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Spartan Motors Introduces Two New Products: Coach-Ready Platform for Rear-Engine Motorhomes and AuraGen Power System

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CHARLOTTE, Mich., Aug. 28 /PRNewswire/ -- Spartan Motors, Inc. (NASDAQ:SPAR) unveiled a new coach-ready platform for rear-engine diesel motorhomes and a platform featuring AuraGen, an innovative power-generation system by Aura Systems (BULLETIN BOARD: AURA) that offers RVers increased electrical capabilities while traveling.

The Charlotte, Mich.-based manufacturer of custom chassis and emergency vehicles said it will begin shipping the two new platforms by the end of 2001. The coach-ready platform, which incorporates additional cross beams and structural components, is three times stronger than traditional frame-rail platforms and is designed for either rear-engine or mid-engine coaches. The Spartan team installs generators, including the AuraGen, as well as jack pads, propane tanks and other items traditionally found below the floor, virtually eliminating chassis preparation for the motorhome manufacturer.

"The coach-ready platform is another Spartan innovation that allows OEMs to differentiate their products to the end user," said John Sztykiel, president and chief operating officer of Spartan Motors. "Our new coach-ready platform shifts the responsibility of everything 'below the floor' to Spartan. Now motorhome OEMs can focus even more on the interiors and exteriors of the units, adding more popular features such as slideouts that further differentiate their products to end users.

"This new platform not only reduces new product development timelines, it allows Spartan to add greater value to the manufacturing process while saving time and money for OEMs. Manufacturers love the idea of a 'coach-ready' platform, which improves quality because of the limited rework. Our new coach-ready platform helps OEMs improve their profitability and, ultimately, the marketability of their products. This platform represents a true partnership with our OEM customers, and allows each of us to do what we do best. It is the next logical step."

Spartan Motors developed its second new platform to accommodate the AuraGen, a revolutionary new electromagnetic system developed by Aura Systems in El Segundo, Calif. AuraGen replaces traditional power generators with a new system that gives motorhome owners greater ability to generate power while they enjoy the RV lifestyle.

"We are also pleased to be the first OEM to feature an Aura Systems product, and feel the partnership between our two companies is already evidenced," Sztykiel said. "We expect this new feature to be very attractive to OEMs and motorhome buyers alike because it offers cost-savings for manufacturers and greater freedom for RV owners."

AuraGen is a unique power-generation system that was originally developed in Los Angeles for the purpose of providing mobile electric power. The high capacity, engine-driven generator, which runs much like an alternator, creates up to 8.5 kw of electrical power necessary to run all the appliances on the coach.

When the coach engine is not running, an aircraft battery supplies enough power to support the electrical demands of the motorhome for up to five hours. The battery pack is recharged during normal driving with little or no impact to fuel consumption, or it can be charged while parked with the engine running at idle. AuraGen provides clean, virtually noiseless power for all the tools and toys that come on today's modern motorhome.

"The combination of Spartan's chassis and Aura's generator provides the necessary durability for use in extreme conditions," said Harry Kurtzman, CEO of Aura Systems, Inc. "AuraGen has only one moving part, is nearly maintenance free, and is warranted by Aura Systems for three years and unlimited miles, making it one of the most hassle-free power systems available."

AuraGen's engineers partnered with the Spartan team to incorporate the generator within the chassis so that the system is "hidden" beneath the floor of the coach. The advantage of this is more design options, and fewer physical barriers within the coach.

"As we said during the Recreational Vehicle Industry Association trade show last fall, Spartan is committed to bringing out new products and process innovations that allow OEMs to differentiate themselves and their vehicles," Sztykiel said. "At RVIA this fall, you will again see more new and industry- shaping products from Spartan Motors."

Aura Systems, Inc. (http://www.aurasystems.com/), a leader in electromagnetic systems, mainly develops, designs, assembles and sells AuraGen induction power systems for mobile power applications in the mobile power generation markets.

Spartan Motors, Inc. (https://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 fire and rescue vehicle manufacturers Luverne Fire Apparatus, Quality Manufacturing and Road Rescue, Inc.

The statements contained in this news release include certain predictions and projections that may be considered forward-looking statements by the securities laws. These statements involve a number of risks and uncertainties, including but not limited to economic, competitive, governmental and technological factors affecting the Company's operations, markets, products, services and prices, and actual results may differ materially.

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