

RV PRO

For The RV Professional

The Rise of the Euro Challenger

German RV maker Erwin Hymer Group has big plans for the North American market.

*Hymermobil
S-Klasse Studie*



Also in this Issue:

- Mid-Price is the Right Price for Travel Trailers
- RVDA Doubles Down on Vegas Convention/ Expo
- Larry's RV Succeeds by Staying Small, Focused

Winning Back Parts Sales

In the competitive battle for parts and accessories, it's imperative for dealerships to leverage the expertise of their parts staff and make the most of supplier and distributor training.

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A customer comes into your store for an RV part. Your parts associate shows him around, helps him find what he needs, and then the customer pulls out his phone and complains that he can buy it 20 percent cheaper online.

Or instead, maybe the customer goes to Wal-Mart and gets a similar fitting or accessory, where it is tossed into the shopping cart next to a SpongeBob SquarePants-shaped shampoo bottle. Odds are, that customer's trip to Wal-Mart will turn into several trips before he can find the right fitting.

Meanwhile, that package from Amazon.com with an RV part may show up quick at the customer's home, but when it breaks, who is the customer going to call?

Of course, the customer could always shop their local AutoZone or other car parts store. Those stores stock the basics – chemicals and tow balls and electric brake pin adaptors – but that's where their strength ends.

Play to Your Strengths

Given that there are more options than ever for the customer when it comes to purchasing parts, it's imperative that dealers play to their strengths. Odds are, price isn't the primary one.

To be sure, there are some customers focused entirely on price. Those are the ones that it's easiest to lose to national chain stores and online-only retailers. And so be it. Competing solely on price is a losing proposition. Think about it: If your "go-to" vent cover replacement is the same cheap one sold at the big box store, odds are it's providing you with precious little profit to begin with.

So, what are your strengths?

Maybe it's having a breadth and width of parts and accessories the big box stores just can't match. Propane sensors? How about one that sends data to an App on a smartphone? Gas regulator? How about the right size the first time, with a braided

In an age of mass merchandisers, dealers need to play to their strengths, which can include having a breadth and width of parts and accessories the big box stores just can't match and having a knowledgeable parts staff to give customers the best experience possible.



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hose? Busted RV converter? It sounds like a great time to upgrade to an inverter-charger system. The range of products and vendors you have access to is much greater than any “RV aisle” in that big box store.

One major advantage for your dealership is expertise. Your customers rely on you and your parts department team for advice, inventory and stock – not just to fix their broken system, but to prevent system failures in the future so they can spend more time enjoying their RV experience. Fortunately, there are customers out there who are willing to pay a bit extra for a better part, or a professional installation.

“Your customers rely on you and your parts department team for advice, inventory and stock – not just to fix their broken system, but to prevent system failures in the future so they can spend more time enjoying their RV experience.”

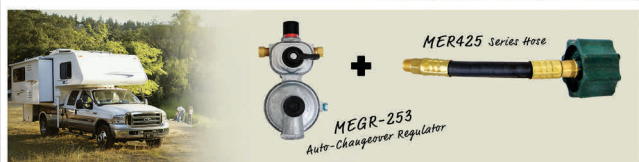
You can leverage your dealership’s expertise to provide customers with the best possible service while improving your bottom line in the parts and service department. Train your staff to know what the upsell is on every major part and service category you can perform, get them to pitch it every time, and you will see the difference. For service appointments, know the prices, and have the “upgrade package” ready. Once the customer knows he is going to open the wallet, an upsell is right around the corner and can rarely be served by a Costco.

Here’s one example of how this might work: Broken DC converter systems are very common in RVs and usually a broken converter gets replaced with a new unit. In the past two years, Xantrex has been educating dealers on the benefits of offering the choice of upgrading an RV’s electrical system with an inverter/charger because of the many benefits it offers to RVers. Yes, an inverter/charger system is a bit more expensive, but it’s also more durable and reliable. The point is, with the same number of appointments, dealers can increase profits of their parts and service departments, and also enhance customer loyalty.

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In today's competitive business environment, dealerships need to play to their strengths, including leveraging the expertise of their knowledgeable parts and service department staff to give customers the best experience possible.

Take Advantage of Training

Believe it or not, the solution to some of these upsells mentioned above is knocking at your door every week. What do I mean?

Too busy to talk to that product line rep? Couldn't book a tech training session with that inverter engineer? Only talk about turns and rebates with your distributor salesperson? If so, you are missing out.

Every day, hundreds of well-trained subject matter experts are roaming the country, looking to tell someone – anyone – about their products, programs and how to sell them. Be bold and accept no B.S.

The reps who show up will be the ones who win. Schedule trainings, give those distributor reps a workout and have them organize info sessions on major lines. Devote one day per month to product knowledge and upselling. Have to cover the phones? Do it in shifts. The reps will wait. (Trust me, they will wait).

At the end of the quarter, the season, the year, each sale was yours to lose. Adding value to your customer's transaction not only increases the sale price, it helps keep the sale in the first place. Dealers increasingly rely on the parts and service department for revenue growth. Do your part and get the best out of each customer, and out of each staffer.

The big box stores are big ... but you are smart.
Happy selling.

PRO



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Progressive Industries Hardwired Electrical Management System (EMS) provides full RV surge and electrical protection against all adverse power conditions. Feel secure with multi-mode surge, voltage, polarity and lost/open neutral protection. Each unit includes a digital display scrolling continuously through the power source information: voltage(s), current frequency, error code and previous error code (if applicable). A state-of-the-art microprocessor provides you with peace of mind, day or night, even if you're away from your RV.




EMS-HW30C




EMS-HW50C



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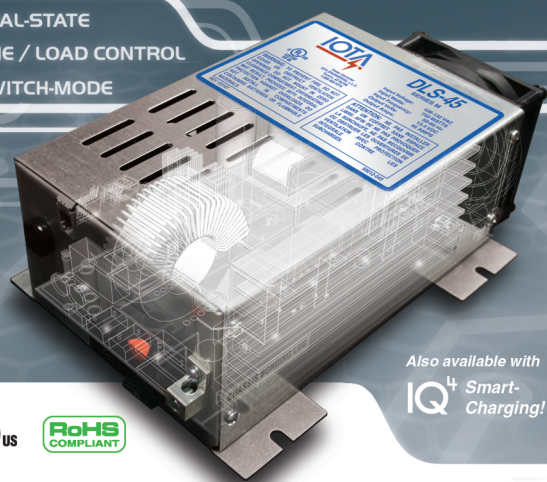


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