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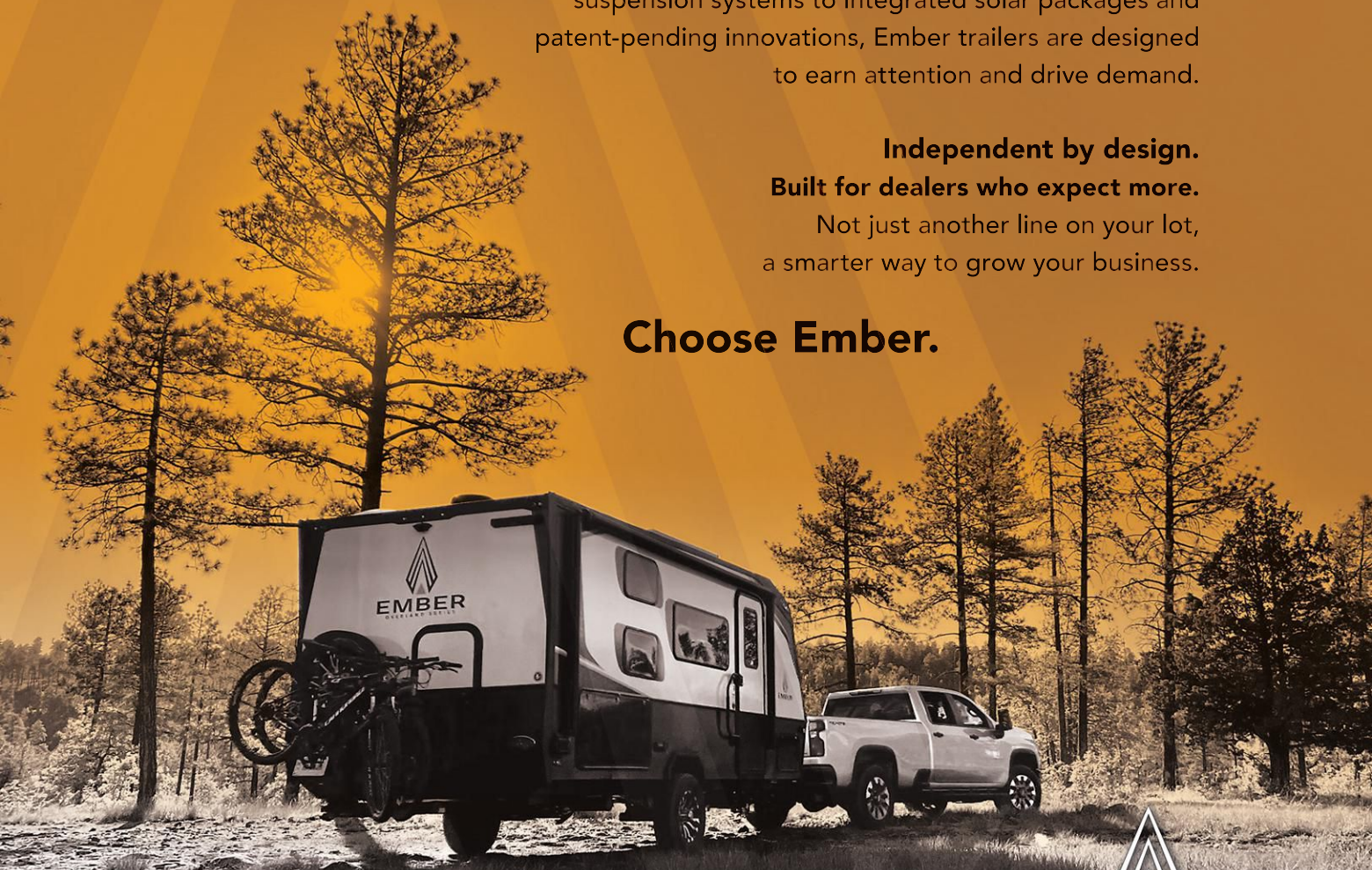
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EMBER

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Keystone's Montana recently underwent a major makeover.
Photo courtesy of Keystone RV.

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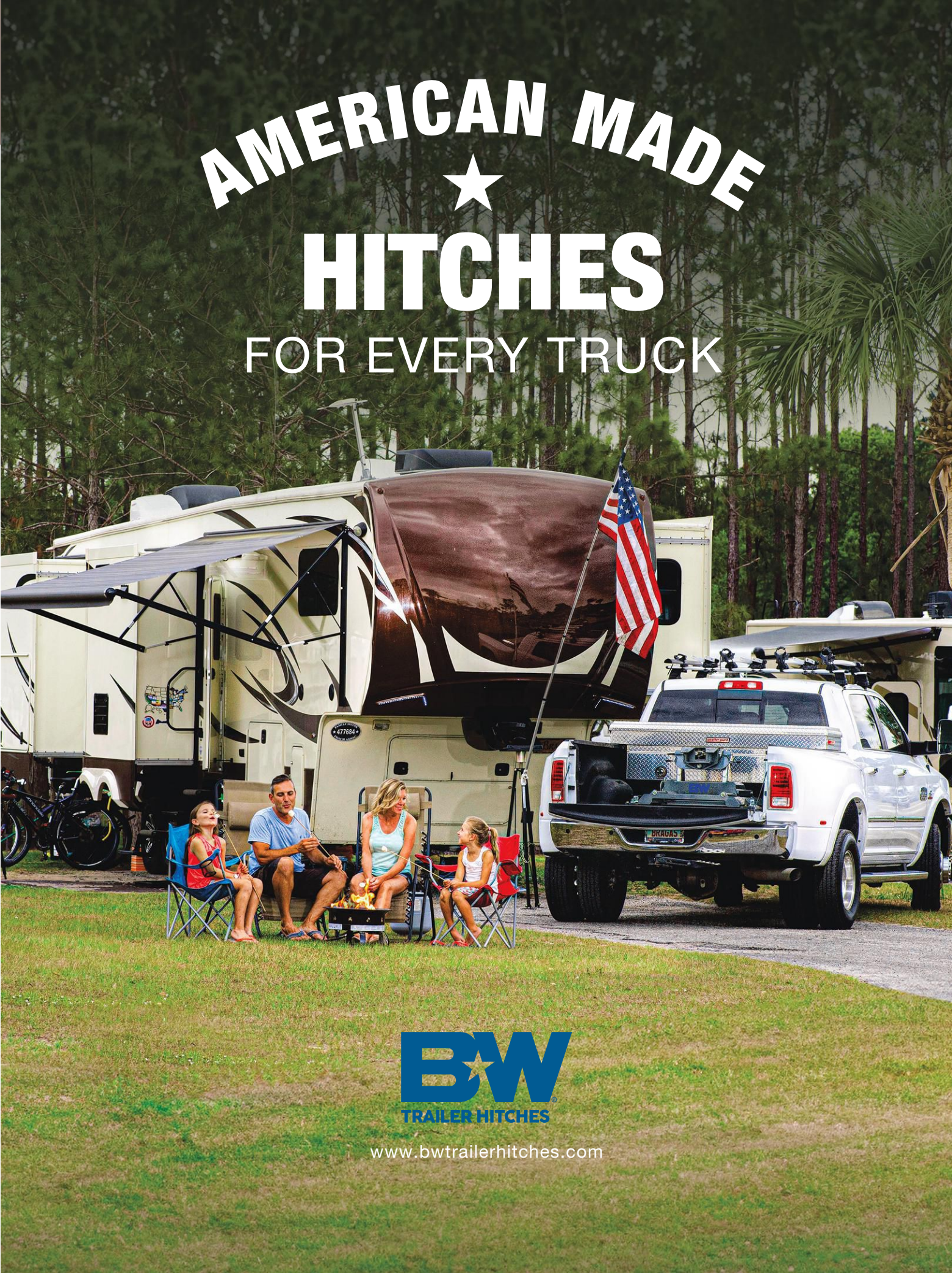
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Michele Moore

This year, the United States celebrates its 250th birthday. This milestone is an opportunity to reflect on where we started, what we've achieved and where we're headed.

For nearly half of the nation's 250 years, RVs have been a part of American life — the RV Industry Association (RVIA) cites 1910 as the birth of the RV industry. That year, a precursor to the modern Class B van, the Pierce-Arrow Special Touring Landau custom built for George K. Birge, was showcased at Madison Square Garden, and camping trailers began to be manufactured by Los Angeles Trailer Works and Auto-Kamp Trailers. Pierce-Arrow later began making travel trailers, dubbed the Travelodge, in the 1930s. Airstream also got its start in that decade, with the iconic riveted Clipper being introduced in 1936. According to RVIA, the burgeoning industry took off after WWII, with many modern RV manufacturers starting production in the 1950s and 1960s.

Our country's love affair with the great outdoors and camping — as well as the RVs that help make it more accessible — is as all-American as apple pie, baseball and all things red, white and blue.

In keeping with the celebratory theme, for our July issue, RV PRO is pleased to highlight 20 honorees for its annual RVeterans special section, recognizing seasoned professionals who have dedicated at least 20 years of service to the RV industry. With the headwinds of recent years and lower shipment numbers so far in 2026, it's more important than ever to depend on the expertise and wisdom of those who know the industry's ins and outs. Turn to page 24 to learn about our 2026 honorees and read their advice for young professionals.

Our July issue also highlights "Made in the USA," so check out the Products section on page 52 for tow bars, hitches, holding tank treatments and more that are all made domestically.

You'll also find business advice for keeping your dealership operations running smoothly. Mel Selway offers tips for phasing out "veteran" inventory that has overstayed its welcome on page 40, and on page 44, Linda Cahan offers her merchandising expertise for upscale RV models. Salespeople can learn to boost their confidence from Thomas Morin on page 47 by preparing in advance for different customer personalities.

As always, thanks for reading and Happy Birthday, America!

Michele Moore



A rendering of the 1910 Pierce-Arrow Special Touring Landau, which featured a wash basin, toilet, foldout bed and more. *Image courtesy of the Buffalo Transportation Pierce-Arrow Museum.*

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Co-Owner

Juan Tejeda
PPL Motor Homes
CEO

Tony Yerman
RV Dealers Association
RV Fixed Operations Consultant

RV PRO

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Jennifer King
jdking@cahabamedia.com

SENIOR MANAGING EDITOR
Jordan Benschop
jbenschop@cahabamedia.com

MANAGING EDITOR
Michele Moore
mmoore@cahabamedia.com

CONTRIBUTORS
Darian Armer, Linda Cahan, John McCurry, Thomas Morin, Mel Selway, Ronnie Wendt

CREATIVE SERVICES

ART DIRECTOR
Melanie Magee

DIGITAL PROJECT MANAGER
Greg Ragsdale

DIGITAL PRODUCTION MANAGER
Charlie Fox

WEB DEVELOPER
Greg Caudle

ADVERTISING

SENIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
Rebecca Tittel
720-784-8081
rtittel@cahabamedia.com

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
Caroline Fugler
720-394-3327
cfugler@cahabamedia.com

CLIENT SERVICES COORDINATOR (ADVERTISING)
Holly Strickland
hstrickland@cahabamedia.com

CIRCULATION
Subscription Changes & Inquiries:
rv-pro@omeda.com

CAHABA MEDIA GROUP

Publisher
Matthew G. Conroy

Vice President of Finance
Brandon Whittemore

Director of Content
Elizabeth Manning

Director of Operations
Laurie Tisdale

Director of Sales
Stacy Marshall

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HIRES & PROMOTIONS



Michael Fennell
Tiffin Motorhomes

Tiffin Motorhomes appointed Michael Fennell as vice president of quality, a newly created role on the company's executive team. Fennell will lead quality across all Tiffin and Cornerstone products, overseeing the full life cycle from product conception through the end-user warranty experience.



Neil Grimmer & Jeffrey Hunter
Storyteller Overland

In May, Storyteller Overland announced a planned leadership transition. Founder Jeffrey Hunter steps into the role of chairman, and Neil Grimmer assumes the role of chief executive officer. Grimmer joined Storyteller Overland's executive leadership team in 2024 as chief strategy officer, where he was responsible for shaping and executing the company's long-term strategic vision and driving year-over-year growth.



Rick Kauer
Blue Ox

Blue Ox promoted Rick Kauer to director of training, in recognition of his 26 years of dedicated service to the RV industry and his contributions to dealer education, customer support and product development. Kauer oversees all training at Blue Ox, including dealer training, internal education, employee onboarding, virtual sessions, tow-bar maintenance and RV Technical Institute Level 1, 2 and 3 courses.



Cody Harman
Genesis Products

Genesis Products promoted Cody Harman to vice president, product and operations, overseeing panel lamination and profile wrapping. In this expanded leadership role, Harman will be responsible for driving product strategy, operational excellence and cross-functional alignment across the company's core business units.

Nick Ebenroth, Scott Taylor, Ian Griffith, Andrew Elliott, Aaron Young & Matt Christensen
Keystone RV Co.

Keystone RV Co. announced an adjustment to its product leadership structure across its Keystone, CrossRoads RV and Dutchmen RV brands. Nick Ebenroth was promoted to general manager of High Profile Fifth Wheels. Scott Taylor was promoted to general manager of Mid Profile Fifth Wheels. Ian Griffith was promoted to general manager of the Toy Hauler segment. Andrew Elliott was promoted to general manager of Entry Level Travel Trailers. Cody Schade continues as general manager of Lightweight Travel Trailers. Aaron Young joins Keystone as general manager of Destination Trailers and Entry Level High Profile Fifth Wheels. Matt Christensen transitions into a new role as director of product development.

IN MEMORIAM



Peter Brown

OHI released an announcement in May regarding the death of Peter "Pete" Brown, owner of Lone Oak Campsites in East Canaan, Connecticut, and OHI Leadership and Elections Workgroup chair. OHI said that Brown leaves behind a legacy of kindness, generosity, service and the countless people made better because of him. In 2024, Brown was awarded the OHI Stan Martin Memorial Award for his support and dedication to the improvement and growth of the members who call OHI home.

"Pete made a long-lasting impact on everyone he encountered and he was a personal friend," said Paul Bambei, president and CEO of OHI. "The seeds of service he sowed will be blooming long after today, and he will always be remembered for his dedication and leadership in the outdoor hospitality industry."

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

In May, **Dometic** was named Business of the Month by the Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce. Each year, the Chamber Council selects up to 12 businesses whose work is advancing the Elkhart, Indiana, community. "We are honored to be recognized by the Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce," said Tim Hall, regional president, Land Vehicle Americas. "The local community plays a key role in how we support our partners and customers across the RV industry. Being recognized by the chamber means a great deal to our team."

Want more?

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EVENTS

FRVA's 113th International Convention & RV Expo
July 1-4
Sedalia, MO
frva.com/frva-sedalia-2026-learn-more

Adventure Van Expo
July 11-12
Winter Park, CO
adventurevanexpo.com

RV Aftermarket Conference
Aug. 10-13
Orlando, FL
rvia.org/events/rv-aftermarket-conference

Overland Expo Mtn West
Aug. 21-23
Loveland, CO
overlandexpo.com/mtn-west

NATDA Trailer Show
Sept. 1-4
Nashville, TN
natdatrailershow.com

America's Largest RV Show
Sept. 16-20
Hershey, PA
largestrvshow.com

Elkhart Open House Week
Sept. 28 - Oct. 2
Elkhart, IN
elkhartrvdealershow.com

RV Component Expo
Oct. 14-16
Shipshewana, IN
accelevents.com/e/2026-rv-component-expo

RVWA Educational Symposium
Oct. 15-16
Chicago, IL
rvwa.org/events/educational-symposium



WEBINARS

Register and find on-demand webinars from RV PRO at rv-pro.com/media/webinars.

RV MANUFACTURING

Winnebago debuted its new ARKA, an off-grid, all-season adventure truck at Overland Expo West. ARKA is built on the RAM 5500 chassis with a 15,000-pound towing capacity and a one-piece molded fiberglass roof. Its adaptable interior features aluminum cabinetry, convertible dinette, modular sleeping options, L-track mounting system and a full-height gear garage with van-style doors.

On May 18, the **Jayco Family** of Companies unveiled its newly remodeled and expanded fitness facility along with dedicating the building as the Jayco Cindy Hawkins Health & Fitness Center. Cindy Hawkins, daughter of Jayco founders Lloyd and Bertha Bontrager, was instrumental in developing the Jayco wellness program. Hawkins was diagnosed with glioblastoma in June of 2023 and passed in April 2024. The dedication of this facility honors her commitment and continued legacy of health and fitness at Jayco.

Mammoth Overland, subsidiary of Vashon Aircraft, announced its XLE, also known as "Xtinction-Level Escape." The XLE is 9 feet tall, with 22 inches of ground clearance and all-aluminum aircraft-grade construction, and features 360-degree night-vision CCTV, a remote-activated sonic defense system, quad remote-controlled bear deterrent systems and more.

RV DEALERS

In May, **Campers Inn RV** hosted the largest grand opening celebration in the company's history. Spanning four days and more than 50 dealership locations across the country, the Epic Grand Opening brought together outdoor enthusiasts and RV lovers in a coast-to-coast celebration of community, adventure and the open road. Each Campers Inn RV dealership put its own unique spin on the festivities, with events tailored to their local communities.

SylvanSport announced its expansion into Idaho and surrounding areas through a new partnership with **Yozzy Overland**. "As demand continues to grow for more capable, lightweight adventure trailers, this partnership [with Yozzy Overland] represents an exciting opportunity to reach new customers in one of the most active outdoor regions in the country," said Tom Dempsey, founder of SylvanSport.

SUPPLIERS & AFTERMARKET

Building on an established and growing relationship that already spans its Dynamax and East to West product lines, **Forest River** has selected **Expion360** batteries for integration into two additional motorized brands: Georgetown and Dynamax Grand Sport. At the center of the Dynamax relationship is Expion360's 12V 240Ah Edge battery, a high-capacity lithium iron phosphate solution.

Big Beard Battery acquired a new property in Athens, Texas, establishing an expanded headquarters and launching Road Life Complex, a multipurpose destination designed to support RV owners, travelers and customers from across the country. "This move comes at a time when we've outgrown our current space," said Stephanie Henson, co-owner of Big Beard Battery. "We started in a cargo trailer, moved into a 2,000-square-foot shop and quickly reached capacity again. This new property gives us the room to continue growing and better serve our customers."

MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

In May, **LCI Industries** and **Patrick Industries** both released press releases announcing the termination of discussions regarding a potential merger of equals. The companies each stated that they were unable to reach a mutual agreement on terms.

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The State of the RV Dealer in 2026: Why the Basics Are Beating the Budget

What separates the dealers gaining ground from the ones losing it.

BY ERIC PEDRETTI, DIRECTOR OF SALES, INTERACTRV

IMAGE COURTESY OF INTERACTRV

Every few years, the RV market resets the definition of what a good month looks like. We are in one of those years now. The post-COVID surge is well behind us, interest rates have rewritten what a payment feels like to the average buyer and OEM production keeps pushing inventory onto lots that are already carrying more than they would like. None of that is news to anyone working a showroom floor.

What is worth paying attention to is what the data is quietly telling us underneath all of it. Across the InteractRV dealer network — which represents more than half of the RV market — the dealerships gaining ground in 2026 are not the ones with the biggest ad budgets or the flashiest campaigns. They are the ones doing the basics, doing them consistently, and treating their digital storefront with the same discipline they apply to the lot.

Marketing spend alone will only get you so far. The top 10% of dealers are generating 4.5 times more leads and turning inventory 54% faster than everyone else. That gap is not closing. It is widening, particularly for dealers whose marketing is integrated with their digital retailing experience and their sales process — in other words, with how a dealership is operating.

The Headwinds Are Real, But They Are Not the Whole Story

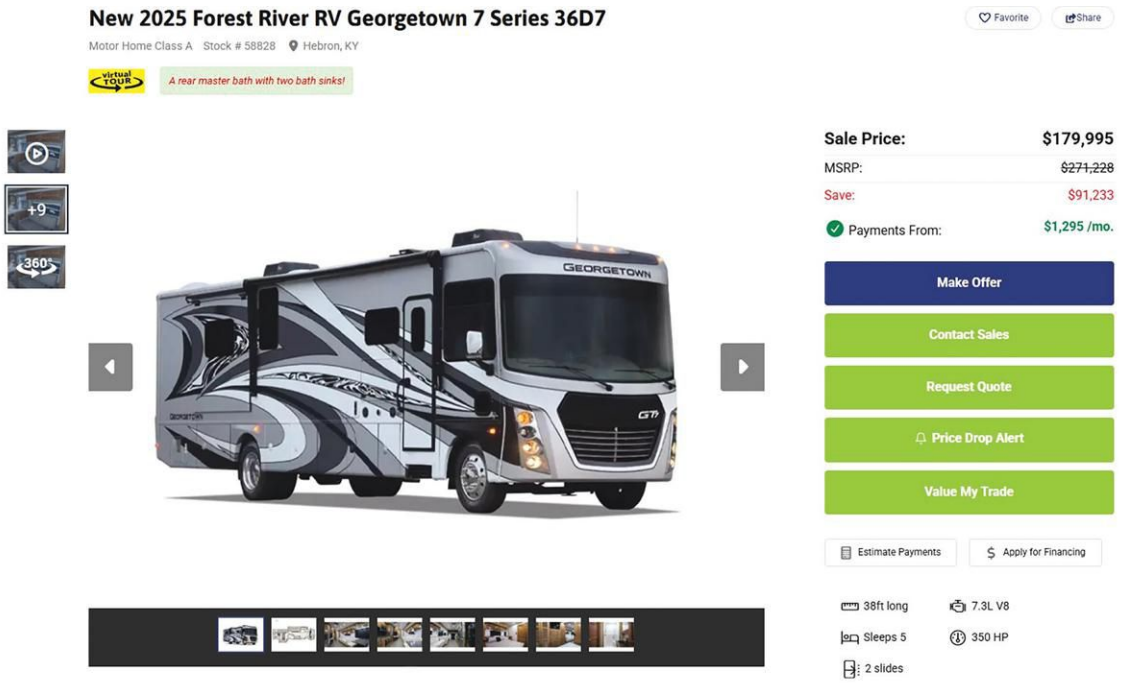
It would be easy to read the current environment as a story about pressure. Many current owners are underwater on COVID-era loans, which makes trade-ups harder to finance. High interest rates and fuel costs are extending buying cycles and shrinking the pool of ready buyers. Cost-per-click for RV ads rose 14.1% by the end of 2025, so every lead now costs more to earn than it did a year ago. Mergers and acquisitions activity and generational ownership transitions are accelerating consolidation, which puts independent dealers under real pressure on both budget and bandwidth.

TOP 10%

The top 10% of dealers are generating 4.5 times more leads and turning inventory 54% faster than everyone else.

All of that is true. Yet when you look at the dealers who are growing through

> *"During COVID, dealers didn't need to spend on advertising — demand outpaced supply, resulting in selling most units easily at MSRP or above. That taught a lot of them that they didn't need to advertise. But dealers now understand they have to invest in marketing to drive traffic and generate leads. They can no longer sit back and wait for it to take care of itself."*
>
> — Eric Pedretti, director of sales, The State of the RV Dealer: 2026



Example of a well-done vehicle detail page (VDP) with pertinent information that customers want.

it, a different pattern shows up. They have not outspent the market. They have outexecuted it.

The challenge in 2026 is not really about traffic. It is about conversion. Shoppers are still out there. They are still researching, still building shortlists, still walking onto lots with screenshots on their phones. The question is whether your dealership shows up clearly enough, often enough and quickly enough to be one of the names on that shortlist.

> *"Most RVers own their unit at least five years. It's often 20-year financing on a purchase they're really invested in — and it always needs something. There's a lot of missed opportunity in the middle for dealers who are only chasing inventory turns."*
>
> — Jenn Ouderkirk, director of product strategy, The State of the Dealer: 2026

The VDP Is the New Showroom Floor

If there is one shift worth internalizing this year, it is this: the vehicle detail page (VDP) has quietly become the most important square footage your dealership owns. RV shoppers want to pre-inspect online before they ever pick up the phone or get in the car. They are clicking through photos, comparing floorplans, checking pricing against memory and against three other tabs open in their browser.

14.1%

Cost-per-click for RV ads rose 14.1% by the end of 2025.

A thin listing creates doubt, and that doubt rarely turns into a phone call. It turns into a click on the next dealer.

Among top-turning dealers, the listings tend to do a few simple things consistently. About 83% of units include pricing. Roughly 72% of units have at least one image, and the average top performer is publishing 10 or more images per listing. Only about 21% of their inventory is sitting at 90 days or older.

None of those numbers are dramatic on their own. Together, they describe a dealership that has decided its website is not a brochure — it is the first walk-around.

Pricing transparency deserves a particular note. Prep fees and freight add real cost between the OEM and your lot, and dealers who disclose that clearly up front — rather than letting it surface in the financing office — close more cleanly and lose fewer buyers to distrust. For independent dealers, this is one of the highest-ROI moves available, and it costs nothing to make.

Showing your math shortens the sales conversation. Hiding it lengthens every part of it.

More than half of RV shoppers — 54% — are browsing outside of standard business hours.

54%

After-Hours Is Where the Deal Is Often Decided

More than half of RV shoppers — 54% — are browsing outside of standard business hours. That is not a minor footnote. That is most of your funnel happening when the store is closed and the sales team is at home with their families.

Listings that show price and financing options generate 47.9% more high-quality leads than listings that don't. When a dealer can reply within 5 to 15 minutes, the math conversion shifts noticeably in their favor. The dealers winning here are not necessarily staffing a 24-hour call center. They have set up the infrastructure quietly: clean inquiry forms with email-to-text alerts, voicemails that confirm hours and offer a clear next step, and routing that ensures Monday morning starts with a list of warm leads instead of a list of missed ones.

For an independent dealer, that infrastructure does not require a large team. It requires a decision and an afternoon.

AI Is Not Replacing the Basics. It Is Exposing Them.

There is a lot of conversation in the industry right now about artificial intelligence, and most of it is useful. About 75.6% of dealers are either using AI or planning to use it this year, and 38% are using it specifically to help prevent lost sales leads.

Search expectations are changing in ways AI is accelerating. Shoppers want fast results, a strong search bar and only a few useful filters. They do not want to learn your taxonomy.

But the honest read on AI in the dealer workflow is this: it does not replace the basics. It makes weak listings, weak routing and slow follow-up harder to hide. A great AI tool sitting on top of a thin VDP and a 36-hour response time will not save the deal. The same tool sitting on top of clean listings and disciplined response times will compound the advantage a dealership has already built. The order of operations matters.

The Real Margin Is in the Middle of the Relationship

This is the part of the business that gets underinvested in almost every year, and 2026 will be no different unless dealers decide otherwise. Owning an RV is a multiyear commitment. Most of a dealership's relationship with a buyer happens between purchases, not during them — yet service pages, parts visibility and post-sale outreach are often the last things to get attention online.

Strong service builds loyalty. Poor service closes doors that no marketing budget can reopen. Keeping your service page current with hours, booking options, active specials and a mobile-friendly experience is not glamorous work, but it is the work that produces a steadier revenue floor when sales cycles stretch. Specials, referrals, rewards, events and past-buyer outreach are not nostalgia tactics. They are how dealerships keep cash flowing through a year that is asking more of every department.

A Practical Place To Start

If a dealership wants to know where it stands going into the rest of 2026, the most useful exercise is also the simplest one. Run a pass/fail review across five areas and be honest about the answers.

- **Publishing stability and inquiry path integrity.** Are units publishing everywhere they should? Are forms, calls and texts landing where they should? Are after-hours inquiries being captured and routed?
- **Response discipline and coverage.** Who owns speed to response? What is the after-hours plan? Are handoffs clean between internet leads and the sales team?
- **Listing completeness and navigation clarity.** Do listings consistently show the basics? Is pricing transparent, including prep and freight? Can a shopper reach the right unit in a few clicks?
- **Service and parts visibility.** Is the service page current? Are parts offerings visible and easy to find? Is the service reputation reflected in the reviews?
- **Reporting alignment.** Do the numbers match what managers are seeing on the floor? Is there a weekly pass/fail scorecard reviewed on the same day every week?

If one area comes back unclear or inconsistent, that is not a crisis. That is the most actionable thing on the to-do list this quarter.

The Dealers Who Will Be Fine

There is a quiet confidence in the data that is worth holding onto. The dealerships pulling ahead in 2026 are not doing anything exotic. They are publishing complete listings. They are answering quickly. They are honest about pricing. They are present after hours. They are taking service seriously. They are staying visible during the off-season because they understand off-season is still buying season.

Listings that show price and financing options generate 47.9% more high-quality leads than listings that don't.

47.9%

The market in 2026 is not asking dealers to be louder. It is asking them to be clearer. The ones who hear that distinction will be the ones still telling good stories at this time next year. RVP

Read the Full Report
The complete State of the RV Dealer report — including the full breakdown of buyer demand by subtype, top brands earning the most VDP views, and the pass/fail checklist referenced above — is available at interactrv.com/blog/2026/04/27/the-state-of-the-rv-dealer.

Eric Pedretti is director of sales at InteractRV. A graduate of the University of Northern Iowa with a marketing and public relations degree, Pedretti started working with dealers 20 years ago, starting in automotive and then for the past 17 years in RV, marine and powersports industries.





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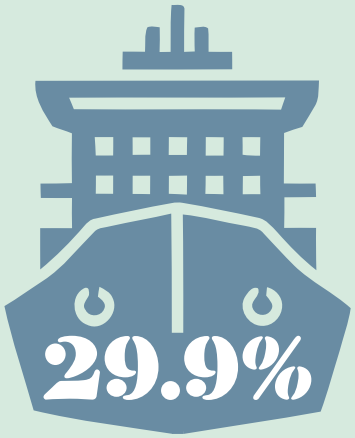
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Facts & Figures: **Park Models**

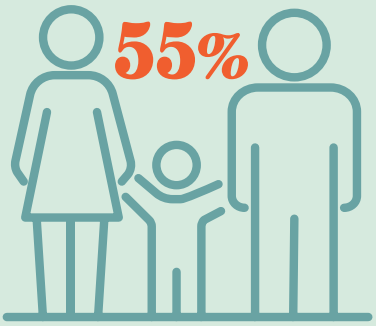
This popular RV segment is trending with families looking for a home away from home.

By RV PRO Staff

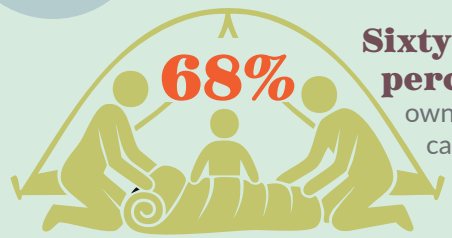


Wholesale shipments of park models are up 29.9% in April 2026 compared to the same month last year.

35% homeschool their children



Fifty-five percent of park model owners have children at home.



Sixty-eight percent of park model owners had experience camping or RVing in childhood.

26% are first-time RV owners



49% are young families

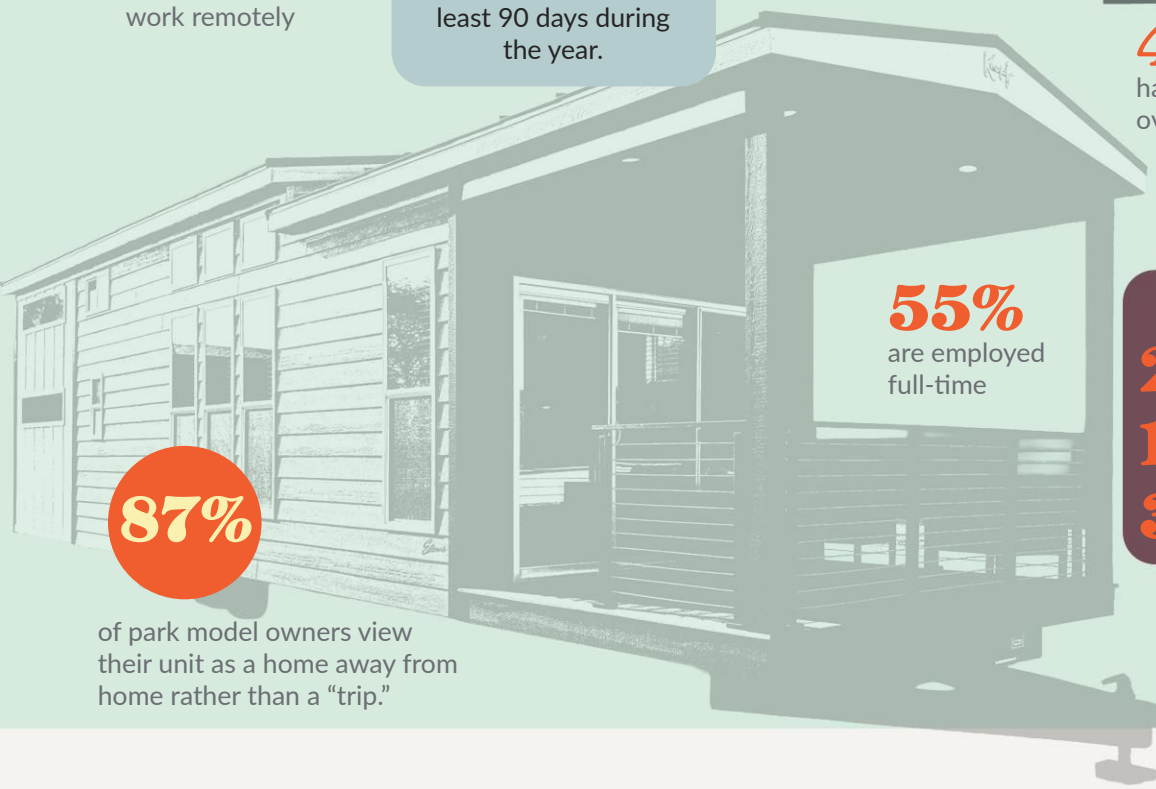


work remotely

90 days

Fifty-five percent of park model owners used their unit for at least 90 days during the year.

49% have a household income over $75,000.



55% are employed full-time

Generations:

28% are **boomers**

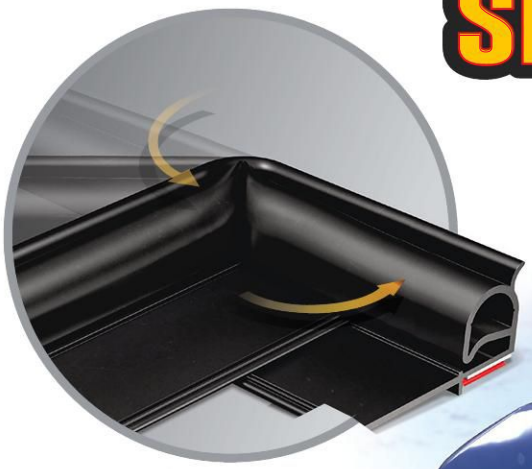
17% are **Gen X**

38% are **millennials**

87% of park model owners view their unit as a home away from home rather than a "trip."

Sources: All statistics courtesy of RV Industry Association and Go RVing. Park model image (left) courtesy of Kropf Park Model RVs.

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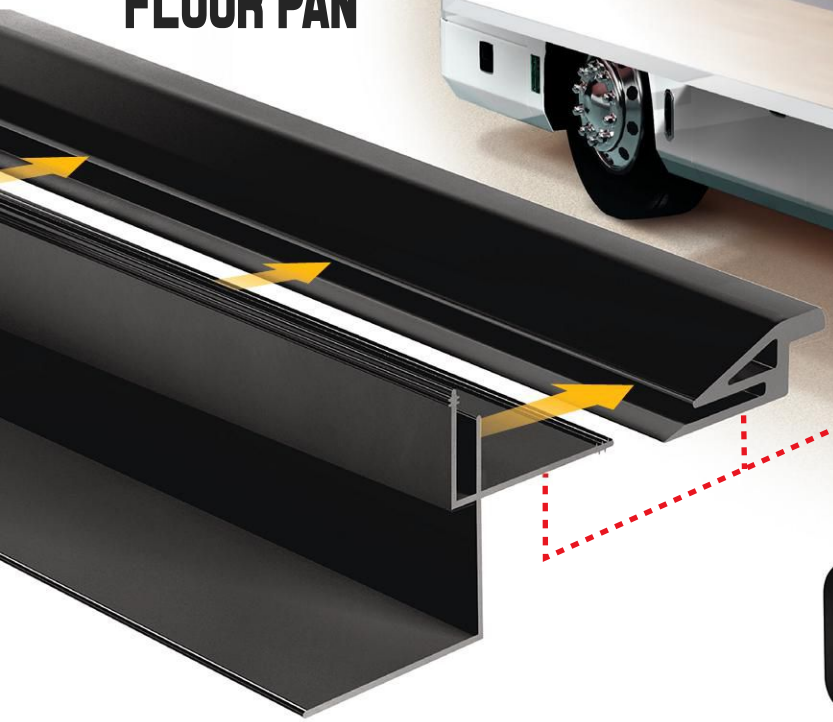


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Beyond a Refresh: The Total Reinvention of the Montana

Keystone RV's iconic fifth wheel enters a new era with diesel-pusher influence.

BY JOHN MCCURRY

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KEYSTONE RV

Keystone stays in touch with customers through the Montana Owners Club, which the company says is the largest U.S. owners club.

Keystone's Montana fifth wheel, which first debuted in 1999, has undergone a major makeover. The reboot is a complete redesign, with nothing transferring from the old Montana. Keystone evaluated and redesigned everything, down to the smallest detail. Early feedback was highly positive, with the new product drawing raves from both customers and dealers.

The Montana and the Montana High Country offer more living space, more storage space, improved functionality and a new five-year structural warranty. The company began working on the relaunch last June.

"Montana has consistently been the No. 1 fifth wheel for the 25-plus years that it has been out there," says Matt Christiansen, Keystone's director of product development. "When we started building the Montana, we were building them based on a requirement that would not allow us to build anything over 430 square feet. So, the depth of our slides, the width of our main rails, all the things that enabled us to maximize our floorplans had to be kept under the maximum area rule that was in place."

The project was not as simple as taking an existing floorplan and making it a few inches wider. It was more like starting over again with the entire model, including a new cap design, new exterior design and an interior overhaul.

"We realized there was a need, and a growing demand, for longer, bigger, wider units," Christiansen says. "Some of our competitors had gone to a wide body. We felt like it was time for us to do a wide body. Once you start going wider, at that point you have to design a new cap. You are redesigning basically everything."

FROM THE TOP DOWN

The design began at the front of the coach.

"After we redesigned the cap, changed what we wanted on the profile of the unit and aesthetically got where we wanted





to be for the front, we stopped and considered our knowledge of the Montana buyer," Christiansen recalls. "Most of them haven't just owned one RV before. They have owned multiple. In a lot of cases, this is the fourth, fifth or sixth RV that they have owned. They know, after a lifetime of owning RVs, exactly what they want and what they don't want."

In redesigning the bedroom, Keystone sought functionality combined with pleasing aesthetics. Starting with the front closet, more drawers were added.

"We wanted a comfortable bedroom area, with enough walking space around the beds," Christiansen says. "When we got to the bathroom, we talked about how every traditional, high-profile fifth wheel bathroom has a sink with about 4 inches of countertop space around it, and maybe a couple of drawers, and is very small. For people who are staying in these for an extended period of time, as a lot of Montana owners do, countertop space is important. We wanted them to have the best bathroom on the market."

Christiansen says the Montana buyer is basically in the same category as a diesel pusher buyer. "There are a lot of similarities; it's just that one is a motorhome and one is a towable. The customer is similar. We have a lot of customers who trade in a diesel pusher for a Montana. We looked at that market very seriously and the innovation. As you look around the exterior of this unit, especially the 3100 that we debuted at [Florida's Tampa SuperShow], you will see the tray that goes out both sides and a massive pass-through storage compartment that is extremely well finished with composite materials that make it easy to keep clean."



Keystone designed storage areas on the main rails on the rear, which the company touts as unique in the industry. There are also pull-out trays on the rear. Among the upgrades is a convenience center with hot- and low-point drains and gate valves. Anything needed for winterizing, or to set the unit up in a campground, is all located in one space. All of the upgrades required a robust structure and frame, with a huge upgrade in the suspension.

One of Keystone's objectives was to incorporate a tray that slid out both sides. Trays are an integral part of the higher end market, said Christiansen, who likens the new Montana to luxury diesel pushers in terms of the new amenities.

"In the motorhome world, especially in the diesel pusher world, the trays are just a huge part of the higher end market. They are in every single thing that you see. Another thing in every diesel pusher or





Class A motorhome is an outdoor TV. In the towable world, that hasn't been taken on into every unit. The Montana buyer is basically in the same category or lifestyle as a diesel pusher buyer."

"All of those things had to be engineered into the trailer," says Nick Ebenroth, general manager of High Profile Fifth Wheels. "You couldn't just take an existing Montana and add the trays on both sides. It had to be redesigned into it. The quest for functionality that we had from the get-go started with bedroom, bathroom and storage. Everything else was built on it from there. From an innovation standpoint, that whole design element was intentional. The other part we felt was very innovative was knowing that units were eventually going to get wider and bigger, as the customers have been demanding. We have even had a lot of requests for a 50-foot Montana. A 50-foot fifth wheel seems unfathomable to us, but it is just a sign of the changing times."

As the redesign progressed, Keystone put its suppliers, both current and new, on notice that they were looking for upgrades. Innovations and fresh ideas were given priority.

"We have absolutely some of the best suppliers in the industry today," Ebenroth says. "We let them know what we were looking to do."

BIGGER & BETTER

Montana's dealers are pleased with the results, as were potential customers at the Florida RV SuperShow back in January, when they got a look at the new model.

"We did a quick turnaround from the point where we were just writing down ideas on a piece of paper in the summer of last year, to the Open House fall show," Ebenroth says. "They were ecstatic over the things that over the years we have wanted to do. Once you go to the wider design, there are things we were able to do. Without those extra inches, we would not have been able to do the bathroom redesign."

Keystone reps said earlier this year that they expected to build between 5,000 and 8,000 units of the new Montana this year, depending on market conditions.

Customers continue to ask for bigger units, Christiansen says.

"When we went through this redesign, we added a lot of enhancements to our frame and to our running gear to enable them to withstand carrying a larger unit, whether it is a 30-foot or someday perhaps a 50-foot unit," Christiansen says. "We have more and more customers doing extended camping, where they have the units parked for months on end. While being able to be nimble and travel around the country is crucial, so also is being able to set up camp and not move for months, whether it is on the beach or in the mountains or wherever."

Customer feedback about adding more space has been consistent, something Montana officials say they accomplished with the redo.

"The customers who want bigger units are not necessarily driving coast to coast," Christiansen says. "Some just want to be able to go and set up for the weekend in their go-to spot. Going to a 50-foot unit will open up a whole new set of things we will be able to do with space. There is only so much we can do in a 33-foot box, but when you go to bigger, the creative minds can think of ways to utilize that space. This is the hottest topic out there. Consumers have changed from a price mentality to a value mentality."

Christiansen says the Montana brand has become synonymous with fifth wheels. He notes there are more than 140,000 units on the road today.

Keystone stays in touch with customers through the Montana Owners Club, which the company says is the largest owners club in the U.S. The club holds multiple rallies throughout the year.

"We are constantly asking questions about the next thing they'd want on a unit," Ebenroth says. "We have a rally here every fall and we go and sit with them and speak and hear what they think. Those features we learn about, we let guide us in our new design. We double down and try to listen to our owners as much as possible, as well as emails and questionnaires throughout the year." RVP

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Chassis & Engine Maintenance 101: **What Dealers Need To Know**

For RV dealers who don't do chassis and engine work themselves, it's important to know who does and how to advise your customers.

BY TONY YERMAN

PHOTOS COURTESY OF TONY YERMAN



TOMASZ ZAJDA-STOCK.ADOBE.COM

"SOME LARGE DEALERSHIPS MAY HAVE A CHASSIS SHOP, BUT, LIKE BODY REPAIR AND PAINT, MOST DO NOT."

—TONY YERMAN

People who own travel trailers move them with a motorized tow vehicle like an SUV or pickup truck. When not towing, most people use them as daily drivers or at least a backup. When the vehicle needs maintenance or repair services, they take them to an automotive shop. It might be the dealer they bought the tow vehicle from, or a local auto shop or truck center.

Motorhomes are another story. They have a drivetrain like a tow vehicle and require maintenance and service to keep them in top condition and dependable. So who does the service on motorhomes?

Most RV dealers have plenty to do on house systems of the vehicle. Equipment to be able to work on the chassis of today's motorhomes is quite expensive, and technicians are as scarce as RV technicians, especially trained and certified ones. Some large dealerships may have a chassis shop, but, like body repair and paint, most do not.

How does the customer/vehicle owner maintain and repair their chassis? Most would take the vehicle to a dealership that services their brand of truck chassis. Under warranty, most chassis manufacturers require the vehicle be brought to one of their

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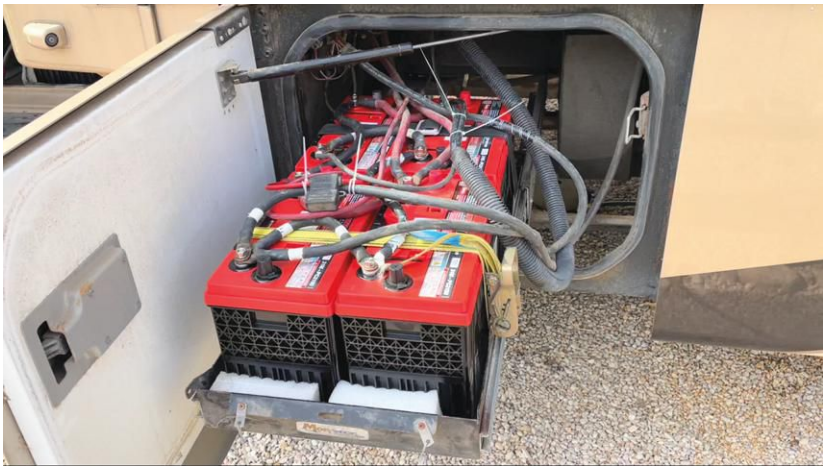
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Automotive batteries require maintenance, just as coach batteries do.



Tires should be monitored for balance, tread depth, sidewall condition and proper inflation.

dealers for service and to cover warranty repair costs.

So how should the RV dealer handle chassis service for motorhome customers? To start, the dealership service personnel should understand what services and maintenance are needed on the chassis of any motorhome. With all the class B motorhomes available, there are a few different chassis manufacturers who provide the underpinnings of these units. Many are just vans converted to RVs. Mercedes-Benz Sprinter, Ford and RAM are the common vans used for these. Class As are generally from Ford, Freightliner Custom Chassis and Spartan RV Chassis.

Each of these manufacturers has their own maintenance schedules. This information can be found in the chassis owner's manual. A list of component maintenance with intervals is listed in the manual. Dealer personnel, including service advisers and even salespeople, should know what to tell the customer about having their vehicle maintained and serviced, by whom, and when.

"DEALER PERSONNEL SHOULD KNOW WHAT TO TELL THE CUSTOMER ABOUT HAVING THEIR VEHICLE MAINTAINED AND SERVICED."

—TONY YERMAN

In the case of larger and more complicated Class A chassis, especially diesel pusher units, most RV dealers have a preferred shop for the maintenance and warranty repairs that their customers will need. Again, the information is found in the owner's manual. The only thing any customer may have to look for is the name and location of the chassis dealer or repair shop.

There are a few things to look for when choosing a shop:

- Do they have certified, trained technicians?
- Do they have the equipment to do all services needed?
- Can the vehicle be maneuvered in their lot easily?
- Do they have a full parts department?

You can also find one online by searching for the chassis manufacturer.

Many shops will do light mechanical work — oil changes, tires and wheels, even brakes. The issue is still whether a shop is authorized to do the chassis warranty work. The RV dealer should be able to recommend an authorized chassis shop or dealer that can be trusted.

Maintenance should be performed by an authorized chassis repair facility but is not required if the shop has qualified techs (i.e., ASE Certified) and receipts are kept and service is recorded. Also, the engines and transmissions of the diesel chassis are not manufactured by the chassis manufacturer. Cummins and Cat are two engine suppliers, and Allison is a popular transmission manufacturer.

Dealer service people should know chassis manufacturer warranty policies and should be able to assist customers with where to have their chassis work done. The service department should refer to the dealer warranty administrator for information on warranty chassis repair and the warranty claims process.

The main point here is that dealership personnel must be knowledgeable when dealing with chassis repair and warranty issues. It's a good idea to have the service manager and warranty administrator present a company policy for chassis repair. RVP

Tony Yerman is a fixed operations consultant to the National RV Dealer Association and the Mike Molino RV Learning Center. He is a Master Certified RV Technician and certified service manager, service writer, parts manager, parts specialist and warranty administrator. Yerman is also the author and developer of the RV Damage Repair Estimator, task force chair for the RV Dealers Association Service Management Guide and a member of RV PRO's editorial advisory board.



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RV VETERANS

CELEBRATING INDUSTRY VETERANS

LEARNING FROM SEASONED PROS GIVES THE RV INDUSTRY A SOLID FOUNDATION.

BY DARIAN ARMER & RONNIE WENDT

The RV business is built on people who have dedicated decades of their lives to helping the industry grow. From dealership operations and manufacturing to sales, service, technology and leadership, long-time industry leaders carry with them the knowledge, work ethic and commitment to move the RV business forward.

Experience matters in a business built on trust. Many of today's most respected RV professionals started on dealership lots, factory floors or in entry-level positions and worked their way up into supervisory roles. Along the way, they gained firsthand knowledge of the business, built lasting relationships and shaped the culture of the organizations they serve.

These RV world veterans are mentors, problem-solvers and trusted resources for customers, coworkers and business partners. They help train the next generation to preserve industry knowledge and provide stability through changing markets, evolving technologies and shifting consumer demands.

What makes many of these leaders stand out is not their longevity, but the way they show up every day with passion, energy and a willingness to help others succeed.

Whether they are supporting customers after hours, mentoring employees, improving operations, driving innovation or volunteering, their impact extends beyond their job descriptions.

At RV PRO, we believe it is important to recognize the individuals whose careers have strengthened and transformed the RV industry.

This year's honorees highlight an incredible group of seasoned professionals with decades of service and industry impact.

We thank the nominators and sponsors who took the time to recognize these outstanding individuals and celebrate the leadership they bring to the RV world.

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Renee Horn

Outside Sales Representative
Land 'N' Sea Distributing

Years in the RV Industry: 30



In the RV world where relationships are everything, Renee Horn has built a reputation on trust.

When Renee recommends a product, customers know it is one she genuinely believes in, not a sales pitch. When challenges arise, she digs in, finds answers and guides customers to a solution.

That relentless follow-through has made Renee a valued partner to customers and a valuable employee to Land 'N' Sea Distributing, where she works as an outside salesperson, covering central and north Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Arkansas.

Renee has a reputation for turning relationships into results. She stays ahead of market trends, uncovers new business opportunities and works closely with internal teams to ensure customers always receive the products, support and service they need.

What sets Renee apart is the way she personalizes every relationship. She tailors her approach to each dealership. She loves introducing dealers to the latest products and innovations, while helping their employees feel confident in their roles and comfortable doing business with Land 'N' Sea.

Renee has worked in this business from almost every angle. At the dealership level, her roles have included parts clerks, service writing, warranty adviser and parts manager. From a wholesale perspective, she has been both an inside and outside sales rep.

Renee's experiences have also sharpened her judgment, strengthened her credibility and earned customers' and coworkers' trust.

At Land 'N' Sea, she is a go-to resource for process improvements, problem-solving and practical guidance. Her historical perspective helps the organization recognize what works and what doesn't and identify opportunities to operate more efficiently.

Renee is also deeply invested in the people around her. Whether onboarding new employees, mentoring teammates or helping dealership staff gain confidence in their roles, she fosters a culture built on support, knowledge-sharing and professional growth.

Her passion for RVing extends far beyond the job itself. When she is not working, Renee hooks up her fifth wheel and heads to Texas state parks to meet up with her camping club for weekend adventures.

What it means to Renee to work in the RV industry this long:
It has given me so much joy to have the relationships I have with so many other RV professionals and customers.

Renee's advice for younger people just starting their careers:
I tell so many of the younger people just starting in the industry to stick with it. It is a very challenging profession to learn, but once you get it, it is so rewarding. There are so many opportunities for growth; once you get the knowledge and experience under your belt, the world is your oyster.

Ron Brown

Engineering Manager
Forest River — Plant 410

Years in the RV Industry: 40+



Some people stay in their lane. Ron Brown never has.

As engineering manager at Forest River Plant 410, Ron's fingerprints are everywhere, from engineering prints and vault systems to process communication, dealership support and product innovation. But those around him say what truly sets Ron apart is not what he does, but his willingness to do it.

Ron attended Dale Carnegie as a student and a coach and brought those leadership lessons into the workplace. He is known throughout Forest River as the guy who says "yes" when something needs to be done.

Coworkers say he will pitch in wherever he is needed, whether that is unloading supplier shipments, assisting sales and customer service teams or supporting other plants within the division. He helps lead retail factory tours and dealership training and works to improve communication in the plant.

That can-do mindset, combined with decades of experience and forward-thinking engineering expertise, has transformed team dynamics and innovation at Plant 410.

Ron played a key role in developing and filing a patent tied to Forest River's 7-foot ceiling height innovation and "One Level Living" River Ranch floorplans. He is respected for his detailed prints and ability to think ahead, which often solves problems before they arise.

But perhaps his greatest impact is the culture he helped create. Coworkers describe him as approachable, humble and endlessly supportive. Ron is a Gold Star employee who stays late, mentors employees, teaches CAD skills and always puts the team first.

Outside of work, he is a devoted father and an accomplished guitarist. He is a lifelong music lover with a guitar collection of over 100 instruments, each with its own story.

What it means to Ron to work in the RV industry this long:
After designing RVs for over 40 years, I have seen a true evolution of the products being made for the end consumer. I have learned a lot about many different aspects of the RV industry by being able to work with many different groups of people from suppliers, sales, production, purchasing, service/warranty, dealers, all the way to the end consumer. This has allowed me a very unique perspective on being able to influence the industry through my designs. It has been very rewarding to have been able to contribute my ideas to directly influence the products we build to help improve the end consumers' experience when using their RV. There are a lot of great people in this industry, and I am blessed to have been able to have worked with as many of them as I have over the years.

Ron's advice for younger people just starting their careers:
You need to be able to roll with the punches and make the best out of every situation that is thrown at you. Don't be afraid to challenge status quo. If you are confident that a change makes sense and would improve either the product or the end users' experience, then keep pushing for that change. Believe in yourself.

Ronnie Wiggins
Facilities Coordinator
Vogt RV

Years in the RV Industry: 40



For decades, Ronnie Wiggins has been the steady hand behind the scenes at Vogt RV. He is the person everyone depends on when something needs to be fixed, moved, delivered, organized or solved. Part facilities coordinator, part mentor, part problem-solver and part family member, Ronnie is woven into the fabric of Vogt RV.

As facilities coordinator, Ronnie oversees equipment, building and grounds maintenance and repairs to ensure the dealership provides an optimal working environment. He also serves as a liaison between the company and outside vendors.

This top performer has been with the business since 1987, when the current company was formed, though his history with the Vogt family dates back even further through previous dealerships. Over the years, he has done just about everything imaginable: from delivering RVs across multiple states to stocking dealership bathrooms and setting up RV shows on his own.

He shows up late at night to move inventory inside ahead of bad weather and responds on weekends when emergencies arise. Coworkers say he treats the business like it is his own, in times of growth or moments of crisis.

Over the years, Ronnie has held nearly every position within the company. He has sold cars, trucks, boats and RVs, and has overseen parts, service and make-ready operations. He has served as an adviser, trainer and customer service resource, bringing vast knowledge and experience to every role.

Though he is beyond typical retirement age, Ronnie keeps the dealerships running smoothly. He stocks lunchrooms and bathrooms, ensures facilities remain up to code, coordinates forklift certifications and stays ahead of OSHA requirements and state regulations. He also keeps Vogt RV compliant with fire department requirements during off-site RV shows.

But perhaps his greatest strength is mentoring others. Ronnie treats every employee as though they are training to become the next dealer president. He takes time to explain why things matter, trains everyone from lot attendants to managers, and instills pride in protecting both the people and the dealership.

Outside the dealership, Ronnie sings in his church band and is a devoted father and grandfather. Widowed several years ago, he has since remarried a woman he met through church.

At Vogt RV, Ronnie is known as the quintessential "do-everything" employee. And when he eventually does retire, coworkers say it will be like losing a member of the family.

Ronnie's advice for younger people just starting their careers:
For those of you that have an interest in working in the RV business and making a career from it, just dig deep and stay with it. I believe you will enjoy this life.

Jazmine Hasebroock
General Manager
Red 10 RV

Years in the RV Industry: 20



Jazmine Hasebroock creates experiences, builds culture and inspires growth everywhere she goes. She has helped turn Red 10 RV into a place where employees, customers and the community genuinely want to be.

As general manager and sales manager, Jazmine oversees all on-site operations while managing a team of 15 full-time employees and coordinating sales, service, parts and finance operations. She manages inventory, hires and trains staff, leads advertising and promotional campaigns, and champions the dealership's "Red 10 Red Carpet Experience," designed to cultivate a VIP-level customer experience.

Under her leadership, Red 10 RV became the No. 1 Grand Design sales dealership in Nebraska, achieving 179% year-over-year sales growth and 167% service revenue growth in 2025. She also successfully guided the dealership through a major ownership transition, relocation and remodel in 2023, while maintaining strong customer satisfaction and team morale.

Jazmine's management style combines operational excellence with positivity and heart. Coworkers describe her as someone who shapes an environment where employees feel valued, supported and empowered to succeed. She actively mentors team members through one-on-one guidance, encouragement and professional development, helping employees build confidence and grow within the organization.

Her impact extends beyond the dealership. Jazmine creates innovative community events, including an annual trick-or-treating experience through decorated RVs that attracts hundreds of attendees while bringing together families, local vendors and charitable causes. She also balances her demanding professional role with being a dedicated mother of five.

What it means to Jazmine to work in the RV industry this long:
Working in the RV industry for 20 years has been an incredible journey and one that I am proud of. I started in this industry as a part-time receptionist, so I've had the chance to learn every side of the business and truly appreciate what it takes to serve customers well. Relationships mean everything in this industry! Working my way into a general manager position has taken hard work, adaptability and determination. The journey to my current role has been one of great adventure, excitement and personal growth.

Jazmine's advice for younger people just starting their careers:
I would advise younger people to take every opportunity to learn something new and absorb it like a sponge. There is potential in every situation to learn and grow, to become better. Each day presents new challenges and opportunities. A strong work ethic, a happy disposition and a willingness to help others will open many doors.

Jeff Redmond

Owner/General Manager
Bucars RV Centre

Years in the RV Industry: 37



Some dealership owners manage operations from behind a desk. Jeff Redmond builds culture from the showroom floor. As owner and general manager of Bucars RV Centre, Jeff oversees sales and marketing strategy, financial performance and inventory management. But he views his most important responsibility as being the dealership's unofficial "corporate culture officer." He plays an active role in employee engagement, serves on the social committee and oversees the company's "Values Champ" employee recognition program.

He regularly steps in to support employees during busy periods and interact directly with customers on the showroom floor. He blends strategic thinking with accessibility to define the culture and customer experience that set Bucars RV apart.

Jeff looks for creative ways to grow the business and improve operations. He embraces a grassroots leadership style that encourages innovation across the organization. Whether evaluating acquisitions, exploring manufacturer partnerships or expanding internal programs, Jeff pushes the dealership to think bigger.

His decades of experience in the RV industry provide a deep understanding of market trends, customer expectations and operational best practices. Through active involvement in organizations such as Go RVing, RV Care and RVDA, Jeff stays connected to the pulse of the industry across Canada and North America.

As Bucars RV's self-appointed "AI Captain," Jeff encourages employees to explore emerging technologies and tools that improve efficiency, customer service and productivity. His direction has accelerated the dealership's digital transformation while fostering a culture that embraces change.

What it means to Jeff to work in the RV industry this long:

The RV business is really a people business dressed up as a product business. Over the years, I've had the chance to sell to thousands of customers who went on to make memories with their families that you can't replicate anywhere else. The campfire does something for people that no hotel or resort ever will, and being part of getting them there is hard to beat. The other half is the people and relationships. Staff, suppliers, manufacturers, other dealers. The relationships you build over decades in this industry turn into real friendships.

Jeff's advice for younger people just starting their careers:

Spend time behind the service counter. That's where you find out what's actually going on, both with your customers and inside your own dealership. Stay scrappy, stay humble and do what you say you'll do. If you're lucky enough to stick around in this industry for the long haul, the relationships and the reputation you build along the way will pay back many times over. Don't take yourself too seriously, and have fun!

Josh Miller

OEM Sales Manager, RV
Dragonfly Energy

Years in the RV Industry: 25



For over 25 years, Josh Miller has been at the center of the RV world's evolving power systems, aiding manufacturers making the transition from traditional lead-acid batteries to advanced lithium technology. Today, as OEM sales manager, RV, at Dragonfly Energy, he has become a trusted voice guiding manufacturers.

Josh works directly with leading OEMs to integrate lithium battery power into their RV platforms. His role bridges engineering, sales and customer experience, supporting manufacturers from initial concept through production and implementation.

But this seasoned veteran's impact extends beyond technical integration. He often travels on-site to troubleshoot systems, educate teams and ensure manufacturing partners are fully confident in the products they are adopting. Whether speaking at trade shows, dealer meetings or factory training sessions, Josh helps manufacturers understand how lithium batteries work and why they matter.

His ability to simplify complex technology and build trust has helped accelerate lithium adoption across the RV market during a period of major industry change.

Josh also plays a critical role in guiding OEMs through supply chain challenges by maintaining consistent communication between customers and internal teams to align production, demand and delivery expectations in a fast-moving market.

Since joining Dragonfly Energy in 2021, Josh has transformed the company from a retail-focused brand into a growing force in the OEM market. During his tenure, the company's OEM channel expanded and now represents over 60% of company revenue.

Josh's credibility and long-standing relationships within the tightly connected Elkhart, Indiana, RV community have opened the doors of innovation and boosted confidence in lithium power.

What it means to Josh to work in the RV industry this long:

I entered the gates of the sprawling RV OEM supply space in 1997 from outside of Elkhart County and quickly learned that this industry is remarkably rewarding, demanding, fast-paced and incredibly tight-knit. I've had the good fortune to work with people at every level of the OEM side of the business and have been fortunate to learn from each one something I've been able to use both professionally and personally. I'm humbled and blessed for every opportunity this industry has provided my family and me.

Josh's advice for younger people just starting their careers:

For those energetic young RV professionals, I'd offer one piece of advice: Listen.

Regardless of what position you are employed in this wildly diverse, nimble and large yet close-knit industry, someone will give you the key to a long, rewarding and successful career.

Raymond Padgett

Vice President of Sales & Marketing
Ultra-Fab Products

Years in the RV Industry: 38



After nearly four decades in the RV industry, Raymond Padgett has become the person everyone calls when something goes sideways. Part salesman, part problem-solver and part industry encyclopedia, he keeps Ultra-Fab Products moving forward with steady leadership, customer insight and upbeat energy.

In his role, Raymond oversees all sales and marketing activities and aids with new product development. But coworkers say his value to the company extends beyond his title. He is the person everyone counts on when the unexpected hits. He doesn't wait to be asked, and he never hides behind job titles. He fills gaps, solves problems and keeps the organization moving.

That dependability is backed by years of experience. This long-time sales leader knows the customers, competitors and RV landscape better than almost anyone because he has spent many years working alongside many of them and building partnerships across the industry. Deep knowledge allows him to answer tough questions on the spot, provide practical direction and move Ultra-Fab forward with confidence in an ever-changing market.

This veteran RV professional also has a remarkable ability to help others learn their jobs and the industry. Internally, he serves as a go-to resource for customer insights and RV know-how. He is always willing to share information that allows Ultra-Fab to better serve dealers and end users.

As a trailer owner himself, Raymond actively engages with RV owners in campgrounds and real-world settings, gathering firsthand insight into customer experiences, pain points and product needs. He brings those conversations back to the company to keep Ultra-Fab closely connected to the people using its products every day.

Raymond is known for his positivity and enthusiasm. In fact, coworkers jokingly say he has been accused of being "too pleasant" — a quality most companies would gladly welcome. He genuinely enjoys talking with customers, understanding their challenges and helping them succeed.

That combination of deep industry knowledge, hands-on customer engagement and unwavering positivity has made Raymond a trusted leader within Ultra-Fab, as well as a respected and valued presence throughout the RV industry.

What it means to Raymond to work in the RV industry this long:
On day one, I was told this is an industry you never leave. It's a fun industry with customers who enjoy it. I've learned so much and had some great opportunities to grow.

Raymond's advice for younger people just starting their careers:
Really two things. One, like most industries, find a mentor or two. And two, get an RV. It's much easier to understand the customers and the industry if you use the products. And having an RV is an amazing adventure.

Jeremy Johnson

Associate Director OEM Business Development
Lightspeed DMS

Years in the RV Industry: 26



At industry events, colleagues joke that Jeremy Johnson is the "Norm" of the RV world. It's impossible for him to cross a trade show floor without someone stopping to say hello. After over 26 years in the RV world, Jeremy has built a reputation for growing business and building relationships that strengthen the RV community.

As associate director of OEM business development at Lightspeed, this seasoned professional works at the intersection of technology, dealerships and OEM partnerships. He connects OEM systems with dealership operations to improve workflows, reduce manual processes and create greater efficiency. Because he works cross-functionally with internal teams and external partners, Jeremy plays a key role in advancing technology solutions that help dealerships grow and operate more effectively.

But his impact reaches beyond his day-to-day responsibilities.

Jeremy is an active leader and industry advocate, serving on committees including the RVDA Convention/Expo Committee, RVIA Emerging Leaders Coalition, Market Information Committee and Supplier Committee. Whether traveling to advocate for the industry, attending dealer events or participating in OEM open houses, he takes time to better understand the needs of dealers, manufacturers and partners.

Jeremy has deep industry knowledge and strong partnerships that directly benefit Lightspeed, and its customers and partners. He leads the way in bringing software integrations and operational innovations into the RV space, bringing ideas and best practices from the powersports market into the RV space.

Colleagues describe Jeremy as generous with his time, always willing to provide guidance, introductions, encouragement or practical advice. He creates opportunities for others through speaking engagements, networking connections and professional development opportunities.

Known throughout the industry as Jeremy, JJ or JRock, he has built a reputation for authenticity, positivity and service.

What it means to Jeremy to work in the RV industry this long:
This is a tight-knit community with great people working across the OEMs, distributors, associations and partners throughout the industry. It's been awesome to see so many passionate people continuing to work hard to build better products and help keep all the amazing places and experiences accessible for families and travelers to explore.

Jeremy's advice for younger people just starting their careers:
Find something you are passionate about first. Waking up in the morning excited and energized about what you do is what really matters. Also, work on maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Work will always be there, so make sure to disconnect from time to time and pay attention to what's happening around you. And don't be afraid to take risks. It's your story to write, so make it a good one.

Elizabeth Stetson

Parts Manager
Broadmoor RV SuperStore

Years in the RV industry: 30



The reason Elizabeth Stetson was nominated as an industry vet is very simple: "Liz knows everything and customers love her."

As the saying goes, Elizabeth wears many hats in the parts department. As part of her responsibilities in managing the parts department, she helps to ensure the right RV parts and accessories are in stock, supports service technicians and provides excellent customer service to retail and wholesale clients.

She also completes estimates for customers and the sales department.

"Liz has so much knowledge and experience. She knows where to locate the hard-to-find or obsolete items. Liz is the last original employee. She brings many skills to our dealership and customers," her nominator says.

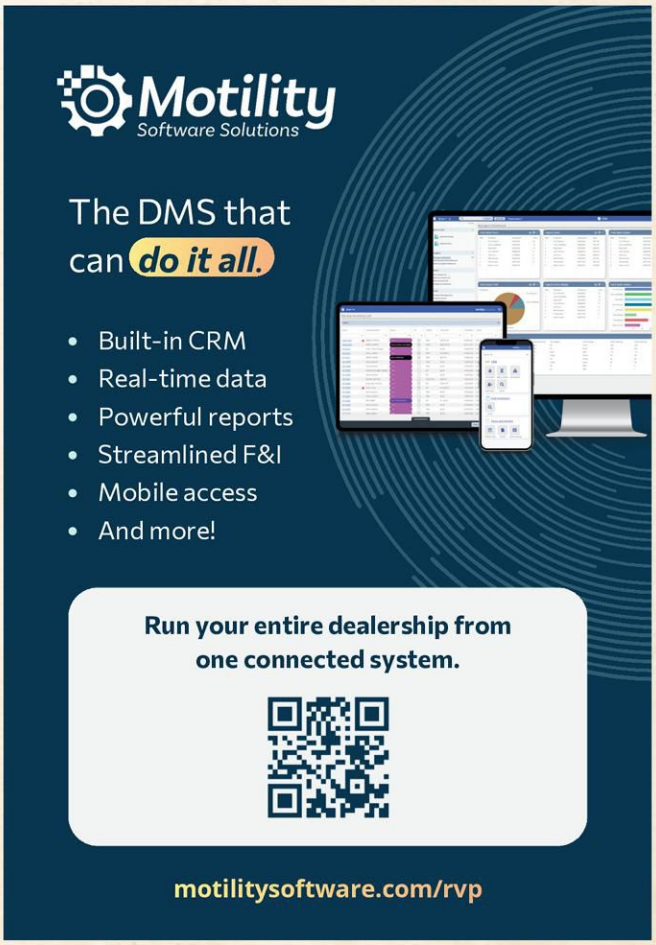
Even after 30 years in the industry, Elizabeth's nominator writes she is always upbeat, positive and ready to explain what part is needed and where to locate it.

That positive attitude is what makes her a great employee and well-liked among customers.

In her spare time, Elizabeth is an avid outdoors enthusiast who enjoys spending her time tending to her flowers and garden, fishing and relaxing at the beach.

Even after 30 years in the industry, Elizabeth is always upbeat, positive and ready to explain what part is needed and where to locate it. That positive attitude is what makes her a great employee and well-liked among customers.





Jesse Ward
Director of Purchasing
Jayco

Years in the RV Industry: 22 Years



Jesse Ward started his career on the production line, and that hands-on experience still shapes the way he leads.

Now serving as director of purchasing at Jayco, Jesse oversees purchasing and material management operations that support production across multiple areas of the company, including lightweight lines, lamination, welding, motorized chassis, tools and supply, wire harnesses, sewing and metal fabrication.

Coworkers say Jesse brings an unmatched level of commitment to the job, taking pride in making sure operations run efficiently and effectively.

"Jesse steps in and completes projects/tasks that improve/help everyone in the purchasing group," says Jeryl Miller, vice president of purchasing at Jayco. "He will complete projects that benefit everyone, not just his team. He has helped our purchasing team become more efficient and lean."

Jesse's leadership is rooted in experience. He worked his way through the organization, starting as a line worker before advancing into PC/IC roles, line buyer, purchasing manager and ultimately director of purchasing. That journey gives him a unique understanding of how every piece of the organization fits together and allows him to better support employees at every level.

Peers describe Jesse as approachable, thoughtful and always willing to listen. Whether helping employees navigate workplace challenges or tackle unfamiliar operational issues, he brings a calm, practical mindset focused on solutions and continuous improvement.

Coworkers say his attention to detail and willingness to dig into complex issues strengthen the entire purchasing team. They also credit him with helping Jayco build a more reliable and cost-effective supply chain through forward-thinking strategies and operational improvements.

Outside of work, Jesse coached soccer at schools and club programs throughout northern Indiana for over 20 years.

For Jesse, coaching mirrors the same leadership philosophy he brings to Jayco: teamwork matters, preparation matters and people matter most. Former players connect with him years after they have left the field, a reflection of the lasting impact he builds on and off the field.

What it means to Jesse to work in the RV industry this long:

It's been extremely rewarding to have the opportunity to work in such a great industry for this long. The pace and versatility needed in this space allows a person to learn so much over their career.

Jesse's advice for younger people just starting their careers:

Develop solid relationships and surround yourself with good people who can help guide you through challenging times and complex decisions. Be prepared to make mistakes, but more importantly be prepared to learn from them.

Scott Tuttle
CEO
Soaring Eagle Campers

Years in the RV industry: 40



Even after 40 years in the RV industry, Scott Tuttle, CEO of Soaring Eagle Campers, is still passionate about building quality campers that make people happy.

With a hand in every aspect of the business, Scott instills that same passion into his colleagues and employees by leading by example and making sure everyone is on the same page. From manufacturing to purchasing to service after the sale, Scott has built a team around him that supports the goals and the vision of the company.

"They have bought into the mantra of, 'If we do it right, we will always have customers!'" his nominator says.

Scott attributes much of Soaring Eagle's success to a number of long-time RV dealer friends who asked him for years to get back into the truck camper market.

"We simply listened to trusted dealers who asked us to bring a quality-built, affordably priced truck camper back to the market," Scott says.

Scott says he enjoys teaching others on his team how to succeed in the RV industry.

"At Soaring Eagle Campers, that starts with our commitment to quality. We build our campers one at a time here and are not interested in the problems or the headaches that can come by chasing the dollars tied to building dozens of campers a day.

"We are proud that, despite an extended, weak RV sales economy, we have never laid off workers at Soaring Eagle Campers, and we have no plans to do so. I cannot think of a better way to support our employees than by maintaining our commitment to doing it right and building our business."

Scott supports a wide variety of local and regional charitable organizations and efforts, including giving scholarships and grants through his two charitable organizations that he founded, the Tuttle Family Foundation and the Life Center of Elkhart County. He also serves on an oversight committee at the Elkhart County Community Foundation, works with the Boys & Girls Club and co-founded Courtney's House — a home for adults with disabilities.

What it means to Scott to work in the RV industry this long:

I am thankful that God has provided the opportunity for myself and my family to be a part of this great industry. I started in it when I was 20 years old and I will be 60 this month, so it has really been a blessing. I'd also say that it means that I really like what I do.

Scott's advice for younger people just starting their careers:

I would encourage young people to find a company that has the same values, ethics and principles that they want to be associated with and not settle for anything else. If you are willing to work for it, you can accomplish whatever you set your mind to in the RV industry, including becoming an entrepreneur and owning your own company.

Stacy Setty
Director of Sales
Optronics International

Years in the RV industry: 24+



As the director of sales at Optronics International, Stacy Setty is willing to step in wherever she is needed.

"She leads by example, supports her team without hesitation and consistently goes beyond her core responsibilities to help both her team and the company succeed," her nominator says.

As director of sales, Stacy is responsible for developing sales plans, setting goals and making sure the team is aligned and moving in the same direction. Her nominator says she is a strong and supportive leader who works closely with her sales team and independent representatives. Stacy takes the time to mentor and guide her team, holding everyone accountable while also encouraging their growth and success. She creates an environment where people feel supported and motivated to do their best.

Stacy is known as a relationship builder, managing customer relationships, OEM and distribution partners. She puts a lot of focus on understanding customers, building trust and maintaining long-term partnerships.

Stacy consistently goes above and beyond to make sure her team is set up for success. She actively supports us by providing the tools, guidance and clarity needed to communicate effectively.

Her nominator says that Stacy is very approachable and has an open-door policy.

"Stacy leads in a way that makes her not only a strong leader, but also someone we can relate to and trust. She can be a friend, a mentor and a role model all at the same time," her nominator says.

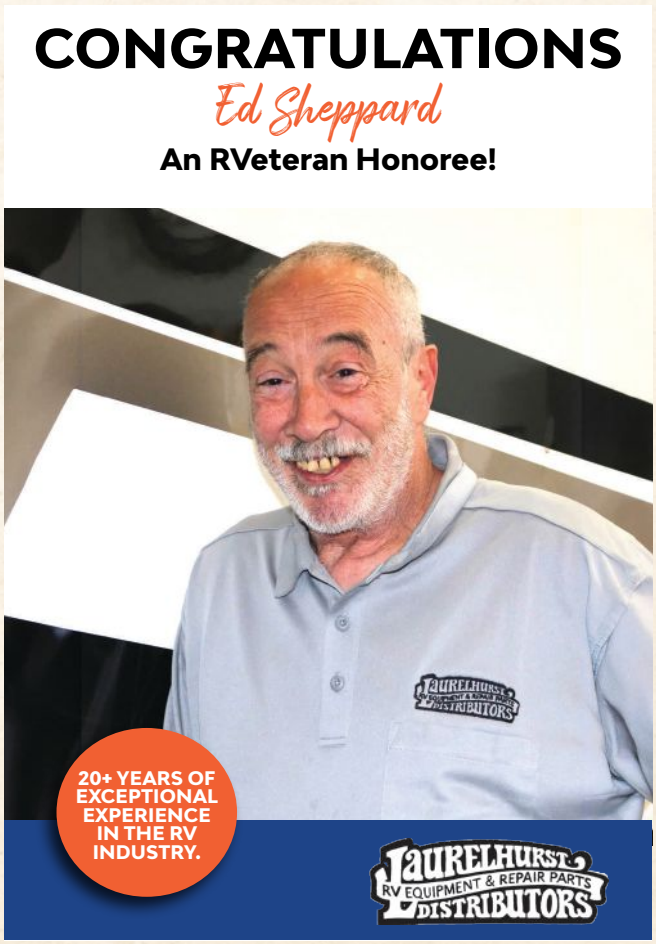
What it means to Stacy to work in the RV industry this long:

It has been an honor to work in the RV industry for 25 years. The industry has changed significantly over time, yet it continues to thrive despite the hurdles we face every day. What makes this industry truly unique is our culture: we work hard, we play hard and we always find a way to keep things moving forward.

But above all, it's the people who make it special. I could not have been successful without them, and I'm grateful for every relationship, every opportunity and every shared win along the way.

Stacy's advice for younger people just starting their careers:

Don't burn bridges — in this industry, you'll most likely cross paths again. Honesty matters, even when it's hard. People respect the truth and the follow-through. Stay loyal to your customers, stay true to yourselves and good things will follow.





Andrew Angel

Senior VP of Engineering & Product Development

Camco Manufacturing

Years in the RV industry: 22+



Andrew Angel's "Go anywhere, do anything" mindset sees him stepping in wherever needed and taking on challenges without hesitation at Camco, his nominator writes.

"He is known for remaining exceptionally calm under pressure. Whether navigating internal dynamics or responding to external demands, he brings a steady, solutions-focused presence to the organization."

As senior vice president of engineering and product development, Andrew provides strategic leadership over product development and engineering across all manufacturing operations, aligning innovation with business objectives and market opportunities.

"I've had the privilege of working closely with Andrew for the majority of his tenure, giving me a unique, firsthand perspective on his impact. Having spent my entire professional career here, I've seen the company grow, adapt and innovate — and much of that progress is directly tied to his leadership, vision and commitment to excellence," says one of Andrew's direct reports.

His nominator says Andrew is an exceptionally well-rounded leader, equally comfortable establishing a new manufacturing facility as he is resolving detailed design or packaging challenges.

"What truly sets Andrew apart, however, is his groundbreaking work in redefining how consumers experience towing. In an industry that had seen little meaningful innovation for decades, he introduced a more mechanical, nonfriction-based approach that fundamentally changed expectations."

Known for his calm and approachable demeanor, Andrew fosters an environment where team members feel comfortable seeking guidance and sharing ideas.

What it means to Andrew to work in the RV industry this long:

What this industry has meant to me, at its core, is being part of something that has genuinely grown and evolved in ways none of us could have fully anticipated. Over 20-plus years, I've had a front-row seat watching RVing expand its reach, attract new generations of enthusiasts and mature into an industry that takes innovation and the owner experience seriously. This recognition is meaningful because it connects me to that larger story, and I'm proud to have played a consistent role in it.

Andrew's advice for younger people just starting their careers:

The growth and momentum that has defined this space over the past two decades has created a foundation that didn't exist when many of us were finding our footing, and that's something worth appreciating. The RV world has a way of drawing in people who genuinely care about it, and that shared investment is what makes the community around it so distinctive.

Cheyney Arters

Service Manager/Lead Technician

Carefree RV

Years in the RV industry: 30+



From volunteering to stay late or coming in early to finish urgent repairs and keep on schedule, Cheyney Arters does what it takes to ensure the service department at Carefree RV is running smoothly.

"He assists other technicians with difficult diagnostics to help the team stay productive, steps in to handle priority or comeback units to ensure customer satisfaction, helps train and guide newer technicians, and shares knowledge and best practices," says his nominator. "He communicates proactively with management about job status and potential delays. He's available on short notice when unexpected service needs arise. His willingness to step up in these situations demonstrates his commitment to both the team and the company's success."

President, CEO and founder Steve Miceli says Cheyney leads the technicians with his years of experience, helping further their careers in the industry. His combined tenure and experience have had a significant impact on the workplace, helping to improve overall team performance.

"Cheyney leads by example. He works hard. He completes quality work and he lives and breathes the company mindset of providing a 'Carefree Experience.' He is always working to educate and level up our team," Miceli says.

He adds that on the rare occasion they have an issue with a rental or service customer, Cheyney drops everything to give them the "Carefree Difference."

"He is always the first to raise his hand to handle a tough situation and leads the team by example. When many companies only provide an 800 number or a voicemail, Cheyney has responded to the call timely and provided repairs on nights, weekends and even holidays."

The go-to guy when a question arises, Cheyney's years of experience and customer service is well known throughout the Carefree client base and his coworkers, making him an advocate in the industry.

"His strong work ethic and true drive to make the customer experience as best as it can be is very hard to find in today's workplace. It is an honor to work with him, and I am proud to have him continue to wear our colors and grow Carefree RV," says Miceli.

What it means to Cheyney to work in the RV industry this long:

For me to be in the industry, it's the relationships you build with customers along the way, the feeling it gives you when others rely on you to keep them serviced and safe so they can go on their journeys and see the beautiful country we live in. It's all about the customer service and the experience for them.

Cheyney's advice for younger people just starting their careers:

Be personable, take pride in the work you do and deliver unmatched quality that others don't provide. Learn as much as you can and be fully versatile in the changing of technologies and be willing to grow with the industry.

Clint Decker

Group Vice President — Fiberglass
Patrick Industries

Years in the RV industry: 38



With nearly four decades in the industry, Clint Decker's nominator says he brings a steady, experienced perspective shaped by navigating both high-growth periods and downturns.

"His deep understanding of the RV industry's pace and dynamics allows him to guide teams with confidence, and his calm, collected approach provides stability and clarity in challenging situations."

As group vice president, Clint oversees multiple business units serving the RV and marine markets, including Better Way Products, SCI, Baymont Composites, Baymont Bath, Frontline Manufacturing, Superior Painting and Williamsburg Marine Furniture.

Clint's role extends beyond operations into mentoring general managers, building strong teams and instilling a sense of urgency around supporting customers and teammates, all while ensuring each business unit operates efficiently and profitably.

"Clint steps in wherever needed, taking on expanded responsibility by leading the entire fiberglass group and integrating additional business units, even outside his prior expertise," his nominator says.

When COVID-19 caused volatility and softer market conditions, Clint was able to keep his divisions profitable while continuing to support both customers and teams. He is known for helping across the organization.

"Clint leads by example. He focuses on building strong teams, developing talent and fostering a culture of accountability and support. He emphasizes taking care of teammates and customers with a strong sense of urgency, empowering others to grow into leadership roles while maintaining high standards across the organization."

With a strong commitment to Patrick Industries and the RV industry, Clint has a competitive spirit and relentless drive to improve that sets him apart.

"He continuously looks for ways to enhance processes and product quality, and even in challenging markets he remains focused on optimizing performance," his nominator says. "He has earned respect as a leader dedicated to both people and results."

What it means to Clint to work in the RV industry this long:
The RV industry has provided for a wonderful life for my family and lifelong friendships. I'm appreciative and thankful!

Clint's advice for younger people just starting their careers:
Surround yourself with great teammates to allow for success in caring for customers and other teammates. It's all about the people! Work with a sense of urgency.

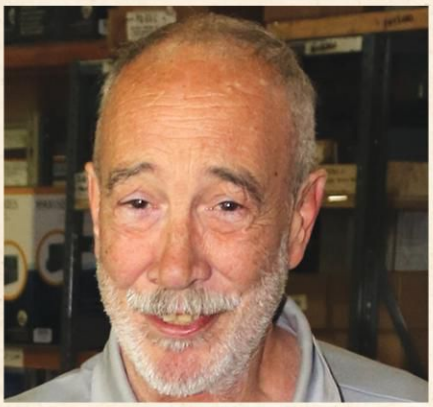




Ed Sheppard

Service & Warranty Manager
Laurelhurst Distributors

Years in the RV industry: 44



As Laurelhurst Distributors grew, Ed Sheppard had a hand in teaching nearly every employee on staff part identification, correct terminology and model nomenclature, basic technical processes and what questions to ask so customers leave Laurelhurst with the exact parts they need.

"Ed's teaching doesn't focus on simply memorizing what part goes where and in what. Instead, he aims to reinforce knowledge of how and why appliances break, what procedures to follow to quickly and accurately diagnose problems, and how to identify environmental or outside influence affecting an otherwise functioning appliance. As he often begins his service calls, 'What's it doing or not doing?'" his nominator writes.

Being in the industry for more than four decades, Ed often remembers when many changes, mergers and revisions happened.

"These changes can impact which courses of action are available in a given repair situation, and Ed's guidance here is invaluable in saving time and money on guesswork. To this day, employees and customers alike line up outside his door to run a quick question past our in-house guru. It is a true pleasure and an invaluable asset to have such knowledge at hand," his nominator says.

Described as a lifelong tinkerer, Ed tries to fix something before replacing it, especially with older, custom and harder to replace appliances.

"Many a technician with an ancient furnace has called him for help, braced for the worst and left with a little-known part and upkeep instructions to make their existing unit last a little longer.

"And when an old dinosaur truly can't be fixed, Ed will walk his querent through detailed instructions on how to retrofit the closest current model unit into their vintage trailer and what difficulties they should be prepared for."

Ed has been instrumental in training an entire generation of RV technicians, both at Laurelhurst and throughout the Pacific Northwest.

"Not a day goes by without his knowledge being sought by service techs all over the country," his nominator says.

Ed offers a free one-day technical workshop annually, where he provides useful knowledge on repair procedures any level of repair technician can find beneficial. Participants are often invited to bring their own queries to the workshops as well.

"For those RV disciples wanting to learn not only 'what' but also 'why' and 'how' and the history of the industry, Ed is truly the guru."

What it means to Ed to work in the RV industry this long:
I'm proud of the 44 years of experience I have given to my career, contributing to the growth of the company and my reputation with our customers.

Ed's advice for younger people just starting their careers:
Don't guess! Test everything before replacing anything.

Jennifer Sugden

General Manager
Tri City RV

Years in the RV Industry: 30



For over 30 years, Jennifer Sugden has built her reputation around a simple philosophy: do what you say, treat people right and stand behind your work.

As general manager of Tri City RV, Jennifer is known for the time, care and relentless attention she brings to the business. Whether it's early mornings, late nights or stepping in wherever needed, she focuses on improving the dealership and the customer experience.

Much of her impact comes from refining customer service-driven processes that support the sales and service departments. She is constantly looking for ways to make the customer journey smoother, transparent and dependable. That commitment shapes the culture of the family-owned business and raises the standard for how customers are treated long after the sale.

The results of her efforts are reflected in the dealership's online reviews, where customers consistently praise the communication, honesty and follow-through Jennifer instills throughout the organization.

Having grown up in the business, Jennifer understands success in the RV industry involves building relationships, solving problems and supporting customers throughout their ownership experience. Her vast knowledge equips her to handle challenges the right way, not simply the easy way, which protects the customer experience and the business's reputation.

Jennifer leads by example. Employees see firsthand how seriously she takes communication, accountability and customer care. That consistency crafts a workplace culture where the expectation is to get the job done in a way that earns trust and keeps customers coming back.

She is also a mentor to employees across the organization, helping newer team members navigate difficult customer situations, understand processes and learn the "why" behind decisions. Colleagues describe her as approachable, dependable and always willing to share her experience to help others grow.

Jennifer is also actively involved in local business organizations and youth sports programs, supporting small businesses and opportunities for children in the community.

Jennifer's advice for younger people just starting their careers:
Find something that gives you a reason to show up and do your best every day. For me, seeing the excitement on people's faces when they're getting ready to go camping is what keeps me motivated. Being part of that experience and knowing you played a role in it goes a long way.

Stay positive and surround yourself with optimistic people. That kind of mindset makes the tough days easier and the good days even better. I've always found that true campers tend to have that outlook, and it's worth carrying into your work and everyday life.

Glenn Goetzinger

Owner & Service Manager
Glenn's Camper & RV Service

Years in the RV industry: 57



A second-generation RV technician, Glenn Goetzinger learned his skills from his father, who learned in the U.S. Army during WWII. His father also taught him electric, plumbing and HVACR (heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration).

Glenn currently holds several state HVACR master licenses, an electrical license, LP gas and natural gas license. He consults for commercial, industrial and residential HVAC companies covering North America and is the owner of Correct Air Engineering located in Maryland. All this on top of being the owner and founder of Glenn's Camper & RV Service, an independent service center.

Glenn shares his knowledge by instructing other service mechanics, proctors technicians' EPA certifications and offers hands-on training. He oversees all services and inspects work before an RV is returned to the client. He consults with clients on service work and required maintenance. He also teaches clients how to perform simple tasks and how to know and understand an RV.

"He's willing to teach new technicians on off hours, builds training boards to teach others and shows technicians and office staff how to give the client the very best experience," his nominator says. "As the boss, he also mentors everyone in doing the best and being their very best. He teaches teamwork, that quality of work matters and to always do the right thing even if no one is watching.

"He's always looking to give the technicians something new to learn each day by showing multiple methods and giving a full explanation on each method. He always listens to techs' questions and gives them a complete answer with full explanation," his nominator says.

What it means to Glenn to work in the RV industry this long:

My father taught me several trades starting in 1969. Now [I'm a] HVACR licensed master, licensed electrician, licensed gas fitter and RV service and restorations mechanic. From a young age, I was working and performing at least two of these trades daily. I have worked them steady all my life, giving me the vast knowledge in handling all RV service needs. The RV industry allowed me to meet and work with great clients. The ability to help my clients with quality work at a reasonable price has always been my main drive. Finding solutions for any problems that may arise and giving good, honest service to clients that are very appreciative.

Glenn's advice for younger people just starting their careers:

Learn all you can. Always be honest and fair with your clients. Treat clients as close family, and always give them more than they ever expected with your service and quality of workmanship. Do your job right the first time.



Jarvis Hunt

Director of Research & Development
RV Mobile Power (RVMP)

Years in the RV industry: 20



Jarvis Hunt has taken on many roles at RVMP, including leading research and development (R&D), driving product development, ensuring quality, training new hires and providing thought leadership.

While he wears many hats, his primary focus this year has been R&D, where he continues to drive innovation and lead new product development across the company.

"Jarvis consistently goes above and beyond, always the first to step up and take on new challenges. While he has earned his position through hard work and experience, he continues to show a strong drive to do more and support the company's success," his nominator writes. "He puts the needs of the company first and demonstrates an exceptional commitment to helping others. Jarvis truly sets the standard as an example employee."

With 20 years of experience in the RV industry, Jarvis is a trusted resource for support. It's that knowledge and experience that makes him the go-to guy when a complex challenge needs to be simplified or to develop effective solutions.

"He has a unique ability to simplify complex challenges and develop effective solutions, making him a true problem solver," his nominator says.

Jarvis has played a critical role on major core initiatives across the company. He is known to be incredibly hands-on, creating detailed training videos, demonstrating how to manufacture products and working directly with teams across the organization and with partners.

"A proud veteran who served our country, Jarvis brings years of experience and a deep skill set, consistently developing effective solutions that improve both our products and overall company efficiency. He approaches every challenge with persistence and determination, never backing down from a problem.

"Jarvis truly lives by the motto, 'If there is a problem, there is a solution.' He does all of this with a smile on his face and is always willing to help others," his nominator says.

What it means to Jarvis to work in the RV industry this long:
Working in the industry this long has had its challenges, but it has been very rewarding. It is nice to see products that you have had a part in developing or manufacturing in so many RVs across the country.

Jarvis's advice for younger people just starting their careers:
My advice would be to show up on time and listen. Don't be afraid to ask a question and always continue to learn.

Ted Cook

Director of Training
National Indoor RV Centers

Years in the RV industry: 35+



Ted Cook may be director of training for National Indoor RV Centers, but he works with all levels of service at every location nationwide and is known for finding areas of growth to improve the customer experience as much as possible.

Known for driving hundreds of miles to help a customer, Ted's name is synonymous with "going above and beyond." Whether he's overnighting parts to campgrounds in order to get customers back on the road or helping to diagnose and fix issues that even the manufacturer can't seem to fix, the list of what Ted has done to help customers is longer than the Nile River, his nominator says.

Ted began his career in the RV industry in 1990 on the manufacturing side, where he developed a deep understanding of motorhome construction and customer expectations.

His early experience with Travel Supreme laid the foundation for a distinguished career in the luxury motorhome segment, ultimately helping shape brands like Entegra Coach and continuing today with National Indoor RV Centers.

Ted is a gifted teacher and always willing mentor others, his nominator says. If he can help educate in any way, he will. He is said to have the best attitude about answering questions, teaching others and helping to streamline problems. He is also known to have an incredible knack for problem-solving that extends beyond the technical side of RVing.

Most recently, Ted figured out how to reengineer the dash air conditioning system in coaches to improve the quality and longevity of the existing units, his nominator says. His willingness to tackle tough issues and engineering prowess has helped solved a long, ongoing issue with the manufacturing of dash ACs. Also, this fix is economical enough to be widely effective among the industry, according to his nominator.

What it means to Ted to work in the RV industry this long:
The most important part of working in this industry is that I get to help customers enjoy life.

Ted's advice for younger people just starting their careers:
You need to have a desire to be a servant in order to help and please others.

BY TARRY SHEBESTA

The New Front Door of Risk

Why RV dealers must rethink credit prequalification in an era of automated identity fraud.



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When news of a data breach surfaces, the industry reacts quickly. But breaches are only one category of digital risk.

There is another vulnerability that is embedded in how many online credit workflows were originally designed. Across the RV industry, dealerships have embraced online credit prequalification. The challenge is that many of these tools were built for a different fraud environment. Today's identity threats are increasingly automated, scalable and AI-assisted. And in many cases, the weakest point is not the back-end system — it is the front door.

Breach Risk vs. Workflow Risk

A data breach involves stored information being compromised. Workflow exposure is different. In many online prequalification models, a consumer enters name, address, date of birth and other static identifiers into a website form. That information is transmitted to generate a soft credit pull or tiered credit response. If the identity details match bureau data, the process moves forward.

The vulnerability arises when no identity verification occurs before credit bureau activity is triggered. If the system cannot confirm that the person submitting the information is a real individual, it may not distinguish between a legitimate RV buyer and an automated script testing stolen identity data.

This is not theoretical. In 2025, an industry Public Service Announcement, published by FlexPath DXP, documented automated attacks against legacy prequalification web applications that lacked identity verification prior to bureau activity. The findings showed how bots and scripted submissions could generate high volumes of soft credit inquiries without confirmed user authentication.

Auto Finance News also reported on similar attack patterns targeting prequalification technology in vehicle lending environments. These attacks are not limited to a single vendor or sector. They exploit workflow design.

Why This Matters for RV Dealers

While many documented cases have surfaced in automotive finance, the underlying mechanics apply broadly to secured lending sectors — including RV retail. RV dealerships often rely on similar embedded prequalification tools and third-party website integrations. That structural similarity means exposure may exist wherever identity is not authenticated before bureau access.

The RV business model also includes characteristics that can increase risk if workflows are not modernized:

- Higher Average Loan Balances — Motorhomes and higher-end towables frequently carry six-figure price tags. Larger loan

amounts can be attractive to fraud actors testing identity data sets.

- Longer Loan Terms — Extended financing terms are common for RVs. Predictable underwriting parameters can make these credit files appealing for automated identity testing.
- Out-of-State Purchases — RV buyers regularly shop across state lines, so unusual geographic activity may not immediately raise red flags.
- Seasonal Traffic Surges — Website traffic often spikes before RV shows and peak travel seasons. Elevated digital volume can make abnormal submission patterns harder to detect.
- Third-Party Integrations — Many dealerships use embedded credit widgets provided by website or technology partners. Dealers may not have full visibility into how identity validation is handled before credit bureau activity occurs.

None of these factors suggest that RV dealers are careless. Rather, they reflect a retail environment that has not yet fully adapted to today's fraud landscape. That gap can create opportunity for abuse.

Understanding Automated & Synthetic Identity Attacks

Traditional identity theft often involves a human actor manually applying for credit using stolen credentials. Today's environment is more automated. Bots can:

- Submit thousands of identity combinations in short time frames
- Test whether credit files exist
- Identify high-credit-score profiles
- Operate without human intervention

Synthetic identity fraud adds another layer of complexity. Fraudsters blend real and fabricated data to create new credit profiles that appear legitimate. If a prequalification system relies primarily on static identity inputs, it may struggle to differentiate legitimate consumers from automated testing activity.

The common denominator is this: If identity is not verified at the front end, the system may not know who is truly engaging.

An Identity-First Model

An identity-first prequalification model changes the order of operations. Instead of collecting full personal information and triggering bureau activity, the system first establishes confidence that the user is real.

In practice, that may include:

- Mobile number validation using one-time passcodes
- Device and behavioral analysis
- Real-time identity authentication before credit bureau access
- Monitoring for repeated automated submission patterns

Only after identity confidence is established does the workflow proceed to soft-pull or tiered credit processes. The objective is not to create friction. It is to place authentication at the front of the process. For legitimate buyers, the experience can remain simple and mobile-friendly. For automated scripts, the barrier becomes significantly higher.



What RV Dealers Can Do

Dealers should ask these questions of their website and finance technology partners.

1. **Is identity verified before bureau activity occurs?** If not, what controls exist to prevent automated submissions?
2. **Do we have visibility into submission patterns?** Can we detect abnormal spikes or repetitive identity entries?
3. **What authentication layers are available?** Are mobile validation or device recognition tools in place?
4. **Are we monitoring soft inquiry volume relative to sold units?** Disproportionate activity may signal workflow abuse.
5. **Do we have a documented response process if a consumer questions a soft inquiry?**

Additionally, dealers should coordinate between F&I leadership, IT vendors and compliance advisers to ensure there are clear disclosures regarding soft credit inquiries, periodic security reviews, staff awareness of synthetic identity red flags and ongoing monitoring of bureau traffic reports.

Fraud prevention is not solely a technology decision — it is an operational discipline. Beyond operational exposure, there is a trust component. Consumers increasingly monitor their credit activity through alerts and apps. An unexpected inquiry, even a soft pull, can create concern.

An identity-first approach demonstrates that a dealership values responsible data handling. That positioning matters as regulators and lenders scrutinize digital credit processes.

Security & Sales Are Not Opposites

A common concern is whether additional verification will reduce lead volume. Experience across multiple lending sectors suggests that when authentication is designed to be mobile-first and intuitive, it does not materially suppress legitimate submissions. In many cases, it improves overall lead quality.

Higher-quality credit leads can increase showroom conversion, reduce time spent chasing unresponsive inquiries and strengthen lender relationships through cleaner data. Security and performance are not mutually exclusive. When implemented correctly, they reinforce one another.

The RV industry has made significant progress in digital retailing. Online inventory, remote communication and payment transparency are now standard. The next step is modernizing the credit entry point.

Ask yourself: Is your current credit workflow designed for today's risk environment? If identity is not verified before bureau activity occurs, that may be an opportunity for improvement. Fraud prevention is an ongoing design decision. And in the digital era, the front door matters. RVP

Tarry Shebesta is a fintech executive with more than 35 years of experience in vehicle finance, digital retail and credit technology. He serves as president of the National Vehicle Leasing Association and is an FBI Citizens Academy alumnus and FBI InfraGard member focused on fraud prevention technology and education.





BY MEL SELWAY

How Many Inventory Veterans Do You Have?

Identifying inactive stock and phasing it out can improve the efficiency of your parts and accessories department.



SUPAVADEE BUTRADEE - STOCK.ADOBE.COM

As a long-time RV industry professional, I appreciate RV PRO's recognition of RV industry veterans. When I was preparing to write my column for this month's issue, I thought of the veterans that might be hanging around in your parts and accessories inventories. Perhaps some of these inventory veterans qualify as an inactive reservist.

I suggest that you develop a PLAN to identify, evaluate and possibly retire any inactive reservists that have completed their service in your parts and accessories inventories.

PLAN is an acronym that I have developed to assist you in your inventory management efforts. These four letters represent:

- **Parameters** should be established to identify inactive reservists
- **Locate** any suspects using your DMS or by measuring the dust on items
- **Analyze** the reason(s) for the inactivity of each qualifying item
- **Need** to take action to effectively process the qualifying candidates

You can start by establishing ...

PARAMETERS to identify an inactive reservist

It is important that you develop criteria to identify inventory items that are not paying their rent. Some dealership management systems (DMS) term these criteria as phase-out guides. The parameters that I used when I was a parts manager/director and that I continued to use in my career as an inventory consultant/trainer are items that have incurred less than three demands in a consecutive nine-month period and that have been included in the DMS database for at least 12 months.

My rationale for a part number to have been in the DMS database for at least 12 months is that any seasonality of demand should have been experienced during the year. Seasonality also plays a role in the consecutive nine months of no demand. My experience is that if an item is seasonal, the season will be at least three months duration. Twelve months in a year minus three months yields a no-demand period of nine months.

These parameters work for me; however, you should develop criteria that you feel comfortable with to identify inactive reservists. Establish these criteria and track the results for a period of time.



If you are hesitant to submit your entire parts and accessories inventories to these criteria, then choose a group (category, batch, group, etc. depending on your DMS nomenclature) of items and apply the phase-out criteria to them. Monitor this group to determine if your criteria identifies the inactive reservists accurately and promptly. If you are comfortable that your parameters are effective, then apply them to the entire parts and accessories inventories.

Now that you have developed the parameters, you should ...

LOCATE the qualifying candidates

Do this preferably by using reports in your DMS. Your DMS might offer a phase-out function that includes a report to identify part numbers that meet the criteria you have established. Or you might develop an exception report with data fields that include (but not be limited to): part number; description; cost; on-hand; on-order; date last received; date last sold; bin location (or locations).

Note: I suggest including all values of the on-hand quantity field (-, 0, +) so that you could also use this as an on-hand accuracy check.

Having identified possible inactive reservists, the next step in your PLAN is to ...

ANALYZE the reason each is experiencing inactivity.

This is important because there might be reasons for the inactivity. These reasons could include:

- The item is not competitively priced.
- The display is not attractively presented.
- The item is hidden behind other goods.
- The carton is in the storeroom and not on the retail floor.
- The product is out of place, e.g. black water tank treatment not with sanitation display.
- Customers in your market aren't interested in this product.
- The brand of RV for which this item is applicable are no longer offered by or serviced by your dealership/business.

These are a few of the reasons that an item has been identified as inactive — yet some of these reasons might suggest different marketing efforts are needed rather than a reason to eliminate the item.

Having decided why each part number has been included in your phase-out report, you now ...

NEED to take the appropriate action.

As implied in the analysis section, the action taken on each item in the phase-out report might be elimination if an item that has qualified as inactive. However, if the item has qualified as inactive due to ineffective marketing, then the necessary actions may not include elimination. First, we will introduce some elimination options and then look at some marketing changes.

Can an eligible item be returned to the supplier? This will require that your parts and accessories manager is familiar with the policies and procedures of each of your suppliers or at least your primary suppliers.

Does the supplier for an eligible item offer a buy-swap option? In this case, some of your suppliers allow returns of slow moving inventory in your dealership if you agree to purchase a specified value in currently popular goods. This is an especially useful option (if it is available) when ordering for an upcoming season. Assuming that the products you will be ordering are reasonably certain to sell during the season, then ordering for the season could also provide benefits such as delayed billing, discounts or free items.

"IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU DEVELOP CRITERIA TO IDENTIFY INVENTORY ITEMS THAT ARE NOT PAYING THEIR RENT."

If the cost of one of the qualifying items is substantial, then perhaps your parts and accessories manager could have the parts associates (or even the major unit sales agents) contact customers who own an RV which the item will fit. An attractive price offer could get the item out of your inventory and generate some cash flow. If this item requires technical expertise to install, perhaps some income could be generated through the service department.

Review the tax laws related to scrapping inventory items. This might not generate any income, yet it might reduce your business' tax liability for the year.

If an item on the phase-out report has experienced inactivity, perhaps you determined that it wasn't merchandised effectively. Decide if the demand might be there if your customers were aware of the item and take the necessary actions to market it more effectively.

Recalling the drill instructor's frequent commands during my basic training experience for the U.S. Air Force, perhaps my closing could be: Ten-Hut! Forward march to get those inactive reservists out of your parts and accessories inventories. 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.



BY BRIAN BODINE

Most Dealerships Don't Have a People Problem — They Have a Process Problem

Give your people the tools, structure and support they need to succeed.



NUTTAPONG PUNNA - STOCK.ADOBE.COM

For decades, one of the most common frustrations heard across the RV industry has been simple and familiar: "We just can't find good people."

And to be fair, that challenge is real. Recruiting, training and retaining quality employees — especially skilled technicians and experienced fixed-ops talent — has never been easy. Today, it may be harder than ever.

But in many dealerships, the true issue runs deeper than staffing.

Most dealerships do not have a people problem.

They have a process problem.

When Good People Enter Broken Systems

Consider what happens when an average employee joins a dealership with clear expectations, strong workflows, connected departments and modern tools. They often perform above expectations because the system helps them succeed.

Now flip the scenario. Place a highly talented employee inside a dealership where processes are inconsistent, systems do not communicate, responsibilities are unclear and managers lack visibility. Even strong performers begin to struggle. Over time, many leave.

That is not because they lacked ability. It is because the environment made success unnecessarily difficult.

The Hidden Cost of Operational Friction

Many dealership leaders mistake operational friction for a talent shortage. In reality, underperformance often stems from avoidable inefficiencies such as:

- Sales, service, parts and accounting working in silos
- Employees relying on tribal knowledge instead of documented workflows
- Managers making decisions based on instinct rather than real-time reporting
- Repetitive data entry and manual handoffs
- Customer delays caused by internal bottlenecks
- Time spent fixing preventable mistakes instead of improving operations

Those are rarely hiring problems. They are process problems.

Why the Right DMS Matters More Than Ever

A dealership management system (DMS) should do far more than store records and process transactions. A modern DMS should help define how the dealership operates.

It should support:

- Consistent workflows
- Faster communication between departments
- Real-time visibility into performance
- Stronger accountability
- Better customer experiences
- Seamless integrations across your dealership technology
- Scalable growth across one or multiple rooftops

When the system is strong, employees spend more time producing and less time navigating chaos. When the system is weak, workarounds become the culture.

The Scalability Test

Here is a simple leadership question every dealership should ask: If your best employee left tomorrow, could someone else step into the role and succeed quickly?

If the answer is no, the business may not have a staffing problem — it may have a dependency problem.

High-performing dealerships are not built around heroes. They are built around repeatable systems, clear training, documented processes and technology that helps ordinary people deliver extraordinary consistency.

Better Systems Help Keep Better People

Before concluding the answer is "we need better people," leaders should ask a tougher question: Are we giving our current people the tools, structure and support they need to win?

When dealerships improve processes, the benefits tend to show up quickly:

- Training becomes faster
- Turnover becomes less disruptive
- Performance becomes more consistent
- Customer satisfaction improves
- Managers gain clearer insight
- Strong employees are more likely to stay

Great people want to work in places where they can succeed.

Final Thought

People will always matter. But even the best people will eventually burn out in broken systems. Dealerships that want stronger teams should start by strengthening the foundation beneath them. Focus on fixing the process. Connect the operation. Equip employees to perform at their best.

Do that well, and what looked like a people problem will often start solving itself. RVP

"WHEN THE SYSTEM IS STRONG, EMPLOYEES SPEND MORE TIME PRODUCING."

Brian Bodine is the chief sales officer at Lightspeed DMS and has been a dedicated leader with the company for 30 years. He has worked closely with thousands of dealers across the recreational industry, building a reputation for strong relationships and a commitment to dealership success.





BY LINDA CAHAN



Upscale Your Dealership's Merchandising

How to upgrade your displays to attract customers.

"Less is more" is the mantra of upscale retail businesses that attract and sell to customers in the higher income brackets. Years ago, I ghostwrote the visual standards manual for Saks Fifth Avenue. I bumped into their visual team at a trade show a few years ago, and their corporate director of visual merchandising told me that almost everything I wrote is still in practice 30 years later. Standards don't change over time; only the merchandise and fixtures do.

According to the RV Industry Association's 2025 RV Owner Demographic Profile, about 34% of the people buying RVs have an income of over $100,000 a year. Many earn well over that amount. In addition, 43% of purchasers earn an upper-middle income, which is $50,000 to $100,000 a year. Only 23% of buyers are in the $50,000 and under income bracket. That means at least 77% of your customers are shopping at stores with higher priced merchandise and are exposed or influenced by the "less is more" style of merchandising of pricier products.

Thanks to our current inflation and anxiety about U.S. and global relations, many people are looking toward discount and low-priced big box stores to save on daily costs. But they still aspire to upscale merchandise.

"Space equals cost" is another major tenet in upscale retail. Customers innately know that if there is less crowding, the merchandise they are seeing is probably more costly. It's simple math. But there is a fine line between more space and looking low on stock. It's what you do with the "empty" space that can intrigue and entice your customers (or not).

Lifestyle stores such as RH (Restoration Hardware), Terrain, Pottery Barn, Williams Sonoma and Crate & Barrel separate out their more expensive lines by creating more visual and aisle space. It doesn't have to be a lot of space, just enough to say, "this is special."

"According to a 2025 report from research firm Moody's Analytics, the top 10% of U.S. earners (with household incomes of $250,000 and up) now account for almost 50% of all spending; 30 years ago, they accounted for 36%," Fast Company reported last year.

Here are some ideas on how to separate and display your more upscale models and other merchandise to attract this customer base.



MAX - STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Placement

In our Western culture, people read a store like a book from left to right and then follow their noses to the right. If you place your more expensive RVs and merchandise toward the right side of your showroom, people will tend to walk in that direction first. This works best if your front door is in the middle of the storefront or slightly to the left or right.

I consulted for Danner Boots in Oregon at a new store they opened in Hillsboro. Their new boots weren't selling as well as their sale boots. The new boots were to the left of the front door on the wood wall and on wood units that were perpendicular to the wall. The sale boots were on freestanding metal A-frame units perpendicular to a window wall. People came in, looked from left to right and walked over to the sale boots — and the light. I suggested that they switch their merchandise, and their new boot sales, now on the right side of the store, went up considerably within a day of making the change. Look at your store layout and notice how people walk as they enter your showroom. If your front door opens to the far-right side of your showroom, people will gravitate to the left as they will see what's there better than what's right in front of them. In that case, center your upscale products so they are the first things people notice as they enter.

If you have some sitting areas for talking with customers, those can go in the dead zones — the front and back corners of the showroom — depending on where your stockroom doors are located. Of course, these should be attractive areas with desk lights and all chairs having arms for customers who need them. Desk lights need warm bulbs to throw a soft yellowish light as that strengthens the connection between people and adds some serotonin to the brain, making people more receptive. If there is no outlet nearby, research rechargeable battery restaurant lighting. Consider adding a tall plant to visually anchor each of the spots and to give them pop of color and texture.

Plants are a vital addition to any of your more upscale settings. Plants and fake trees remind people of nature if they're good ones. Real or fake plants? That is totally up to whether there is lighting for a real plant and people who are willing to water and nurture the plants. Fake plants just need to be dusted — monthly, at the least. But buy great-looking fakes — look at Autograph Foliages, Petals.com, Nearly Natural, Afloral, Artiplanto, Silk Plants Direct and Ikea. I have only bought from Autograph Foliages, so I can personally vouch for them. Read reviews before you buy.

Spacing

I've been in many RV locations, and while some are large enough to showcase five or six special RVs in the showroom, most are smaller, showcasing just a few.

Then there's TerryTown RV in Grand Rapids, Michigan, that has about 200 brand-new RVs housed in a 5-acre heated showroom, which is ideal for the weather in Michigan. Whether your showroom is small, medium or huge, one thing makes sense — for the most expensive units, create a little more visual and breathing space between

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them, both indoors and out.

In the prime focal areas — what people see as they walk into your showroom and/or walking through it — add a focal scene that can include some taller trees, lights on the unit, perhaps fake grass (with carpet tape to hold it down), plus some more upscale foldable outdoor dining or seating that you sell as well.

Lighting

Good lights attract people like moths to flames. Once you designate focal areas for your higher priced models, make sure you have some overhead lighting to make them just a bit brighter than the less expensive models. Of course, use LEDs, and ideally they should be on average about 4 to 5 feet above the RV to get the most bang for your buck. Check out outdoor solar lights and lanterns as a category to add to your merchandise assortment. As they will not shine in your store, blow up catalog photos of each one and put them in Plexiglas sign holders so customers can see what each looks like at night.

Signage

Less truly is more. Of course, signage matters, but too much may feel less desirable. You're selling a lifestyle, and that includes a feeling of elegance. For the more upscale units, make sure your signs are in a frame — ideally, one that is floor-standing with the frame part on an angle, so the sign is easy to read from a standing position.

Please don't slap fluorescent-colored sale or special event signs on the expensive RVs. Make sure all signage is on the floor-standing sign holder. When you search "floor standing angled sign holder" online, you can find a vast array of options at many price points. Check the reviews, not just the price, before you buy.

While white type on a black background looks "classier," it is much harder to read for older people (over 50) who are the traditional luxury buyers for the more expensive RVs. The contrast of the white on black vibrates, making it more challenging to read.

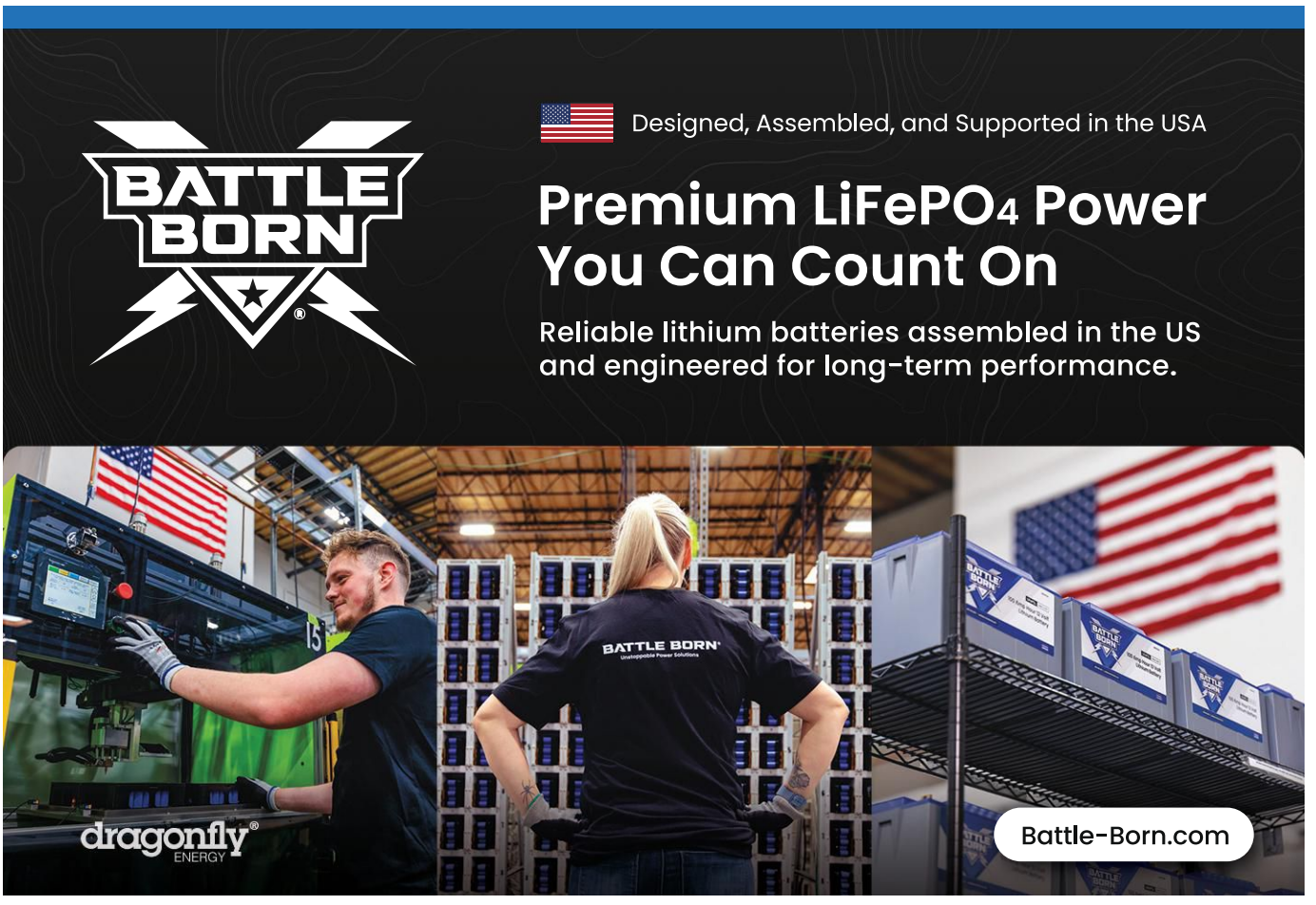
If you want the white on a dark background, experiment with a softer dark taupe, blue or green background. Please get opinions from your staff and older relatives and friends. You can print out these test signs on your computer and get feedback before you spend time on the final ones.

New luxury buyers may now be in the 35-54 years old range. But the basic rule is to design your signs and lighting for the oldest of your customers. The younger ones will be totally fine with what works for those whose sight isn't what it once was.

Remember that space equals cost, so give your upscale merchandise and RVs some breathing room. Separate, decorate and light up your most expensive RVs and watch them sell! RVP

Linda Cahan is the president of Portland, Oregon-based Cahan & Co., a consulting firm that works with retailers of all sizes and categories to improve their bottom line through affordable and appropriate visual merchandising, store design and renovations. For more information, visit lindacahan.com.





BY THOMAS MORIN

Situational Salesmanship

Planning responses for different customer personalities in advance can boost a salesperson's confidence during the sales process.



AUREMAR - STOCK.ADOBE.COM

RV salespeople deal with varying personalities and customer types every day, and if they are not thoroughly prepared in advance, they'll soon discover that a one-size-fits-all selling approach will not prepare them to be flexible enough to adapt to different types of customers.

Customers from different generations have distinct mindsets, priorities and goals in shopping situations. Customers from the baby boomer generation have distinct philosophies and values compared to Gen X customers. There is some crossover, but for the most part, each generation thinks and acts differently from the generation before it. The salesperson who approaches each customer in the same way might get lucky once in a while, but unless they adapt their presentation to a way that prospective customers find acceptable to their generation, it will be like trying to put a square peg in a round hole.

Many customers have different personality types as well. The expressive customer needs a fun, exciting shopping and demonstration process with laughter that's not too serious or overly dependent on details. They need to have fun while shopping, and being able to decide to purchase something will be difficult for them. The analytical shopper prefers a detailed presentation that includes supporting information with facts and documentation backing up the demonstration. They're all business and care very little about having a fun time shopping, as their decision to buy will be based strictly on the information and data being presented to them.

All this requires salespeople to have a chameleonlike ability to adjust to the customer on short notice. That is one of the reasons why it takes a new salesperson two to three years to get their legs under them and start to consistently get customers to say yes to buying. They don't have the experience with multiple types of customers yet, so they rely totally on the selling system they were



taught in the initial training — whether it fits the customer standing in front of them or not.

Even though there are different types of customers out in the market, there is some consistency in the objections customers might use, which can be predicted in advance. Identifying these and developing basic responses a salesperson could use would be helpful to prevent getting caught off guard when they're thrown at you.

Developing a library of these situational salesmanship opportunities can help you handle these with effective, well-thought-out responses, memorized in advance, and increase a salesperson's confidence to handle them when a customer tries to take a sales process off track.

Listed below are some of the statements customers typically use in trying to sidetrack a salesperson's efforts to move them through the selling process, along with some suggested responses to consider. Use them as a starting point to develop your own.

"I'm just looking."

How many times have you heard that from a customer when approaching them just after walking in the front door? Hundreds or maybe thousands.

Possible responses:

"Well, you're in the right place to look. What is it that you're here to see today?"

"I understand that you're shopping around. We have a great selection to choose from. Let's talk about exactly what you're interested in, so I can show you right where that is."

"I'm happy to assist you today. Where would you like to get started?"

"This is the first place we've stopped."

Possible responses:

"Have you looked at our website? Did anything catch your eye?"

"I'm happy that you've chosen us. I'm sure you'll be happy that you did."

"That's great! Most people make us the last stop because they are very happy with how we treat them here."

"That's great! You're my guest here, so let me show you around."

"Our marketing department tells us that most customers have looked online before stopping in. Did you find anything on our website that caught your eye?"

"I have no idea what I want … I just started looking."

Possible responses:

"That's fine. Let's spend a few minutes together and find out what's the best fit for your needs."

"Here is a great place to start … Let's sit for just a minute to get some more information, and we'll get started."

"I understand. Deciding is a process, but I can help. Let's get started!"

"Great — you don't have to decide right now. Let's talk about what's important to you, and I'll take you right to that product."

"Great! Have you done any research online that can help us get started?"

The customer who won't give you a budget.

Possible responses:

"We've got ____ of those here. Did you want to start with the lowest priced model first or the highest priced?"

"I'd like to be respectful of your budget, so what price range did you want me to focus on today?"

"Since I will be very respectful of your budget, what is an amount that you don't want to exceed today?"

"If we started in a price range of $150 a month, does that work for you?"

"We've only got 10 minutes."

Possible responses:

"When you say 10 minutes, does that mean that you actually have to leave in 10 minutes?"

"That's not much time. What would be your expectations for those 10 minutes?"

"OK, sounds good. What would be your goal for those 10 minutes?"

"That should be just enough time to talk and help me know what to show you when you come back in. Does that sound good?"

"That's not something that you can realistically do in 10 minutes. Let's set an appointment for you to come back when you have more time."

"I know what I want — I found it online. I just want your best price for it."

Possible responses:

"So, if I give you our best price, you'd be willing to buy it right now?"

"I know price is important to you, but let's take a minute to make sure that it's the right product for you, OK?"

"So price is important to you. Is that what's most important to you in this purchase?"

"Sure, but how about we take a quick look to make sure it's the right fit for you?"

"It's great that you found something that you like. If I can get some quick information from you, I might be able to find you something better for less money, sound good?"

"I don't need a salesperson; I just want to go out and look at what you have."

Possible responses:

"We like to help our customers find the perfect _____ for you that's in your budget. How's that sound?"

"It's important to me that you don't waste your time looking at something that's over your budget. Let's talk for a minute, and I'll save you some time."

"I don't like working with a salesperson either, but I will be a trusted partner for you to help find something nice in your budget. Does that sound good to you?"

"You can certainly go out and look, but some features that you don't necessarily need could inflate the price."

"The price is too high."

Possible responses:

"Our price is too high? What makes you think that?"

"I see that you have spent quite a bit of time researching the pricing at our competition. Have you also researched the company's integrity, service reputation and commitment to customers?"

"We know that we are in the ballpark with our competition on pricing, but we would suggest that you look closely at how we stack up in service reputation and our warranty."

"We rarely miss a proposal by much, so let's give the sales manager an offer they would consider. Sound good?"

"I want to go home and think about it."

Possible responses:

"I can appreciate that you want to go home and think about it, but I would like to ask: What is it that you would like to go home and think about?"

"Other than price, what else are you considering as part of your decision-making process?"

"It's been my experience that when a customer says that they want to go home and think about it, it's because they aren't really interested. Is that it for you?"

"You would like to think it over. Would you care to expand on that, please?"

"OK, fine, what did you plan on thinking about? Product? Price? Something else?"

Let's use these as a starting point and act now to identify all the things customers have said in the past that have thrown you off course and develop responses you're comfortable with to keep your sales process moving in the right direction. Other benefits include:

1. Increasing customer confidence
2. Being perceived as a problem-solver, which will help relax your customer
3. Building on the trust you have already established
4. Preventing additional objections from arising later in the process

Get out your pen and paper and get to work on solving this ongoing problem, so customers will no longer get you off track. 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.





BY TROY HARRISON



KUCHERAV - STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Why a Quality Sales Onboarding Program Isn't Optional

Follow this 90-day plan to make the most out of your hires.

What does "onboarding" mean? If you said that "onboarding a salesperson" consists of doing the HR paperwork, giving a facility tour, a few days of shadowing existing salespeople and then expecting the salesperson to "hit the ground running," you're not alone. Entirely too many sales managers feel that way — and then they wonder why they don't get the results that they want.

Onboarding is defined as "The time period, processes and activities to prepare your new hire to make a quality sales call on your behalf." Doing it properly requires 90 days — not nine.

The first 30 days of onboarding should be focused exclusively on **Knowledge**.

During those first 30 days, your salesperson should be a sponge. You should be focused on teaching your new salesperson everything that salesperson needs to know in order to make a quality sales call and answer at least the most common customer questions. That means teaching:

- Your products and services and the problems they solve
- Your target customers and prospects
- The specifics of their territory
- Your internal processes for order processing, shipping, billing and profit generation
- Your sales culture and your sales training system

And yes, it takes a month to do that correctly. Anything you shortcut here will come back to bite you and cost you money. During this time, you should have no metrics for sales or sales calls; in fact, you shouldn't even have a salesperson making a sales call, with the exception of shadowing a current sales rep.

The second 30 days is focused on **Activity**.

Now that your salesperson knows enough to make sales calls, it's time to get that salesperson out in the field (or on the phone or video call). The purpose here is to have that salesperson ramp up to your normal required weekly run rate for activities — number of discovery appointments, solution appointments, proposals, LinkedIn

activities, etc. You do have those numbers, right? If not, you should.

During this time, you shouldn't put a sales quota on your salesperson. Instead, the first week should be aimed at achieving 25% of the normal weekly run rate; the second should be 50%; the third should be 75%; and by the fourth week and ongoing, the salesperson should be hitting their normal weekly activity run rate.

The third 30 days should be focused on **Achievement**.

This is where the result can vary widely. If your sales cycle is 30 days, it's completely fair to expect your salesperson to sell some business during this time period (the expectation is that some of the proposals from month two will close). On the other hand, if your sales cycle is long, you may want to measure "achievement" by viable proposals, funnel size, etc. What's important is that you have a standard and are willing to live with it.

You should have checkpoints for each one of those first 30-day periods. After the first month, some sort of "graduation exercise," such as a quiz with a pass/fail number, a presentation or a facility tour that demonstrates learning, is appropriate. The second month can be rated based on achievement of the activity numbers, and the third measured against whatever metric you have put in place, based on your own sales environment.

Here's why this matters: Most onboarding can be summed up as, "Here's your book, here's your desk, here's your phone, good luck, you're on your own." Many managers like to say that "good salespeople — the ones worth keeping — figure it out on their own." That's an ineffective and costly approach, and it's a great way to lose a hire that you should have won. New sales hires typically fall into three categories:

1. Those salespeople who are so naturally gifted that they will, in fact, "figure it out" and succeed, no matter what you give them or don't give them.
2. Salespeople for whom quality onboarding, training and coaching can have a great impact on success or failure.
3. Salespeople who just aren't going to "get it" regardless of how much training you give them.

The bad news for the "figure it out" managers is that most sales hires — about half, but maybe as many as two-thirds in some candidate pools — fall into category No. 2. When you don't do a quality onboarding and training, you're going to lose on a lot of these hires, and then you have to go back to the well, do another search and hire again — and your next hire has the same probability of success as your first hire.

But what about the other two categories? A good onboarding program helps with these hires, too.

For category No. 1, the "naturals," quality onboarding and training gives them a much better basis to launch into their success. The category 1s who would have been at quota in, say, six months will be at quota in three or four months. That's a win in anyone's book, and it will help them hit their performance ceiling quicker. That means strong ROI, because usually category 1s will make better use of training.

For category No. 3, the monthly checkpoints let you know that you're on a path to failure. In this case, the philosophy is, "if you're going to fail, fail quickly." This still saves money, time and effort over plodding along for a year or more.

Of course, a failed checkpoint doesn't necessarily have to lead to termination — use your best judgment. Sometimes, a little coaching or even remedial training can overcome obstacles. If you determine that you have a category 2, coaching is a great investment.

Sales hiring is getting harder, and candidate pools are getting smaller. Once you've made your hiring selection, it's incumbent upon you to make the most out of that hire. Shifting away from "I want someone to figure it out themselves and hit the ground running" toward the mindset of "I've won a good candidate, and now I'm going to take the time to lock that win in through quality onboarding" is an essential part of effective sales management in 2026.

And you don't have to depend on good luck for your results. RVP

Troy Harrison is the Sales Navigator and the author of "Sell Like You Mean It" and "The Pocket Sales Manager." He helps companies navigate the elements of sales on their journey to success. He offers a free 45-minute sales strategy review. Contact Harrison at 913-645-3603 or troy@troyharrison.com.





MADE IN THE USA

RECEIVER HITCH WITH INTEGRATED STEP

Blue Ox, Pender, Nebraska, presents its Receiver Hitch With Integrated Step. This receiver hitch features an integrated step for ease in loading and unloading. Custom-designed to fit your specific make and model for a proper fit and optimal towing performance.

blueox.com







WEIGHT DISTRIBUTION HITCH

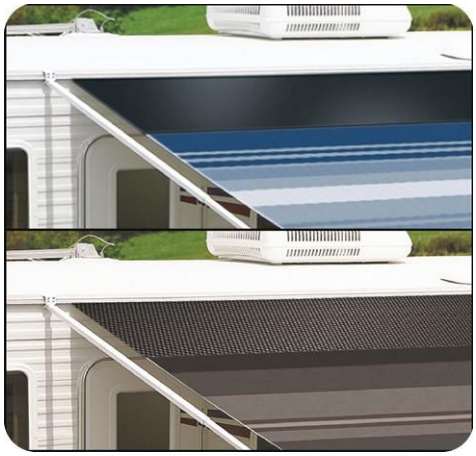
B&W Trailer Hitches, Humboldt, Kansas, presents its Continuum Weight Distribution Hitch. A hydraulic system allows users to fine-tune weight distribution from one side of the vehicle, while built-in friction sway control, dual composite spring bars and a single pivot design deliver a smooth, quiet ride. Simply set the hitch height, snap the bars in and adjust pressure with the pump of a handle. 16,000 pound max trailer weight with tongue weight between 600-1,600 pounds. Backed by a limited lifetime warranty.

bwtrailerhitches.com

PRIVACY SHADES

Active RV Upholstery Center, Yuma, Arizona, offers its RV Quick Shades. These interior RV windshield and window privacy shades install with 10 low-profile, UV-treated suction cups. The shades help the AC work less and protect interiors from sun fade. Precision-cut to your window for minimal gaps, they offer day or night without bulky curtains and reduce glare. A compact storage bag is included.

activervinteriors.com





ENGINEERED STRUCTURAL PANEL

BRAWN, a UFP Factory Built brand, Elkhart, Indiana, offers its BRAWN Engineered Structural Panel (ESP). Designed for consistency and durability, BRAWN ESP panels deliver high strength, uniform thickness and superior screw-holding. With 100% MDI resin construction, they provide enhanced moisture resistance and anti-swell performance. Free of core voids and defects, ESP panels enable cleaner builds, improved yield and greater production efficiency, helping OEMs elevate quality where it matters most.

builtwithbrawn.com

AWNING FABRIC PROTECTION

Carefree of Colorado, Broomfield, Colorado, presents its FLXguard. FLXguard is a Carefree exclusive, proprietary polymer developed by Carefree that rolls up with your awning to protect it from the elements. FLXguard is flexible, lightweight, robust and gives your fabric the same look and protection properties as more expensive, heavier metal wraps at a fraction of the cost. Colors available are white, black, satin or carbon fiber.

carefreeofcolorado.com



HOLDING TANK TREATMENT

Century Chemical Corp., Elkhart, Indiana, offers its Simply Free by Travel Jon. Made in Elkhart, Indiana, Simply Free by Travel Jon is manufactured by Century Chemical, an American company with more than 100 years of sanitation expertise. Designed for RV and marine holding tanks, the biodegradable, enzyme-based formula controls odors without added fragrances while helping break down waste and toilet tissue. Each toss-in packet treats up to a 40-gallon tank for up to one week, offering travelers a septic-safe solution.

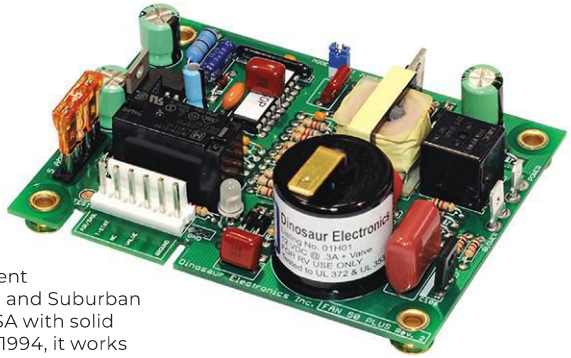
centurychemical.com



BRAKES

Dexter, Elkhart, Indiana, presents its Dexter Genuine Brakes. Dexter brakes are engineered for dependable, long-lasting performance with nearly every component manufactured in-house using domestic materials and U.S.-based quality control. This vertically integrated approach ensures precise fit, consistent function and reliability — delivering the safe, time-tested braking performance trailer owners trust.

dextergroup.com



IGNITOR BOARD

Dinosaur Electronics, Lincoln City, Oregon, offers its Fan50 Plus Pins. The Fan 50 Plus Pins is a dependable, American-made replacement board for Dometic/Atwood and Suburban RV furnaces. Built in the USA with solid construction refined since 1994, it works in both new and older 12 VDC furnace models. Backed by a three-year warranty, it delivers long-lasting reliability and trusted performance.

dinosaurelectronics.com



POWER AWNING

Dometic, Elkhart, Indiana, presents its Dometic 9100 Power Awning. Made in Elkhart, Indiana, the Dometic 9100 Power Awning delivers fast, push-button shade in under 13 seconds. It extends from an RV to cool the interior and expand outdoor living space. Durable, waterproof fabric resists moisture, mildew and sun damage, while integrated LED lighting enhances nighttime use. Built with robust rounded arms that resist bowing and warping, offering long-term durability.

dometic4business.dometic.com



SMART BATTERY

Dragonfly Energy, Reno, Nevada, offers its Battle Born GC3 Smart Battery. The Battle Born GC3 Smart LiFePO4 Battery delivers 270Ah of 12-volt deep cycle power for modern RV energy systems. Used by leading RV OEMs as a factory-installed lithium solution, it gives owners more usable power for off-grid camping, appliances, inverters and onboard electronics. Built with Dragonfly IntelLigence communication, it enables smart battery monitoring and system connectivity.

battlebornbatteries.com



CUSTOM WIRE HARNESS

EQ United, Cassopolis, Michigan, presents its Custom Wire Harness. EQ Harness, a division of EQ United, designs and manufactures custom wire harnesses entirely in Cassopolis, Michigan, with over 20 years of experience. Each harness is engineered to specification (custom wire gauge, configuration and length) with terminals, lugs and heat shrink applied by a dedicated production team. From a single print to full production runs, every assembly is built, tested and shipped in the U.S.

eqharness.us



BOTANICAL RODENT REPELLENT

EarthKind, Mooresville, North Carolina, offers its Fresh Cab Botanical Rodent Repellent. Fresh Cab Botanical Rodent Repellent is one of the only EPA-registered botanical indoor rodent repellents in the U.S. Customers tuck the balsam fir oil pouches into cabinets, engine bays and storage compartments — on the road or in seasonal storage — and they deter mice for 30-plus days. Plant-based, no-kill, family- and pet-safe when used as directed. Over 60 million sold and backed by a 100% money-back guarantee.

earthkind.com



HOLDING TANK TREATMENT

Liquified, Elkhart, Indiana, offers Liquified. Liquified is an enzyme and bacteria-based holding tank treatment designed for RV owners. Just 1 ounce treats up to a 40-gallon tank, working to liquefy waste, break down buildup and help maintain accurate sensor readings for a cleaner, more efficient system.

liquifiedrv.com

GOOSENECK HITCH ACCESSORY



GEN-Y Hitch, Nappanee, Indiana, presents its GoosePuck. The GEN-Y GoosePuck GEN 2 is a smarter evolution of a trusted gooseneck hitch accessory, engineered for heavy-duty towing. Built in the USA from durable steel, it features rear puck integration for improved clearance, built-in safety chain points and enhanced adjustability. With a 25,000-pound capacity, 5-inch offset, and 2 5/16-inch ball mount, it fits a wide range of trucks. Maintenance-free and built for performance, it delivers strength, flexibility and a more efficient towing experience.

genyhitch.com



AIR-CONDITIONING SOFT STARTER

Micro-Air, Hamilton, New Jersey, presents its EasyStart Breeze – EasyTouch. The EasyStart Breeze reduces startup power demand, helping to reduce the stress of an RV AC electrical system and enabling smoother AC operation on limited power sources. Paired with the EasyTouch thermostat, you gain precise climate control, intuitive touch screen operation and smart connectivity. Together, they deliver quieter starts, improved efficiency and a modernized RV experience. Perfect for off-grid travel or campground areas with limited power.

micro-air.com

GOOSENECK PIN BOX

MORryde, Elkhart, Indiana, offers its GooseTech. The MORryde GooseTech Rubber Gooseneck Box delivers exceptionally smooth towing with its proprietary rubber shear spring. By absorbing harsh road shock, the GooseTech gives you a more stable, controlled towing experience, whether you're on the highway or wandering off road. Replacing a traditional pin box, the GooseTech frees up valuable truck space while maintaining the OEM pin location for a seamless fit. Built for confidence, convenience and comfort.

morryde.com





SHOWER SURROUND

RecPro, Bristol, Indiana, presents its RV Shower Surround. RecPro RV shower surrounds offer a one-piece design for a simple installation without using grout. Made from scratch-resistant, nonporous ABS material, they are easy to clean and resistant against bacteria and mildew growth. Available in square or corner styles, with patterns including Teal Waterfall, Ash-Gray Wood Waterfall, Subway Tile and Ash-Gray Wood with Patterned Waterfall. Corner sizes include 32 inches or 34 inches, while square sizes include 40 inches by 24 inches or 24 inches by 36 inches.

recpro.com



JACK PADS

RV SnapPad, Calgary, Alberta, offers its SnapPad XTRA. The original and bestselling SnapPad, XTRA, was created over 10 years ago in South Bend, Indiana, where production still lives today. Made in the U.S. from recycled rubber tire crumb, SnapPad XTRA has been sold to tens of thousands of RVers across North America.

rvsnappad.com



ELECTRIC RV FURNACE

RV Comfort Systems, Bothell, Washington, offers its All Electric RV Furnace. The RV Comfort Systems All Electric RV Furnace replaces traditional propane-powered furnaces with an efficient, electric alternative that has multiple heating ranges all in one system (one system fits all). This modern solution is designed to enhance comfort, safety and convenience.

rvcomfortsystems.com

TOW BAR

Roadmaster, Vancouver, Washington, presents its Liberty Illuminated Tow Bar: 250th Anniversary Edition. Built on Roadmaster's Nighthawk design, this patriotic red, white and blue tow bar delivers 8,000-pound strength, corrosion-resistant construction and signature LED stop/turn/marker illumination for safer towing. This bar provides long life, superior towing stability and a wider hookup radius for ease of use. Limited production. Limited time. Dealer-only availability. Crafted in the USA to celebrate America's 250th.

roadmasterinc.com





SPRAY GUN

SATA USA, Spring Valley, Minnesota, presents its SATA jet K, a pressure-fed spray gun built for industrial coatings applications. Its advanced labyrinth airflow technology delivers smooth atomization with less overspray and reduced mottling. Standard and MaxLayer nozzles support a wide range of coatings, including high-build materials. A taller spray pattern improves coverage and efficiency, while the lightweight design enhances comfort. Compatible with pressure tanks, diaphragm pumps, plural component systems and other low-pressure delivery systems.

satausa.com



RV ROLLER SHADES

ShadePro, San Diego, California, offers its Legacy Day/Night RV Roller Shades. Legacy Roller Shades are made-to-measure, American-made window shades. Available in manual spring or 12-volt motorized versions, they combine a 95% solar sunscreen for daytime visibility and heat reduction with a blackout fabric for complete nighttime privacy. Choose from five blackout fabric colors: dove gray, black, almond, khaki and sandstone. Sized from 15 to 80 inches wide.

shadepro.net

SUSPENSION ENHANCEMENT

SuperSprings International, Carpinteria, California, offers its Rebel SumoSprings, a maintenance-free airbag alternative designed for heavy-duty trucks, vans and overland vehicles carrying added weight. Made from microcellular polyurethane, they provide progressive load support that increases with compression to help reduce sag, sway, harsh bottoming and body roll. Rebel SumoSprings improve stability, handling and ride comfort while towing, hauling or exploring off-road — without air lines, compressors or maintenance.

superspringsinternational.com



STEERING CONTROL UNITS

Safe T Plus Steering Control, Tallapoosa, Georgia, offers its Safe T Plus. Designed to combat road wandering, oversteering, side winds, the push of passing semitrucks, front tire blowouts and the fatigue that comes from fighting the wheel on long hauls, Safe T Plus installs directly onto your vehicle's steering linkage to keep you confidently in control when it matters most.

safe-t-plus.com

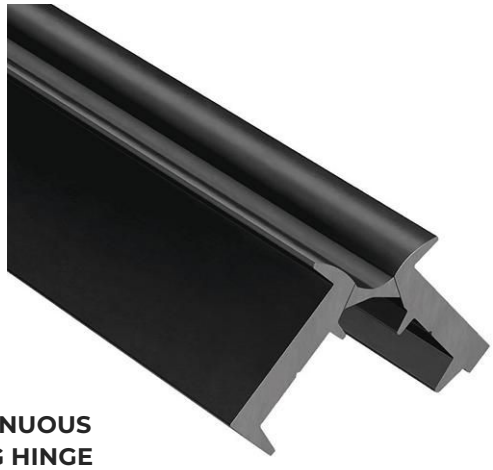


HANDRAILS

Stromberg Carlson, Traverse City, Michigan, presents its Lend-A-Hand Rail Family. Stromberg's family of Lend-A-Hand rails provides support when entering or exiting your RV. Each model offers a comfortable grip and durable construction for everyday use. Mini models AM-250 and AM-255 offer 22 inches of support, while standard AM-200 (white), AM-300 (silver) and AM-800 (black) rails provide 27 inches. The AM-533 extends outward and downward for improved balance. Available in 42- and 50-inch lengths for multistep RVs. Both models clamp closed for travel.

strombergcarlson.com

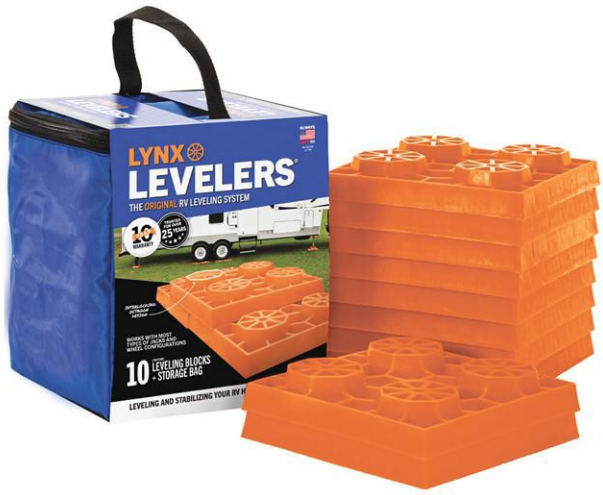




CONTINUOUS LIVING HINGE

Trim-Lok, Buena Park, California, offers its Endura-Hinge Continuous Living Hinge. Endura-Hinge is a one piece, all-plastic living hinge engineered for teardrop trailers and exterior storage compartments. Made from durable PVC plastic with a proprietary hinge material, it replaces metal hinges that rust or corrode. Its continuous design seals out air, dust and moisture, protecting stored gear. Lightweight and easy to install, it provides smooth, quiet operation with a clean, modern look.

trimlok.com



LEVELING BLOCKS

Tri-Lynx, Dallas, Texas, presents its Lynx Levelers Leveling Blocks 10 Pack. Lynx Levelers are plastic interlocking leveling blocks that can be configured to be used for most RV leveling or stabilizing functions. Includes 10 Lynx Leveler Blocks and a nylon carry bag.

trilynx.com



TOW BARS

Ultra-Fab Products, Elkhart, Indiana, presents its Tow Force Tow Bars, which deliver real strength on highways, campgrounds and whatever dirt path people swear is a "shortcut." Solid aluminum means serious muscle without needing a protein shake to install. Self-locking legs and nonbinding handles, and it folds up clean. Comes fully equipped with safety cables, clevises and a lifetime warranty.

ultra-fab.com



AC SILENCER

WackO Products, Green Bay, Wisconsin, offers its RV AC Silencer, which is designed to reduce the noise and improve the airflow of ducted RV air conditioning systems. Engineered for easy installation, the RV AC Silencer creates a quieter, more comfortable environment inside motorhomes and travel trailers. The system also includes a lifetime reusable electrostatic filtration system that helps capture dust and airborne particles while improving air quality. By reducing air turbulence and vibration, the RV AC Silencer enhances cooling efficiency.

wackoproducts.com



TOILET TREATMENT

Walex Products Co., Wilmington, North Carolina, presents its Porta-Pak Premium Toilet Treatment. Porta-Pak is a trusted holding tank treatment. Porta-Pak features odor control, reliability in extreme temperatures and superior performance for more than seven days. Made in the USA and backed by decades of brand loyalty, science and customer service, Porta-Pak offers strong shelf appeal, dependable supply and consistent turn in a high-repeat category.

walex.com

Lance MFG CO



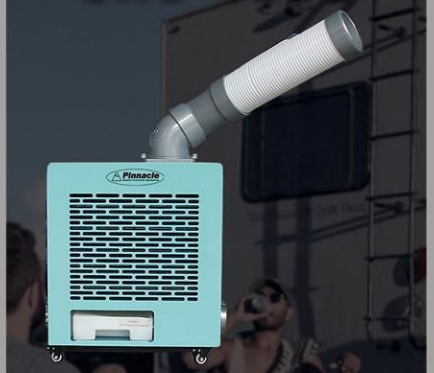
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Pit Stop



THE DYRT'S 2026 BEST PLACES TO RV

Presented by Grand Design RV

1. **Dark Sky RV Park & Campground — Utah:** Otherworldly views, both around and above you
2. **The Views RV Park & Campground — Colorado:** Four states' worth of wonder in a hip mountain town
3. **Catherine's Landing — Arkansas:** Lakeside tranquility and top-notch facilities
4. **Rafter J Bar Ranch — South Dakota:** A wooded getaway in the Black Hills
5. **Sportsman Lodge — Montana:** Perfect for reenacting "A River Runs Through It"
6. **Coachella Lakes RV Resort — California:** Five lakes and luxurious amenities
7. **Roadrunner Travelers RV Park — Texas:** An inviting base camp for exploring Big Bend
8. **Anchor Down RV Resort — Tennessee:** Lakeside views of the Great Smoky Mountains
9. **Swan Bay Resort — New York:** A family-friendly riverside resort
10. **Scenic Hills RV Park — Ohio:** Peace and quiet in Amish country



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE DYRT: COACHELLA LAKES RV RESORT

APRIL 2026 SHIPMENTS

29,209 (units)
total RV shipments

17.4% decrease
compared to April 2025 (35,375 units)

For the year, shipments are off 13.5% with 115,260 units shipped to date

Towable RVs, led by conventional travel trailers, ended the month down (-20.7%) from last March with 25,376 shipments. Motorhomes finished the month **up 13%** compared to the same month last year, with 3,833 units.

Park model RVs finished April up 29.9% compared to the same month last year, with 539 wholesale shipments.

ICYMI



RVIA cites **1910 as the birth of the RV industry.** That year, a precursor to the modern Class B, the Pierce-Arrow Special Touring Landau, custom built for George K. Birge, was showcased at Madison Square Garden.

Pierce-Arrow later began making travel trailers, dubbed the Travelodge, in the 1930s. Two other manufacturers were also on the new camping trailer scene …

Catch more about the first recorded RV in this month's editor's letter on page 4!

Starting Sept. 1, **RVs that ship with solar already installed must include a listed solar charge controller.**

The RV Industry Association is adopting the 2026 edition of NFPA 1192 (Standard on Recreational Vehicles), along with the 2025 ANSI/RVIA DC Standard for DC Voltage Systems in RVs, **with an effective date of June 1 and mandatory enforcement beginning Sept. 1.**

The new regulation sets four requirements for solar installations on RVs. For OEM purchasing and engineering teams, the implication is straightforward: if a solar charge controller doesn't carry a UL listing (or equivalent NRTL certification), that vehicle will not pass an RVIA inspection after Sept. 1.

Source: Go Power! | Dometic
Learn more at rv-pro.com

Go RVing is sharpening its experiential strategy with fewer but larger-scale partnerships in the coming months. Keep an eye out for its five marquee events across the U.S. this July through mid-November:

- **Scouting America National Jamboree** – Glen Jean, West Virginia (July 22-30)
- **US Open of Surfing** – Huntington Beach, California (July 25-Aug. 2)
- **Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta** – Albuquerque, New Mexico (Oct. 3-11)



- **Pickleball World Championships** – Farmers Branch, Texas (Nov. 2-8)
- **The National Dog Show** – Oaks, Pennsylvania (Nov. 12-15)

At every event, Go RVing will serve as the official and exclusive RV partner.

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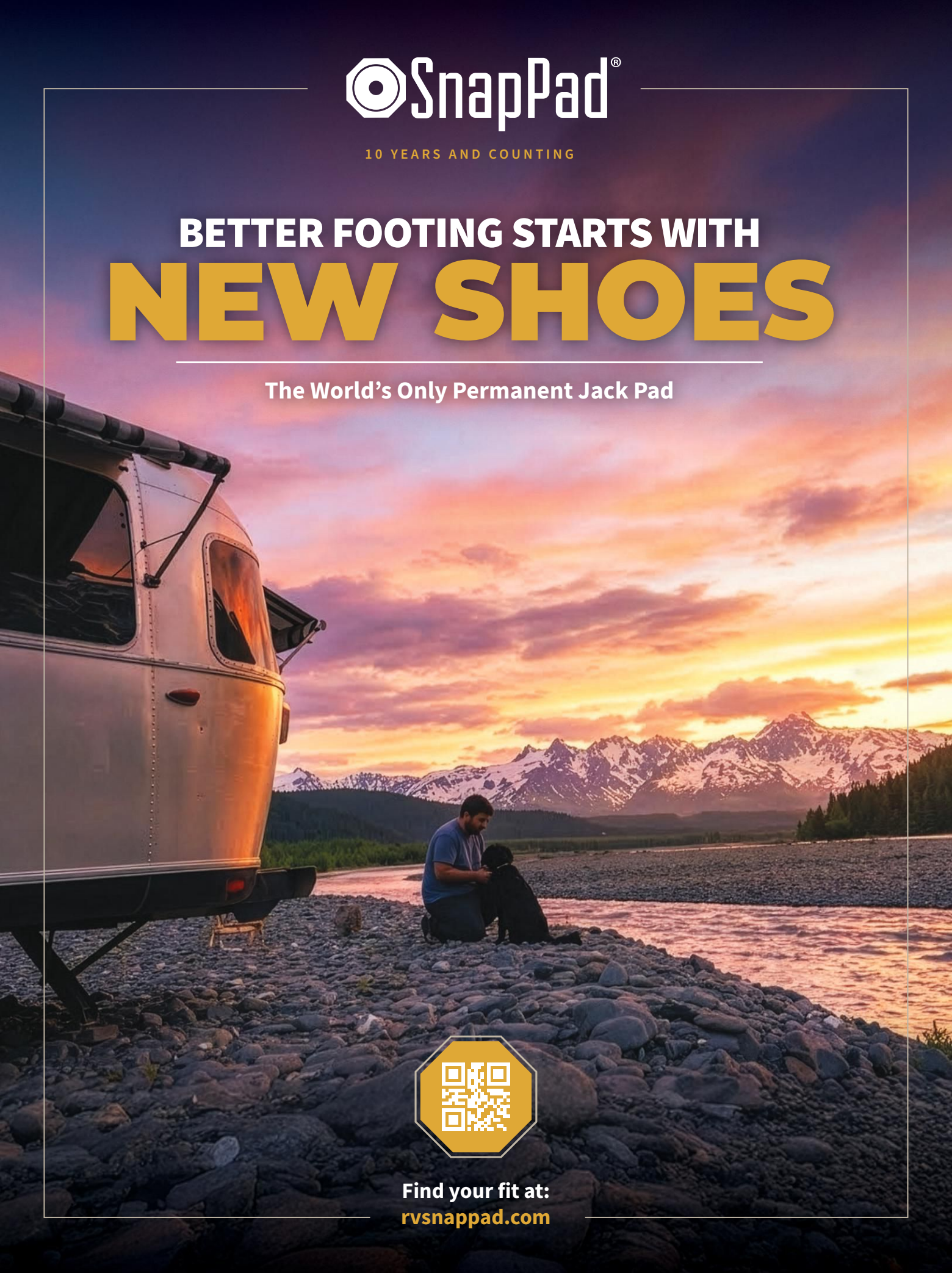


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