New 2017 RV Models
An Inside look at America’s Largest RV Show

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I just returned from America’s largest RV show in Hershey, Pa. I attend the Pennsylvania RV & Camping Show each year to take a look at the upcoming model year RVs and new RV products.

This year’s show broke attendance records again with 57,692 visitors. That is encouraging news for the RV industry and for RV enthusiasts alike.

It’s hard to cover the entire show and I was a little disappointed during industry days when several displays I visited had no reps, units were locked and there were no brochures available. The good news is many other RV displays were eager to show off what they had to offer for 2017.

Sit back, relax and take a look inside America’s Largest RV Show.

Mark
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Our digital RV Product Catalog puts all of our RV training products in one place, and we separate what products apply to what type of RV. For example if you own a travel trailer you can browse through the single DVD titles or go directly to the DVD value sets that apply specifically to travel trailers.

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Last month I made my annual trek to Hershey, Pennsylvania to attend what is coined as America’s Largest RV Show. The Hershey RV Show affords me the opportunity to visit with old friends, catch a glimpse of the 2017 RV models being introduced and stay current with what is happening in the RV industry. It also lets me show you what is new and exciting for next year’s camping season.

With over 1,300 RVs on hand there was a lot of ground to cover in a few days, and it is difficult to highlight all of the new RV models. Unfortunately when I visited some of the RV displays units were still locked, and no reps or brochures were available, so I was not able to feature some of the units I wanted to. On the other side of the coin some displays were professionally staffed and folks were excited to talk about their 2017 RV offering.

With that said let’s take a look at what I saw inside America’s Largest RV Show for 2016

When I attend a show like this I typically have a plan to cover the show. It might be the latest RV trends, luxury RVs, or lightweight and fuel efficient RVs. This year I did not have a specific plan; my thoughts were to highlight whatever caught my eye. As a truck guy the first thing that caught my eye were a few trucks on display at the show. Now if I
were a truck manufacturer or dealer and there was an RV show that was expecting 50,000 plus visitors I would have every tow vehicle I had at the RV show. It was a little disappointing to only see a couple makes and models represented, but the good news is the trucks on display were all more than capable tow vehicles.

Classy Chassis had a nice Cummins powered Ram 5500 built specifically for many of today's large and heavy 5th wheel trailers. If you are considering purchasing and towing a heavy 5th wheel trailer you need a truck designed to handle the weight. Trucks like the one pictured above are custom built inside and out and are capable of safely towing heavy loads. Classy Chassis can custom build Ford, Chevrolet and Ram trucks for your specific needs. For more information on custom built tow vehicles visit Classy Chassis.
If you don’t want to go the custom truck route, or the trailer you are towing is not extremely heavy there are other good tow vehicles available. The single rear wheel Ford F350 pictured above is equipped with a 6.7L Power Stroke turbo diesel engine and has a max 5th wheel tow rating of 16,200 pounds. Below is a Ford F350 King Ranch dual rear wheel truck with a 6.7L Power Stroke and a max 5th wheel tow capacity of 26,500 pounds. Either truck would make a nice tow vehicle.
A few years ago I heard talk there was going to be a Nissan Titan XD built using a new Cummins ISV 5.0L diesel engine. I saw the 5.0L engine at several shows, but this was the first opportunity I had to look at a Nissan Titan XD truck equipped with the 5.0L Cummins. The 5.0L V8 Cummins is 310 hp with 555 lb-ft of torque. This is a nice truck and it would make a good tow vehicle for average size RVs. The truck has a maximum tow rating of 12,300 pounds. If you are looking for a medium duty diesel powered truck this is one to look at.

These were the only trucks I saw at the show, but as I mentioned earlier each of these trucks are worthy tow vehicles in their respective category. The important thing to remember is to always use a tow vehicle capable of safely towing the trailer’s weight.
I am sure you have heard the phrase “come full circle.” I don’t know if you call it a craze, a trend or just coming full circle, but vintage trailers are back and they are doing well. Manufacturers like Little Guy Teardrop Trailers are busy building the Little Guy teardrop, T@G and T@B trailer brands. The appeal for teardrop style trailers goes back to the origination of camping trailers. Teardrop trailers are light-weight, aerodynamic, practical and equipped with modern day amenities. What more could you ask for?

In 2015 Shasta made the decision to re-release the 1961 Shasta Airflyte retro-style trailer. This vintage style trailer equipped with modern day amenities was an instant hit.

It’s hard not to like the looks of vintage trailers and lots of folks can remember going camping in a vintage trailer with their parents or grandparents. My first RV trip, on my own, was in a 60’s Shasta trailer with the famous wings on the back.

The kitchen facilities are in the back leaving the front for living and sleeping arrangements. The T@G and T@B trailer lines offer more headroom and living space than the Little Guy teardrop models so there is a type and size trailer available to suit your specific needs.

Other RV manufacturers took notice and started producing vintage style trailers of their own. At the Hershey RV show I saw retro-style trailers by Riverside RVs that are lightweight and range in size from 13-feet to 25-feet.

And Gulfstream had a line of Vintage Cruiser trailers on display too.
Airstream re-introduced the Basecamp model, which to me represents a vintage trailer of yesteryear meeting modern day travel trailer. It is smaller, lighter and more versatile than the original Basecamp making it ideal for getting out and exploring the great outdoors. It can be towed with a variety of mid-size SUVs and the larger wheels and tires make it fitting for those rough terrain camping trips. It sleeps two and has seating for five and it is equipped with a bathroom. The rear hatch has storage for your gear and the convertible living space easily converts into a relaxing bed. With a solar pre-wire kit, smart storage solutions, USB charging ports, and all the amenities of home this Airstream Basecamp is ready to hit the road regardless of where the next adventure might take you.
Prior to leaving for the Hershey RV show I received a Press Release announcing that Little Guy Worldwide, distributor of the most popular models of teardrop camping trailers in the USA, was developing a new line of trailers under the Serro Scotty brand name. You might remember the iconic Serro Scotty campers that had a picture of the company’s mascot, a Scottish Terrier.

John Serro, founder of Serro Scotty trailers, was a retired automobile dealership owner. He started Serro Scotty in 1957 after a weekend of bad weather prevented him from enjoying an outdoor trip. When he returned home he built his first trailer complete with a bed, dinette, sink and stove. John’s vision was manufacturing affordable family campers. The company was headquartered in Irwin, Pa.

In its heyday Serro Scotty trailers were manufactured in Pennsylvania, Georgia and Oklahoma. During that time, dozens of Scotty Clubs sprang up all along the East Coast. John Serro purchased 300 acres in Rockwood, Pennsylvania, and in 1962 developed Scottyland, a campground just for Scotty trailers. In 1997 a fire destroyed the Irwin factory, ending the family’s trailer business.
I stopped by the Little Guy display at the show to check out the new vintage style Serro Scotty trailers, and was surprised to meet Gary Pirchl, John Serro’s grandson. Gary still runs Scottyland, a campground opened by Serro in 1962 for Scotty trailers, but is open to everyone now.

**MP:** I stopped by to check out the new Serro Scotty trailers and here you are. It’s nice to meet you.

**GP:** Nice to meet you too Mark.

**MP:** Your grandfather John Serro founded the Serro Scotty Company in 1957 and manufactured trailers until 1997. Can you tell our readers a
little history on how and why your grandfather started the company?

**GP**: My grandfather was a car guy. He came out of the automobile business, selling Chrysler, Plymouth and Dodge. In the mid-50s he sold the business. He was always an avid outdoorsman and really enjoyed hunting and fishing. He built a little teardrop trailer to satisfy his needs and found that his buddies wanted one too. He built the first trailer in his barn on his property in Irwin Pa.

He found there was a market for that little teardrop trailer so he started building a few of those right out of the barn. Then the idea of a 13-footer came along and he saw a business model. So down the road just a few miles away he developed a small factory on 10 acres of ground and launched the 13-foot model trailers.

**MP**: So, did he build the first trailers by himself?

**GP**: No, he had a small crew of guys that helped, but it wasn’t production fashion. I remember him telling a story that he was a bit embarrassed to bring new business in and then take them to a barn where their trailers were going to be built. He knew that wasn’t a good business model and he had to put up a factory. In fact there were three factories total, one in Pennsylvania, one in Georgia and then in Oklahoma. It was back in the heyday of the early sixties when camping was gaining popularity.

**MP**: So it started with a 10-foot trailer, evolved into a 13-foot model, then more and better production techniques and…

**GP**: And the 13-foot went to a 15-foot, and the 15 went to an 18 and really those three the 13, 15 & 18 foot models were the three models built for many, many years.

**MP**: So it went from an avid outdoorsman needing shelter and evolved into a full blown business after he already retired from the automobile business?

**GP**: Yes, after retiring from the automobile business he saw the need for RVs and really that 13-foot model got him started in the RV business.
MP: The Serro Scotty brand is synonymous with vintage campers of the past. Is keeping the vintage style and appeal an important element of reintroducing the new Serro Scotty trailer line?

GP: I think it is. I think that bringing back the vintage style and the values the original units brought to the market where you had a family unit that was family sized and family priced was essential in getting it kicked off and getting the popularity of the units out.

MP: I agree and I think that people in our age group will recognize Serro Scotty as a vintage trailer. They know the name, they know the logo and they remember it as a vintage trailer and right now the retro-style trailers are a big boom all across the country.

Gary what are your thoughts when you look at the new Serro Scotty trailers and with Little Guy Worldwide being the manufacturer?

GP: I am so glad to be partnered with Little Guy on this project, and seeing the new models that were brought to Hershey I can see the vision they have to keep quality built travel trailers under their umbrella. They can bring the Scotty line in here with the smaller units they offer and customers can move up to a larger trailer if they want and still stay under the same manufacturer.

MP: I agree. I like the Little Guy products. It’s a well built product and I think the new Serro Scotty line will benefit both companies. Like you said, if a customer wants to move up in size from a teardrop they can move right into a Serro Scotty.
MP: I have one final question for you. What do you think your grandfather would say if he were here to see the new Serro Scotty trailer line for 2017?

GP: He would be so proud to know that his vision, his goal of continuing to manufacture a quality product at a reasonable price is still happening this many years later. It’s just an amazing thing to think that we can be doing that with the same product and a lot of the same personality that came from that era. I think he would be touched and there would be a tear in his eye.

MP: I am sure he would be extremely proud of his grandson too.

GP: I hope so, I learned so much from him and he was one of the best influences in my life, and giving something back like this is something I really want to do.

MP: That’s a great story. I appreciate your time and wish you success with this and future endeavors.

GP: Thank you very much, it was really nice meeting you Mark and I appreciate your time.
At the Hymer display the new Hymer Touring models caught my eye, especially when I saw a Mini Cooper towing one of the four lightweight travel trailers on display. The trailers were right off the boat from Germany and should be available through independent dealers in the U.S. by next spring. The smallest Hymer Touring 310 model weighed in at just 1,454 lbs. making travel trailer ownership accessible to many people without the need to purchase a larger tow vehicle.

The fit and finish work was impeccable and although it is small the use of space made for a well designed interior. If the 310 model is too small you can move up to the 550 model. If you are looking for a compact lightweight travel trailer that can easily be towed by many vehicles you might want to look at the Hymer Touring models. For more information visit http://www.gohymer.com/
Hymer also displayed the all new Aktiv Class B motorhome, a European inspired coach built on the Ram ProMaster chassis.

The Aktiv has a full kitchen, seating for four, and a separate bathroom and shower featuring a swivel toilet and flip-up sink to maximize space.

The main feature of the Aktiv is the rear queen size bed that folds up, opening the aisle way for storage of large items like bikes, skis or other equipment.

Erwin Hymer Group North America Inc. is the leading manufacturer of class B motorhomes in North America, selling motorhomes through a network of independent RV dealers in the USA, Canada and Japan. They are also part of Erwin Hymer Group in Germany.
Over at the Lance display I checked out their flagship in lightweight travel trailers, model 1995. The exterior of the trailer has a sleek aerodynamic design that looks great compared to other conventional boxy designs. It also featured a nice pull out front storage tray, an electric tongue jack and optional three propane cylinders. The trailer has nice aluminum wheels, an integrated rear eye-brow cap and a deep slide-out for more interior space. Before you even walk inside it’s easy to see the quality and thought that went into the trailer. The display model was equipped with the optional 4-seasons certified all weather package. In addition to standard dual pane windows and block foam insulation it includes a water heater by-pass, winterizing valve and insulated holding tanks.
Inside the quality was evident by the superior fit and finish of the cabinetry and other details. The Lance representative explained the interiors are constructed using Lite-Ply which Lance imports from Europe. It’s more expensive but it is lighter and stronger than other wood products.

The Lance trailer line ranges in size from 15-feet to 23-feet and in weight from 2,500 to 4,500. These are extremely well built trailers that can be towed by many SUVs and light-duty trucks. For more information on Lance travel trailers visit [http://www.lancecamper.com/](http://www.lancecamper.com/)
While I was there I looked at some of the truck campers too. Lance builds exceptional truck campers. The large truck camper models are pretty amazing and extremely roomy with slide-outs and large floor lengths. If you purchase a large truck camper it’s important you have a truck capable of handling the weight.

What got my attention at the display was the smaller Lance 650 model built specifically for short bed trucks. The floor length is only 6’ 10” and the dry weight with standard equipment is only 1,639 pounds. Even when you add some optional equipment and personal belongings the weight should only be about 2,000 pounds. It is well equipped to include a wet bath and 22 gallon fresh water, 15 gallon gray water and 16 gallon black water tanks. For more information visit Lance Campers
On the motorized side of the house smaller motorhomes continue to make a large presence. Depending on the manufacturer some are called Type B, some are B-plus and some are Type Cs. This smaller lighter more fuel efficient motorhome trend has been ongoing for several years now.

For many years the diesel-powered Mercedes-Benz Sprinter chassis was the platform of choice for Type B motorhome builders, and on the gas side of the house Chevrolet was a popular chassis for Type B motorhomes. As sales of these smaller lighter more fuel efficient motorhomes increased so did the chassis suppliers. Ford entered the marketplace with the Ford Transit chassis and Ram trucks with the Ram Promaster chassis.

The additional competition was good for the consumer. Now there are more chassis’ engines, floor-plans and price points for buyers to choose from.

At the Winnebago display I saw this Winnebago Fuse model. It is on a Ford Transit chassis powered by a 185 hp turbo-diesel engine and six speed automatic transmission.

Notice how the sofa slide-out really opens up the floor plan. It would be comfortable for a couple who enjoys traveling in a compact easy to drive RV.

Other nice features were the flex bed and adjustable head rests.
If you are interested in a custom made motorhome you might want to look at **Born Free Motorcoach**. The Born Free mission is to build high quality RVs by combining craftsmanship, safety, drivability and durability. And it’s easy to see the quality when you look at one. In Hershey I looked at a Type B and C Born Free.

The Type B was a **Born Free Reign** on a Mercedes chassis. There are four 24-foot floor- plans available and too many features to list here. The unit was well thought out and the craftsmanship was easy to see inside and out.

One of the most notable space saving features was a Murphy bed tucked away in the slide-out. With the Murphy bed the floor-plan was open and roomy.
The Type C Born Free model I looked at was a 33-foot Imperial on a diesel powered Ford F550 chassis. It is also available on a Ram 5500 (with gas or diesel engine) and in 4X4 versions as well. This was another nice example of a custom built RV. The Born Free representative at the show explained how this RV makes a great choice for folks who are downsizing from a larger Type A motorhome.

The Imperial was extremely roomy with two slide-outs. Something a lot of folks are not aware of is that Born Free is a 5 star rated leader in safety. Every Born Free motorhome has built-in safety roll bars for protection in the event of an accident.
The fit and finish was superb with solid wood cabinets and dovetailed solid wood drawers. The Imperial was loaded with features and amenities.

This model had the front entertainment center and rear bedroom, but you have the option to order it to sleep up to 5 adults with the cab-over bed.

The Imperial model on display had a retail price of $236,000. I was really impressed with the quality of the Born Free motorhomes I looked at. I also learned Born Free builds mobility RV models and specialty RVs with individually designed floor-plans and equipment options. If you are in the market for a well equipped and well built RV you need to look at what Born Free Motorcoach has to offer.
When it comes to Type C motorhomes there are conventional mini-motorhomes and there are what some RV manufacturers refer to as super C’s. Super C motorhomes are built on larger truck chassis’ with much higher Gross Vehicle Weight Ratings (GVWR). These heavier GVWRs work well as toy haulers to accommodate the additional weight added to the motorhome.

This [Jayco Seneca](https://www.rvconsumer.com) 37TS model on display is built on a Freightliner® M2 Business Class chassis powered by a Cummins® ISB 6.7L diesel engine, with 660 pounds of torque, and an Allison® 2500MH automatic transmission. The towing capacity is 10,000 pounds, so you can tow or load about anything in it you might need.

The Seneca is equipped with the JRIDE Premium package that includes heavy-duty rear air suspension, a front sway bar, 60-millimeter Bilstein® shock absorbers, full air brakes, and air-ride seats, boasting the quietest riding, best handling Super C on the market today. Jayco backs the Seneca with an industry-leading, 2-year limited warranty, the most comprehensive warranty in the industry.
The Seneca is available in five floor-plans and lengths of 38 and 39 feet.

The interior of the Seneca has three décor options to choose from and is enhanced with Amish-crafted cabinetry. It comes equipped with loads of standard and optional features and equipment. The model on display had an MSRP of $239,000.
There were lots of Type A motorhomes on display as well. Some were smaller more fuel efficient models and others were large luxury diesel pushers. Regardless of the size or price-point you are looking for there is a Type A motorhome to meet your needs.
Something I found interesting were Type A motorhomes I saw designed to sleep numerous people. Lots of Type A motorhomes are designed for two people or to possibly sleep four, but I saw Type A's in Hershey that can sleep up to 10 people.

One such motorhome was the Winnebago Forza. It is advertised as “Families love the Forza”™ The sleeping arrangements included a dinette (2 people), a sofa sleeper (2 people), two bunk beds (2 people), a rear queen bed (2 people) and a drop down bed over the driver and passenger seats (2 people).
Speaking of Type A motorhomes check out this Dutch Star 4018 by Newmar. This model is on an IFS Freightliner XCR chassis powered by a 450 HP Cummins ISL engine. The MSRP on this unit was $421,000 with a show price of $342,000.

I will let the pictures speak for themselves
Chassis manufacturers were represented at the show too. This included Ford, Freightliner and Spartan. The most noteworthy I saw was at the Spartan display.

Spartan displayed its new Advanced Protection System® (APS). The APS is a package of market-leading collision mitigation and coach stability features designed to make owning and operating a Type A recreational vehicle safer for drivers, passengers, and other vehicles that share the road.

Spartan’s new APS integrates collision mitigation, electronic stability control, adaptive cruise control and an integrated tow-vehicle airbrake system to Spartan’s stability and defensive driving technologies. The new package will be available beginning with select model year 2017 Class A motor coaches.

“The market asked, and we listened,” said Daryl Adams, President and Chief Executive Officer, Spartan Motors. “We’ve brought safety innovations that have been exclusive to the passenger vehicle segment to the motor coach market for the first time. In doing so, we offer our OEM partners the industry’s first comprehensive set of RV-specific safety provisions so they may extend additional protection, security, and value to their premium coach customers.”

A product overview of the Spartan Advanced Protection System and other details are available here
Every year I like to do my “Best in Show” for either a motorized or towable RV I saw at the show. This year it is the towable category, and my “Best in Show” was the New Horizons Summit 5th wheel. New Horizons is a custom built factory direct manufacturer. The MSRP for the Summit model on display was $212,000. The superb craftsmanship is evident everywhere you look on this RV. The chassis is built in-house for the specific floor plan, so the weights are right where they should be. Pin weights can be calculated as 20% of the weight of the fifth wheel. The frame rails are 12” Steel I-Beam over 4 inch structural steel tubing. A chassis tolerance of only 3/16” provides excellent tracking behind the tow vehicle.
The walls, floor, and roof are made with a pressure-rolled laminate construction. The layers of the wall (consisting of the exterior fiberglass, structural framework, foam insulation, and interior wall panel) are assembled, glued, and pressure rolled to form the walls. The structural framework of the walls, floor, and roof is built using tubular aluminum.

There are way to many standard features and options available to list here. Each New Horizon’s RV is unique. The RV Consumer Group awarded New Horizons the only Five Star award in the full timer towable category.

Each unit is custom-built to the individual customer’s specifications. Pairing the premium floor plan options with a wide range of mix-and-match features makes each RV unique and created specifically for the owner’s enjoyment.

All the New Horizon’s floor-plans include standard features, as well as the electrical, plumbing, and interior furnishings you would expect from a luxury RV. The units can also be customized for special purposes such as handicapped accessibility, horse hauling, bunk houses, office space and more. New Horizon’s RVs are known for their true four-season comfort that allows the owner to enjoy the RV in temperatures ranging from below zero to one-hundred degrees and above, and they are built to withstand the rigors of full-time living for decades.
The New Horizon’s interiors are absolutely beautiful featuring cabinetry built out of solid wood at their facility. The cabinetry features full extension, soft close drawer glides and European style hidden hinges. Everything is glued and pocket screwed to make the cabinets last for many years.
Keep in mind that this type of quality, construction and infrastructure adds to the weight and a tow vehicle capable of safely handling the weight will be required.

New Horizons backs up the skill and quality built into each RV with a two-year “hitch-to-bumper” warranty plus a five-year warranty on the frame.

If you are considering a luxury 5th wheel, especially for full-time living you might want to consider looking at these custom built models by New Horizons.

That concludes my coverage of America’s Largest RV Show. I mentioned earlier it would be impossible to highlight every RV make and model available, but hopefully this gives you a good sample of what you can expect to see in 2017 RV models.

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When I was a teenager and went tent camping in the rolling hills of Pennsylvania we packed coolers with ice to keep our food cold or frozen. I remember making runs to the local country store every couple days to get more ice for the coolers.

Those days are long gone. Now when we go camping, tailgating, to a sporting event or on RV trips we take a portable refrigerator/freezer by Dometic. They come in a variety of sizes (from 28 to 95 liters) and with numerous options to meet your specific needs. If you are on-the-go and need to keep drinks or food cold or frozen these portable refrigerator/freezers by Dometic are essential equipment.

We started out with a smaller portable unit and when our needs changed we checked out the new CFX-95DZUS Dual-Zone Portable Refrigerator & Freezer. It is loaded with features and options, but the most unique feature is the separate compartments so you can refrigerate and freeze at the same time.

One compartment is 54 liters and the other compartment is 40.5 liters for a total storage capacity of 94.5 liters. The dual-zone feature is available in the CFX-65DZUS and CFX-95DZUS models. On the CFX-95DZUS model you can set either compartment anywhere from -8 degrees F to +50 degrees F so you can make either the 54 Liter side or the 40.5 liter side freeze or refrigerate (or both sides freeze or both sides refrigerate).

It comes with removable wire baskets for easy loading & cleaning. The CFX-95DZUS holds 117 12-oz. cans so keeping your kids entire sports team hydrated, or keeping beverages cold for an outdoor party is easy. It also features a dairy compartment for perishables.

The tough and tested exterior is made to endure the harshest outdoor environments. It has durable latches, hinges, and drop-down handles designed to stand the test of time. It operates on 12-volt and 24-volt DC power or 120-volt AC power. Just plug it in and the powerful but energy efficient compressor
starts cooling immediately. There is a USB port to charge a mobile device, and it has a built-in battery protection feature that can be set to Hi, Med, or Low when you are using 12V DC. This feature prevents the vehicle battery from draining if the 12-volt outlet stays powered when the vehicle is not running.

The features don't stop there. When it is turned on you will notice a digital temperature display and a soft-touch control panel. The temperature can be set from -8°F to +50°F (-22°C to +10°C). The memory feature maintains presets if the system is turned off and there is a quick-chill turbo feature too.

The CFX-95DZUS model also has an iOS & Android app to control the portable cooler functions with your smartphone. I mentioned earlier these portable refrigerator/freezers are great for RV trips, back yard BBQs, sporting events, camping and tailgating. If you are active and on-the-go and need to keep food and drinks cold or frozen check out these portable refrigerator/freezers by Dometic.

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Media Kit
Our goal with RV Consumer E-Magazine is to provide you with helpful information to make all of your RV experiences more enjoyable. I left my position as an RV Sales and F&I manager in 2000 to work RV Education 101 fulltime.

We produce RV educational videos & DVDs and publish books and e-books on how to safely & properly use and maintain your RV. The reason I left my job was because of my concern about the lack of educational and safety awareness material available to the RV consumer, in other words you.

My wife Dawn left her position in RV sales to help start the company, and is our Sales and Marketing Director. We currently have a 35-foot Type A motor home and travel with our three dogs Roxie, Gracie & Mo-Mo. If you would like to learn more about us and about RV Education 101 please visit www.rveducation101.com

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