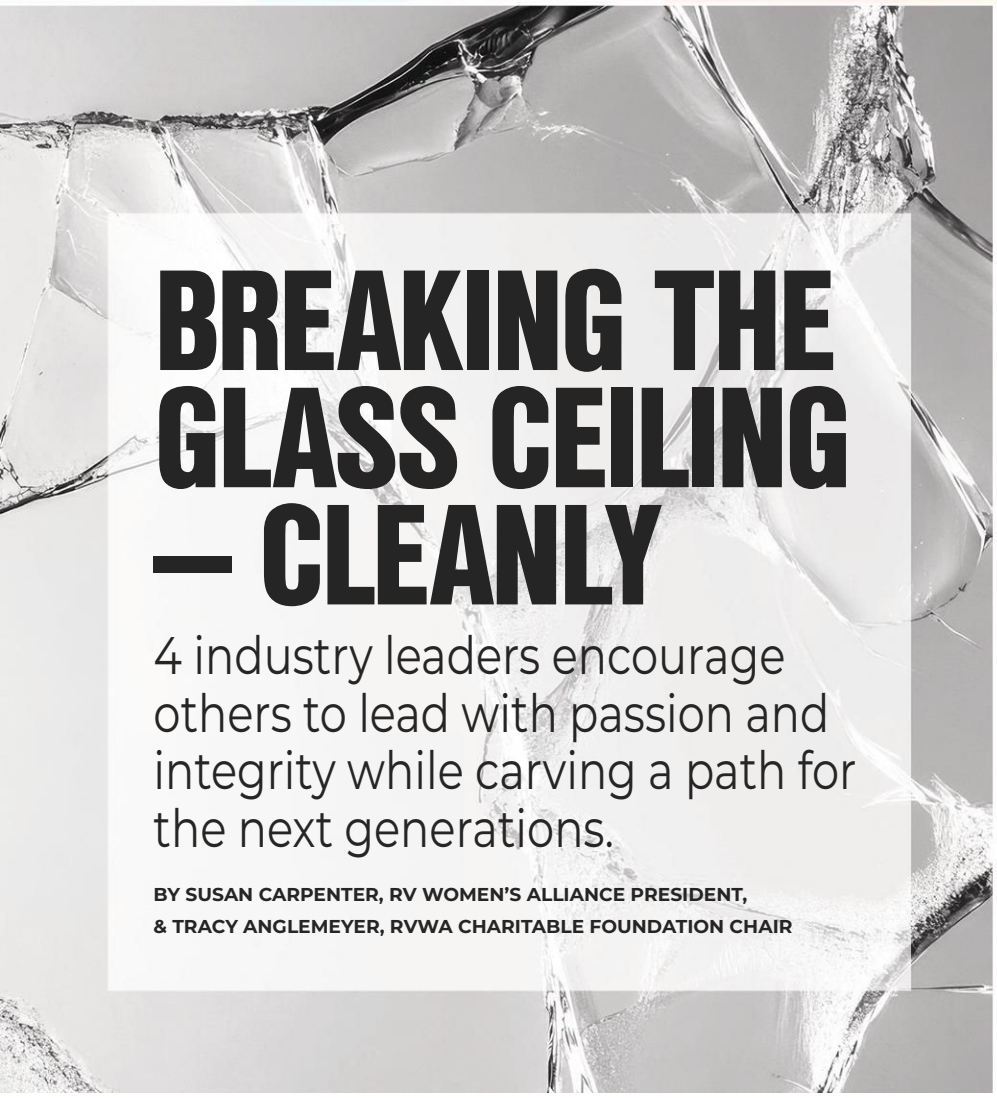
"The brain performs better — more creatively, more clearly — when it's in a positive state. Communication improves, and performance rises," she says.

To leaders who dismiss positive thinking as fluff, she says, "Don't say you want to win if you're not willing to invest in your people and your culture. Imagine what's possible if you integrate both your business and your cultural strategy."

Her advice to other companies? Start with the next right step.

"Transformation takes time, commitment, and consistency. But if you stick with it, you can truly change your business — and your people — for the better." RVP





BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING — CLEANLY

4 industry leaders encourage others to lead with passion and integrity while carving a path for the next generations.

BY SUSAN CARPENTER, RV WOMEN'S ALLIANCE PRESIDENT, & TRACY ANGLEMEYER, RVWA CHARITABLE FOUNDATION CHAIR

The phrase "breaking the glass ceiling" is woven into the fabric of workplace conversation. As defined by Merriam-Webster, the glass ceiling is "an informal, intangible barrier within a hierarchy that prevents women or minorities from advancing to higher positions." Since entering the collective vocabulary in the 1980s, this metaphor has inspired countless stories of trailblazers who have shattered barriers in male-dominated industries, including the ever-evolving RV industry. As women and minorities continue to climb into leadership roles, the question evolves from simply how to break through, to how to do so cleanly — with integrity and honor.

Much of the conversation surrounding the glass ceiling focuses on the struggle and the act of shattering itself — on the moment of breaking through. Yet there is less discussion around the manner in which that barrier is crossed. In a competitive world, how can one advance with integrity — without "trampling the weak or hurdling the fallen"? And more than that: How can we ensure the path is cleared and made more welcoming for those right behind us?

There is, of course, no perfect path to the corner office, nor a flawless trajectory in any career. We are — mercifully and messily — human. Mistakes and second guesses are inevitable. But moving forward with a sense of responsibility and ethical conviction for those around us, striving not only for personal success but also the betterment of our teams and the industry as a whole — that is an achievable, worthy goal. When shortcuts beckon or we see others leap the line by dubious means, it is precisely in those make-or-break moments that our choices define not just our careers, but the legacies we leave behind.

To deepen this conversation, we spoke with industry leaders Debbie Brunoforte, vice president of Campers Inn, and Doug Gaeddert, CEO of Forest River, both of whom graciously shared their perspectives on advancement, ethics and advice for aspiring trailblazers, alongside valuable insights from the broader leadership team.

BUILDING OPPORTUNITY & TAKING IT

One essential truth prevails in the RV industry: Opportunities for advancement exist for everyone, regardless of gender, race or creed. As Gaeddert emphatically asserts, "If you want it, go get it — it's there." This confident optimism is grounded in years of evidence, yet it doesn't come with a guarantee. It takes perseverance.

A pattern emerges in those who don't last, however. If it isn't broken clean, Brunoforte, Gaeddert and we all unanimously agree "that people will not be in the industry long." The group says, "we can see them coming from a mile away." There are no shortcuts.

Very often, barriers are as individual as the people facing them — yet no matter the ceiling, one theme rings true: teamwork is fundamental. "Building them, relying on them and learning from them. Good teams are essential," the group says.

The most successful leaders aren't lone wolves. They create, nurture and trust their teams — and in doing so, they ensure their own ascent is solid rather than precarious.

Gaeddert summarizes it well: "Build great teams. At the end of the day, it

is that simple." The wisdom in this simplicity is time-tested — strong teams raise the ceiling for everyone.

LEADERSHIP LEGACIES: LEARNING, ADAPTING & ELEVATING OTHERS

Everyone makes mistakes. The difference is what one does next.

"Learn from your mistakes — admit them, learn from them and be better," Gaeddert advises. The willingness to acknowledge, own and adapt from errors isn't just humility; it's a strength that forges authentic leadership and fosters trust.

Brunoforte tackles another common misconception — the unflattering lens through which media and fiction sometimes depict ambitious women.

"If you look at movies and novels, they rarely tell the story of a clean break. Most often, successful women are depicted as being nefarious and greedy. But that's just fiction. In real life, the opposite is true. Women succeed with excellence [and] passion, delivering results and being a positive force in the company culture. Not a negative force."

The real stories, the ones not always told in bestsellers, are those of women and minority leaders who achieve not by undermining, but by uniting; not by creating mistrust, but by cultivating thriving, affirmative workplaces.

Adaptability is also a recurring lesson. As Brunoforte notes, "It's not the strongest of the species that survive, nor is it the most intelligent — it's the most adaptive that survive."

In an industry (and world) in perpetual change, those who thrive aren't necessarily the loudest or smartest, but those who can pivot, respond and grow.

Gaeddert puts success into four pillars: "passion, perseverance, intelligence and ethics. With those, there is no limit." Passion fuels the journey, perseverance carries us through obstacles, intelligence keeps us sharp and ready to learn, and ethics guide us so that the path we cut is one we can look back on with pride.

HIRING FOR STRENGTH, NOT EGO

No discussion of healthy leadership would be complete without attention to hiring practices. The oft-cited advice, "Hire people smarter than you," attributed to R.H. Grant, speaks to a critical vulnerability in many leaders: the discomfort of surrounding oneself with brilliance and challenge. However, great leaders do just that — they seek talent that expands the team's collective strength, diversity of thought, innovation and competence.

It's equally essential to "give credit where credit is due." Those who build their careers on the work or ideas of others erode not only their reputation but also the strength of their teams.

We both have found that those who build their career on taking credit for others' ideas or work are bound to fail eventually. This creates a very toxic environment for their team. True leaders elevate those around them and, in doing so, raise the entire organization.

A CLEAN BREAK & AN OPEN DOOR

The glass ceiling, as much as ever, is real. But so, too, is the possibility of breaking through without shattering relationships or principles along the way. Clean breaks are possible; and when done with integrity, adaptability and a spirit of teamwork, they become stepping stones for generations beyond our own.

Let our legacy be this: Aiming not merely for personal achievement, but for a culture in which all can climb higher, together.

As the RV industry continues to evolve, let's choose to break the ceiling cleanly, and leave the door wide open behind us for those to come. RVP



It's Time To Take a Close Look at Your Parts & Accessory Inventory



Include the input of your suppliers, customers and fellow employees.

BY MEL SELWAY

YELLOW_MAN-STOCK.ADOBE.COM

For this month's column, I believe it is worth looking at your parts and accessories operations from the standpoint of being inclusive. Here are three aspects of your parts and accessories operations that could be considered from an inclusionary perspective:

- suppliers of parts, accessories and related materials
- types of RV lifestyles that make up your customer base
- involvement of managers/personnel from other departments when considering inventory mix and depth

Parts & Accessory Suppliers

How many of your suppliers would you consider as primary suppliers? These would be vendors from which you regularly purchase the parts, accessories and related materials that are needed to support your customer base.

What criteria do you apply when you decide to use these suppliers as your primary source(s)? How important are costs, availability of goods when you require them, product mix, return policy and merchandising support in your decision process?

With the possible changes to supply chains impacted by tariff policies, will you be considering adding any new suppliers?

Regarding stocked parts and accessories, if tariffs increase your cost for goods, and if you have budgeted an inventory value established for that investment, then you might have to stock fewer of each of these items (the inventory depth) or perhaps limit the variety of items that you can offer (the inventory mix).

As for those items that are special requests, what is the lead time for goods from each of your primary suppliers? What changes have tariffs made on the depth and mix of those suppliers' inventories, and how will these changes impact your choice of vendors?

Customer requests should be included in your decisions as to what items are needed, so that leads us to the next inclusionary factor.

Your Customer Base: RV Lifestyles

How do your customers use their RVs? With what frequency do your customers use their RVs? By knowing your customers' usage patterns, you can better decide what goods are necessary to stock and what goods might be required on an as-needed basis.

For instance, what types of RVs do you sell and service in your market? Towables used by young families who are recent entrants to the RV lifestyle and who only use them for one or two vacations per year might require a different mix of goods than full-timers with a full-size Class A. Adventure RVers going off-grid will most likely require a different set of parts and accessories than either of these other two owner groups. The quantity of RVs in each of the RV groups within your market could be a

factor in determining the mix of parts and accessories that you carry.

Speaking of customers, I feel obligated to include a separate group of customers who might not own any of the RVs in your market yet might provide important feedback — the employees around you.

Managers & Staff of the Other Departments

As a parts manager/director, I considered members of the other departments proxy customers. These personnel represent your retail customer base and might have valuable input.

Consider that almost every RV owner has only one RV. Yet your RV sales agents might sell several of the same brand/model RV in a year. And your service technicians might maintain or repair the same brand/model several times in a year. By soliciting the input of these other staff members, you could have a broader mix of input.

What if the service manager decided to offer a special on a certain maintenance process? If she contacted the parts and accessories manager in advance, there is a better chance that the parts and materials used for that maintenance special would be on hand in the appropriate quantity.

Suppose the RV sales manager was able to get a deal on a specific brand/model of RV. If he told the parts and accessories manager about the deal, any accessories that the sales agents might offer, and the anticipated fill rate for these accessories, then there is a better opportunity that the sale will be made.

In previous columns, I have recommended that each demand for an item should be recorded, especially for those demands for which a sale didn't occur. These are lost sales that should also be recorded.

What if each service technician and RV sales agent also recorded each demand for an item that didn't result in a sale? If the parts and accessories manager invited the service manager and the RV sales manager to a discussion as to what parts and accessories might be required to fill more customer demands, could that result in a more effective stocked inventory of parts and accessories?

As a parts manager/director, within the first week of my employment, I met with each of the other department managers and asked them how the parts and accessories department could better serve them. This improved the interdepartmental communications and set the tone for future brainstorming sessions among the several departments.

By including staff from all departments, you might enhance the overall performance of your RV business operations. RVP

Mel Selway is the president of P.A.R.T.S. Inc., a Sahuarita, Arizona-based firm providing business management analysis and training to retailers. He can be reached at 520-336-8606 or melselway@aol.com.





What Customers Really Want

Adjusting to the changing needs and expectations of today's customers.

BY THOMAS MORIN



NATALLIA-STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Shopping for an RV can be exciting and fun, but also stressful to customers, as they weigh the plusses and minuses of trading their hard-earned money for the joy that RVing or camping can bring.

However, in the last few years, customers are not only more in tune to what they expect from a dealership, but they are more vocal about sharing it. They're also more assertive in sharing feedback in surveys or online comments.

Most salespeople have not adjusted to their customers' changing needs and expectations and are still doing things the way they always have. Nowadays they expect more than just product knowledge.

So, what's the answer? The following is a countdown of the top 10 (down to the No. 1) most important adjustments salespeople need to make to keep up with customer expectations.

No. 10: Nail the First Impression

We have all heard the longstanding saying "you only get one chance to make a great first impression." Customers are more demanding of their salesperson than ever before, so they now tend to make immediate (subconscious) judgments about them. These perceptions tend to stay with them throughout the shopping process, and since buying decisions seem to be more emotional than logical now, it plays a role in helping them decide. Salespeople now need to be more aware of how they initially approach a customer, what they wear, how they walk, facial expressions and, of course, the first words they say.

No. 9: Do More Listening

Most salespeople try to make a good impression when first meeting a customer, and as a result, they tend to talk way too much. During this time, an anxious customer (which is most of them) needs to feel comfortable talking to their salesperson. This is the first big opportunity the salesperson has to help customers feel safe and develop some comfort. In those first few minutes, be sure to slow down the process, keep it simple, ask questions and listen.

No. 8: Respect The Budget

One of the biggest customer fears is that a salesperson will try to sell them something that is above their budget. They are no longer open to salespeople applying pressure to "upsell" them to a more expensive RV. Once their budget is established, be respectful of the price of what you show them. Once they realize RVs in that price range don't have the features they need, they may increase their budget.

No. 7: Product Knowledge

Customers today expect you to not only know your product, but to master it, inside and out. Why? So you can prove why this product fits where they plan to go, how they'll use it and how it can accommodate everyone sleeping in it. They also expect you to know your competitor's product, so you can prove why yours provides more value.

No. 6: Demonstrate Benefits

Most great features on RVs today are obvious, but that's not always enough. Being able to do an interactive demonstration that also illustrates how it can make RVing easier or more comfortable is what customers expect now. Features and options have gone up in price, so illustrating the benefits customers will enjoy from that feature is a step customers really appreciate.

No. 5: Focus on the Shopping

As soon as a customer walks in, most salespeople get an adrenaline rush about the opportunity for a sale and commission, and they want to get customers to say "yes" as fast as possible. BIG mistake. The customer wants you to enjoy the shopping process along with them. They don't want to see your desperation for a sale. All too often, salespeople's energy for a sale is obvious and it's a major turn off for a customer. Have fun, allow your customer to enjoy

you, the RV and shopping, and the rest will happen when the customer is ready.

No. 4: Do a Quick Recap

When customers look at multiple RVs (four or more), they all start to run together. After walking out of each RV (even if they hated it), stop for a minute and quickly recap what they liked, disliked and what questions they have, and then move on to the next. This prevents them from getting overwhelmed as they look at multiple RVs, and it also gives the salesperson new clues as to what to show them next.

No. 3: Close Respectfully

High-pressure selling is less acceptable to customers now, so if the salesperson can't get them to say yes, bringing in a "closer" to pressure them is a major turn off. Pressure-buying in this economic environment just does not work. In addition, masking a bad deal with cheap throw-ins is a big reason for buyer remorse and cancelled deals.

No. 2: Honesty

Dealing with a bad salesperson is a main reason why customers put the next salesperson they work with through the ringer. Salespeople must be on the lookout for the cues of an anxious customer. Those signs are:

- Nervous, uncomfortable, edgy
- Won't look directly at the salesperson
- Short answers to questions
- Uncomfortable body language

In this situation, you must win the customer first. Any discussion about what they want, why they want it, budget, or anything else must wait. They need to like you, feel comfortable with you and trust you before you'll get the honest information you need to put them on the right product.

No. 1: Build Rapport & Trust

Building comfort, rapport and (especially) trust is the secret sauce of selling. Not having trust in their salesperson is the No. 1 reason why a customer eventually says, "I want to go home and think about it," even if the product is perfect for them, the price fits their budget and everything else appears to be fine.

Salespeople must take the time to build trust with the customer. When they rush the customer out in front of product, they pass on the opportunity to calm their customer's anxiety and build trust to gain the "yes" to buying. So, let's revise what you do and how you do it in those first few minutes with customers to make the adjustments that will result in most customers saying yes the next time you try to close them. RVP

Thomas Morin is a sales coach and author in North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, who teaches salespeople in all industries how to build the rapport and trust that customers must feel to be comfortable buying. Listen to Morin's podcast "No Trust, No Sale" on Spotify, iTunes and Amazon. Contact Morin at bookauthorcoach@gmail.com.







POWER SOLUTIONS

LITHIUM BATTERY



Arizon Off-Grid, Epping, Melbourne, Australia, presents its Off-Grid 25.6V 230Ah Lithium Battery, a recently launched, brand-new lithium battery designed to help adventurers stay off-grid. With Arizon's 24-volt Power Control System, solar panels and lithium batteries, it enables adventurers to run their air conditioning, induction cooktops, air fryers, coffee machines and other appliances. The new 25.6V 230Ah lithium battery will allow them to store even more power from their solar panels to run their essential appliances when they want.

arizon.com.au



LIFEPO4 DEEP CYCLE BATTERY

Battle Born Batteries, Reno, Nevada, offers its 270Ah 12V GC3 Smart Battery. The Battle Born 270Ah 12V GC3 Smart LiFePO4 Deep Cycle Battery is a safe, reliable, long-lasting and intelligent energy storage solution built to give users the freedom to take advantage of limited spaces inside various applications. Designed in a unique form factor, this Smart 270Ah Lithium Battery is not only capable of delivering power and smart communication, but also its tall, narrow build allows for maximum possibilities.

battlebornbatteries.com

RV GENERATOR



Cummins, Columbus, Indiana, presents its Onan QG 7000i DF. The new Onan QG 7000i DF RV generator is dual fuel switchable for LP or gasoline applications and has electronic fuel injection, which means automatic adjustments, no carburetor issues and 50 state certification. It features a variable speed engine with PMA alternator and 120/240-volt inverter output. This new release will have external J1939 communications and extend diagnostics all in a retrofittable design over 70 pounds lighter than current models.

cummins.com

PORTABLE AIR CONDITIONER



EcoFlow, Seattle, Washington, offers its Wave 3 Portable Air Conditioner, which delivers wireless climate control with 1,800-watt cooling and 2,000-watt heating — adjusting room temps by up to 15 F in 15 minutes. Its 1024Wh battery lasts up to 8 hours and supports fast, versatile charging. Smart features include auto mode, dehumidification and pet care. For spaces up to 183 square feet, it runs on eco-friendly R290 refrigerant. With no installation needed, Wave 3 is perfect for outdoor adventures, RVs and backup use.

ecoflow.com

RV SURGE PROTECTOR

Hughes Autoformers, Anaheim, California, presents its Power Watchdog RV Surge Protectors. The Power Watchdog Smart RV Surge Protector Gen II offers robust surge protection, ensuring your customers' RVs are safeguarded against electrical issues. Its patented replaceable surge module lets users swap out a depleted module after a surge event, extending the life of the unit without replacing the entire device. With Wi-Fi connectivity, users can monitor their RV's power status in real time via a user-friendly mobile app. The patented, lockable, illuminated connection bay enhances security and usability.

hughesautoformers.com



BI-DIRECTIONAL ISOLATOR RELAY DELAY



Intellitec Products, DeLand, Florida, offers its 250A Heavy Duty B.I.R.D with RV-C. The HDBD 250A Bi-Directional Isolator Relay Delay (B.I.R.D.) is a core piece of the DC management system offering RV-C communications capability. It will bridge two battery banks together when either battery has a charging source present. It will isolate the batteries when the charging source is removed or when both battery banks are fully charged. The B.I.R.D. can also provide auxiliary start power when the chassis battery is low and the vehicle is unable to start.

intellitec.com

BATTERY CHARGERS



OptiMate High Performance Battery Chargers, Birmingham, Alabama, presents its OptiMate 7 6V/12V GOLD series, an 8-step, 6-volt/12-volt, 10-amp sealed battery saving charger and maintainer. It saves batteries from as low as 0.5 volt and has proven pulse recovery and temperature regulation. Select the right charge voltage: for 6-volt batteries: 7.2V / 7.35V / 7.6V, or for 12V batteries: 14.4V/ 14.7V / 15V.

optimate1.com

ALL-IN-ONE POWER SYSTEM

REDARC Electronics, Lonsdale, South Australia, offers its Redworks QuickFit Power Panels, compact, Australian-made solutions that integrate critical components into one unit. Designed for OEM efficiency, they reduce setup time by up to 50% and cut inventory, labor and supply chain costs. With 40 programmable channels and RedVision compatibility, they support advanced features like mood lighting and actuator control. Rigorously tested to endure tough conditions, each panel is backed by REDARC's warranty and expert support, delivering installation-ready power management for any RV application.

redarcelectronics.com





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RENEWABLE ENERGY SYSTEMS

RV Solar Connections, Denver, Colorado, offers Victron Energy Systems, which specializes in renewable energy systems for mobile applications. First the company discusses your energy needs or the appliances you'd like to use off-grid. Next, the company designs a full system, including lithium batteries, solar, inverter/chargers and system monitoring and control.

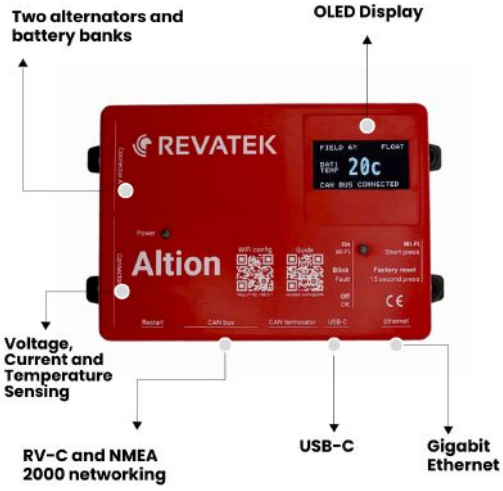
rvsolarconnections.com



DUAL FUEL GENERATOR

RV Mobile Power, Elkhart, Indiana, presents its RVMP 4000e EFI Dual Fuel Generator. The electronic fuel injection 4000e EFI generator runs on a flexible and reliable single-cylinder 224cc OHV air-cooled engine with a digital governor. It's designed to be 50 state CARB compliant, compact, quiet, powerful and efficient. It is over 40 pounds lighter than comparable 4,000-watt generators. Run your RV's appliances directly or recharge your battery bank for extended off-grid boondocking.

rvmp.co



ALTERNATOR REGULATOR

Revatek, Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin, offers The Altion, one of the world's most advanced alternator regulators. It optimizes your power system, ensuring your batteries charge faster and last longer. It possesses differentiators such as 20%-35% faster charging; universal compatibility, working with all major battery chemistries and 12-48 volt systems; App-Free Wi-Fi connectivity; automatic software updates and Boost Mode. The premium version, Altion Max, offers advanced control for up to two alternators and two battery banks. It features a built-in screen to monitor the system status.

revatek.com



CONNECTOR & INLET

SmartPlug Systems, Seattle, Washington, presents its 30-Amp SmartPlug Combo Kit. The 30-amp SmartPlug Combo Kit includes a 30-amp, 125-volt cable retro-fit connector and an updated inlet. The inlets are available in 316 stainless steel or white, gray and black plastic options. They easily fit in the existing inlet hole pattern of the RV. The cable end connectors are made from high-performance materials for long life and resistance to corrosion. The end connector has a mechanical cord restraint, color-coded wire guides and a water-resistant cord seal.

smartplug.com



SOLAR PANEL

Renogy, Ontario, California, presents its 120W ShadowFlux Solar Panel. ShadowFlux is a solar solution designed to perform efficiently in shaded or partially obstructed environments. It's one of the market's first N-Type solar panels, powered by advanced ShadowFlux anti-shading technology for stable, uninterrupted performance — day or night. Utilizing N-type solar cells reduces power loss and maintains optimal performance under less-than-ideal conditions. Engineered for high efficiency in a smaller footprint, ShadowFlux panels pack serious power without the bulk.

renogy.com



INVERTER/ CHARGER

Samlex America, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, presents its EVO-3012 Inverter/Charger. The Samlex EVO-3012 Inverter/Charger combines a pure sine wave inverter, an adaptive battery charger and a transfer relay into a single, compact unit. Designed for RVs, cabins and off-grid applications, this system delivers 3,000 watts of reliable AC power. With a 130-amp charger and a 70-amp transfer relay, it ensures that all your devices run smoothly, bringing the comforts of home wherever your adventure takes you.

samlexamerica.com



SURGE GUARD WITH APP

Southwire, Carrollton, Georgia, offers its Surge Guard 50A-Model 34951. The Surge Guard 50A-Model offers total electrical protection from surges and voltage spikes. Featuring wireless connection via Bluetooth, RV owners can monitor their RV power from their phone with the Surge Guard app. Other features include weather resistance, an anti-theft lock ring, LCD Display and Easy-T-Pull handle. The 50A-Model protects RVs from high/low voltage, miswired pedestals, open neutral, open ground, reverse polarity, high neutral current, surges and overheating plug/receptacle.

southwire.com



SOLAR SYSTEM

Xponent Power, Fremont, California, offers its Xpanse solar system, an award-winning and patented retractable rigid solar panel system. With an ultra-low, 6-inch footprint, the 1,200-watt Xpanse can install where roof space is too limited to install traditional solar panels. With SmartSensors that automatically retract 50 bi-facial solar panels into a high strength aluminum protective shell, Xpanse also has an integrated mobile app for remote operations, monitoring and management of real-time power production and battery status.

xponentpower.com



SURGE PROTECTION DISPLAY

Valterra Products, Mission Hills, California, presents its Mighty Cord Surge Protection 3-foot display, an in-store solution to showcase essential electrical accessories and boost customer confidence. This compact display features Mighty Cord surge protectors alongside circuit testers and AC voltmeters for complete power testing needs. Signage highlights the informative Surge Protection Fact Sheet, educating customers on the value of protecting their electrical system.

valterra.com



If you're interested in submitting a product for the Special Product Focus section,
submit to your sales rep:
Rebecca Tittel: **rtittel@cahabamedia.com**
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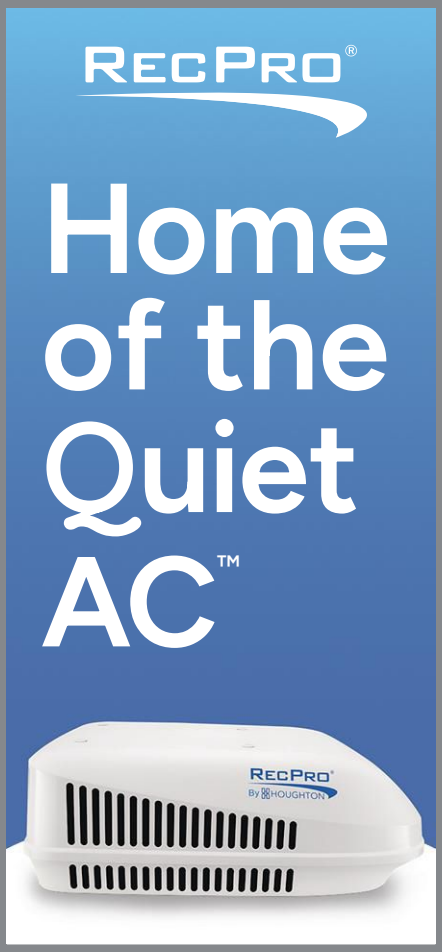
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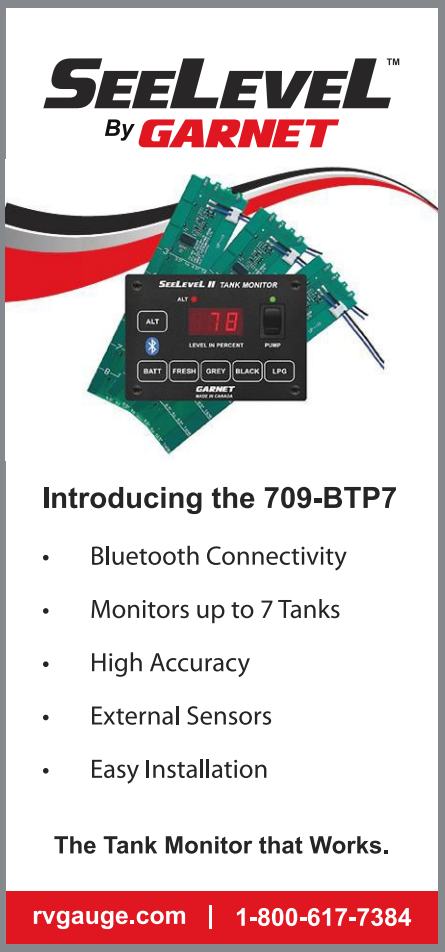


Pictured: Winnebago View Outer Valance Panel LH 16201

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Pit Stop



De Minimis Loophole Closed

As reported on April 2, President Donald Trump announced a decision to close de minimis exemptions for Chinese imports, a move aimed at curbing the flow of illicit synthetic opioids into the U.S. After allowing Customs and Border Protection time to develop adequate systems to collect tariff revenues, **duty-free de minimis treatment for covered goods from China and Hong Kong officially ended May 2, 2025, at 12:01 a.m.** The de minimis rule, which allows goods valued at $800 or less to enter the U.S. without duties or detailed customs scrutiny, has long been exploited by Chinese exporters.

"This is a significant win for the RV industry which has been advocating for a fix to the de minimis loophole, which has had a particularly negative effect on the RV aftermarket sector," RVIA said.

- Imported goods sent through means other than the international postal network that are valued at or under $800, and that would otherwise qualify for the de minimis exemption, will be subject to all applicable duties, which shall be paid in accordance with applicable entry and payment procedures.
- All relevant postal items containing goods that are sent through the international postal network that are valued at or under $800, and that would otherwise qualify for the de minimis exemption, are subject to a duty rate of either 30% of their value or $25 per item (increasing to $50 per item after June 1, 2025). This is in lieu of any other duties, including those imposed by prior orders.

"HANDS OFF"

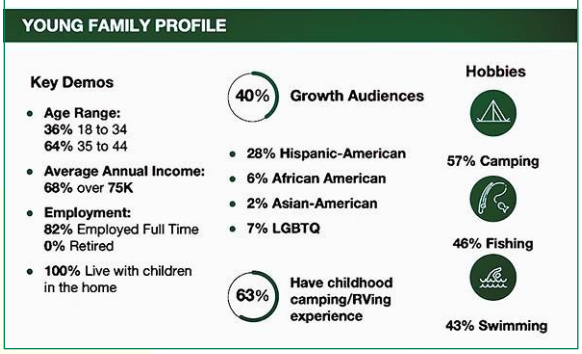
From the Grand Canyon to the Rocky Mountains, Yosemite National Park and more, a nationwide call for support to protect public lands rallied thousands from across the globe over the last two months. Ongoing hiring slashes have devastated the National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service. As of May 2, when the current administration released its 2026 budget plan, reports detail a proposed **75% reduction to the National Park System, which would wipe funding and staffing for at least 350 out of 433 national parks in the agency.**

Specific Park Service-related budget cuts include:

- $900 million cut to the operation of national parks
- $73 million cut to park construction funding
- $77 million cut to recreation and preservation funding
- $197 million cut to the Historic Preservation Fund

Source: National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA)

Comprised of RV owners between the ages of 18-44 with children under 18 in the home, Go RVing's recent demographic report spotlighted Young Families.



MARCH 2025 SHIPMENTS

37,348 (units)
Total RV shipments

15.8% increase
compared to March 2024 (32,243 units)

To date, shipments up 13.9% with 97,848 units

"Heading into the summer selling season, RV shipments are up nearly 14% in the first quarter, and our research shows an estimated 72 million Americans planning RV trips this year," said RVIA President and CEO Craig Kirby. "While we're keeping a close eye on consumer confidence and potential tariff effects, one thing remains clear: even in times of economic uncertainty, Americans turn to travel and the outdoors. The RV lifestyle has enduring appeal offering freedom, flexibility and memorable adventures on the open road."



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