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Spartan Motors and Travel Supreme: New Luxury Motorhome Debuts Featuring an Attached Garage Class 'A' Coach Boasts Garage That Can Stow a Car, Other Toys

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LOUISVILLE, Ky., Dec. 4 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Over the last few years, motorhomes have become more and more like houses, featuring luxuries such as full-sized baths, granite kitchen countertops and expandable rooms called "slideouts."

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20021204/DEW002>)

Now comes a motorhome with an attached garage.

A Michigan-based chassis manufacturer and an Indiana-based motorhome manufacturer have teamed up to introduce a Class "A" motorhome with a 440- cubic foot garage that will allow owners to park their favorite "toys" -- personal watercrafts, ATVs, motorcycles or even a small car -- inside their RV.

Spartan Motors, Inc. ([NASDAQ:SPAR](#))

, based in Charlotte, Mich., and Elkhart, Ind.-based RV maker Travel Supreme unveiled the 41-foot long commercial motorhome this week in Louisville at the Recreational Vehicle Industry Association's (RVIA) dealer show, the world's largest RV trade show. After RVIA, the motorhome will travel to New York City for a series of special events on Dec. 16-17.

The Travel Supreme ME will be on RV dealer lots beginning in early 2003 for purchase by consumers and is expected to sell in the \$300,000 to \$350,000 price range.

The motorhome, which features two slideouts and plenty of other luxurious touches, is built on an innovative new mid-engine chassis -- called the Me2 -- built by Spartan. The chassis moves the engine from the rear of the coach to the middle and lowers it below the frame rails, allowing for more design flexibility, improved performance and better ride and handling.

Spartan Motors said the Travel Supreme coach marks the first commercial application of the technology. The luxury coach features a double-slideout, which nearly doubles the width of the coach, and a 12-foot deep storage garage, measuring 95.5 inches wide by 56 inches high, with a hydraulic lift in the rear of the coach. To showcase its capacity, the coach's garage will house a BMW Mini Cooper at the RVIA show.

"The Me2 is designed to offer the ultimate in form and function for motorhomes," said John Szykiel, chief executive officer of Spartan Motors. "By moving the engine to the middle of the chassis, we are able to distribute the weight more evenly to improve ride and handling. As the Travel Supreme coach showcases, it also allows manufacturers to jazz up their floor plans with more space for slideouts, greater variation for room designs and the addition of high-end amenities like a hot tub, or a garage to carry their toys."

Spartan's engineers have been able to lower the engine below the frame rails in the Me2's platform, enabling manufacturers to build with lower floors and increased headroom. With the Me2, coaches can feature as many as six slideouts, which could increase the average living space by as much as 40 percent. The new chassis design also opens up space in the rear of the coach for up to 30 percent more storage space, which can be used to haul a small boat, car, snowmobiles, ATVs, motorcycles, bicycles or other leisure items that are popular with adventure-seeking RVers.

"What you're getting here is a motorhome with a larger interior and a garage within the same exterior frame, which allows RV enthusiasts to bring along everything they need for a trip without having to tow along the extras that normally wouldn't fit in their motorhome," said Glenn Troyer, president of Travel Supreme. "This is truly a great innovation for the industry and we expect consumer response to be very positive to this one-of-a-kind motorhome."

Despite the sluggish economy, the RV industry remains strong as America's growing Baby Boomer population seeks opportunities to get away from it all. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, nearly 4 million people turned 50 in 2002. That number is projected to rise 17 percent by 2010 to more than 4.6 million.

"Outdoor sports enthusiasts love the freedom, control and convenience that RV travel offers," said RVIA President David J. Humphreys. "RVs complement almost every outdoor adventure year-round -- from skiing and hunting to mountain biking and snowmobiling -- making these experiences even more hassle-free and fun for every family member."

About Spartan Motors, Inc.

Spartan Motors, Inc. (theshyftgroup.com) is a leading developer and manufacturer of custom chassis for recreational vehicles, fire trucks, ambulances and other specialty vehicles. The Company also owns ambulance manufacturer Road Rescue Inc. and rescue vehicle manufacturer Crimson Fire, formerly Luverne Fire Apparatus and Quality Manufacturing.

The statements contained in this news release include certain predictions and projections that may be considered "forward-looking statements" by the securities laws. These forward-looking statements are identifiable by words or phrases indicating that the Company or management "expects" that a particular result may occur, or that its "guidance" or "initial guidance" is that a particular event may occur. These statements involve many risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially, including but not limited to economic, competitive, governmental and technological factors affecting the Company's operations, markets, products, services and prices. Additional information about these and other factors that may adversely affect these forward-looking statements are contained in the Company's reports and filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The Company undertakes no obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements to reflect developments or information obtained after the date of this news release.

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