



1541 Reynolds Rd. Charlotte, MI 48813

P: 517.543.6400

SPARTANMOTORS.COM

Utilimaster Selected to Operate Ram Commercial Upfit Center and Mopar Custom Shop

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INDIANAPOLIS, March 3, 2015 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Long regarded for cost effective operations and engineering expertise, commercial vehicle manufacturer [Utilimaster](#), a subsidiary of [Spartan Motors, Inc.](#) (Nasdaq:SPAR), was selected to establish and operate a Ram Commercial Upfit Center and Mopar Custom Shop in Saltillo, Mexico. The arrangement includes long-term agreements with Fiat Chrysler Automobiles US LLC (FCA), the Ram Truck Mopar brands, and a number of vocational package suppliers who need at-plant installation services.

The Utilimaster investment in the Ram Commercial Upfit Center and Mopar Custom Shop builds on the core offering of customized commercial vehicles. Utilimaster has OEM upfit center operations in multiple locations and in 2014 started operations in Saltillo. The mission of Utilimaster is to expand offerings to provide for its clients, fully integrated solutions.

"The Ram Commercial Upfit Center and Mopar Custom Shop provides fleet managers with a cost-effective method to reduce freight costs while also providing customized vocational packages for their fleet operations," said John Marshall, Senior Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Utilimaster. "Our engineering services, close relationships with fleet clients, and reputation for cost-effective operations made Utilimaster the right choice for this opportunity."

In addition to reaching agreement to operate the upfit center, Utilimaster established OEM partner agreements with Knapheide Manufacturing, Leggett & Platt/MasterRack, Adrian Steel, AutoTruck, Farmbro and Midway. FCA and Utilimaster clients and Ram Truck dealers can contact these OEM partners directly to order vocational packages and then receive a fully configured Ram ProMaster van at their local dealership without additional time or travel costs, which would be incurred when local dealers have to send the vehicle offsite to be upfit.

For quick delivery, common vocational packages are stocked in the Saltillo upfit center. Ram Truck dealers can order FedEx Ground and Home Delivery vocational packages from Utilimaster and receive a route-ready van. To make the sales process efficient, Utilimaster created a Ram ProMaster upfit hotline – (574) 848-2111, staffed by vocational experts and supported by an experienced engineering team.

The upfit center operates in partnership with FCA US out of a 125,000-square-foot facility Saltillo, Mexico facility. Utilimaster currently employs in-country, a management team and 30-40 assembly associates. Installations are completed within a 3-5 day delivery time frame and then placed into the FCA US delivery network.

"Utilimaster is pleased to be selected by the Ram Truck and Mopar team to execute their upfit strategy for the Ram Truck commercial product line," stated Dave Stace, Upfit Operations Manager for Utilimaster upfit centers. "Our experience with commercial fleets and reputation for supporting large OEM operations is a competency we will continue to expand."

The Saltillo upfit center aligns with Spartan's D.R.I.V.E. initiative, as it positions the company for diversified growth. Additionally, it reaffirms the strength of the Utilimaster team in supporting the commercial van & walk-in industry.

D.R.I.V.E. is Spartan's operating strategy based on five tenets:

- **Diversified Growth**
- **Redefining Technology and Innovation**
- **Integrated Operational Excellence**

- **Vibrant Culture**
- **Excited Consumers/Brand Loyalists**

For more information on Utilimaster, visit www.utilimaster.com or call (574) 848-2111.

About Utilimaster

Utilimaster, a subsidiary of Spartan Motors, Inc. (Nasdaq:SPAR), is a leading manufacturer of walk-in vans, commercial van bodies, and truck bodies for the delivery and service marketplace. Utilimaster designs, develops and manufactures products to customer specifications for use in a wide spectrum of applications including mobile retail, package delivery, one-way truck rental, bakery/snack delivery, and utility and linen/uniform rental businesses. Utilimaster portfolio of products and services include in-field installation and retrofit of existing equipment, OEM upfit services, project management & deployment, engineering services, for a diverse customer base. For more information, visit the Utilimaster website at www.utilimaster.com.

About Spartan Motors

Spartan Motors, Inc. designs, engineers and manufactures specialty chassis, specialty vehicles, truck bodies and aftermarket parts for the recreational vehicle (RV), emergency response, government services, defense, and delivery and service markets. The Company's brand names – Spartan™, Spartan Chassis™, Spartan ER™, Spartan ERV™ and Utilimaster® – are known for quality, performance, service and first-to-market innovation. The Company employs approximately 1,700 associates at facilities in Michigan, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Indiana and Florida. Spartan reported sales of \$507 million in 2014 and is focused on becoming a global leader in the design, engineering and manufacture of specialty vehicles and chassis. Visit Spartan Motors at theshyftgroup.com.

CONTACT: John Marshall
Senior Vice President, Sales and Marketing
Utilimaster Corporation
(574) 848-2004

Greg Salchow
Director, Investor Relations
Spartan Motors, Inc.
(517) 543-6400

Spartan Motors, Inc.