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READY FOR LAUNCH

Startup OEM Axiom RV Introduces the 'Vendetta' Toy Hauler

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UFP Factory Built Committed to Offering Custom Solutions, Products in the RV Industry

ON THE COVER

From left, John Jones, Tom Ison and A.J. Jones bring over 60 years of combined experience to startup OEM Axiom RV. Their long-standing collaboration spans more than 15 years, and the trio said Axiom RV is the culmination of a shared dream to build something better from the ground up. *Photo: Peter Ringenberg*



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Q&A

UFP Industries & UFP Factory Built Intent on Delivering Global Strength & Custom Solutions for the RV Industry

■ BY WANDA KENTON SMITH

One of the RV industry's long-standing supplier companies may also be among its best kept secrets.

UFP Factory Built, a division of UFP Construction and parent company UFP Industries (NASDAQ: UFP), specializes in providing high-quality structural components, custom-engineered solutions and essential products to RV manufacturers as well as the modular and manufactured housing and cargo trailer industries.

More specifically, the company delivers a wide range of solutions for manufacturers and builders — including framing panels, wall panels, studs, trusses, floor bases, ceilings and roofs — and third-party product offerings via its distribution arm, coupled with custom deliverables including strategically located warehousing and specialized custom marketing and product development programs.

UFP Industries was founded in 1955 and over its 70 years has emerged as one of the premier suppliers of treated lumber in North America as well as a leader in engineered wood, structural components and building materials across the construction, retail and packaging sectors.

With 14,000 employees and an



UFP Factory Built offers a comprehensive range of structural components and other critical components for quality builds.

Photos: Courtesy



impressive global reach of customers across nine countries and four continents including North America, Europe, Asia and Australia, UFP corporate posted sales in 2024 of \$6.7 billion.

UFP Construction, meanwhile, serves customers through 26 locations including 17 manufacturing facilities and nine distribution centers in the U.S.

Of note more recently, UFP Industries acquired Robert Weed Corporation's Twin Falls, Idaho, facility in mid-June. The addition of this

facility enhances UFP Factory Built's regional service and operational capacity to benefit its RV OEM partners, officials noted. Lamination, engineered wood, distribution and value-added products will be provided from this location.

Recently, *RVBusiness* spoke with Executive VP Chad Eastin of UFP Factory Built, a UFP Construction division subsidiary. Eastin, a seasoned 27-year company veteran, provides keen insight into the company's current product portfolio, focus and future direction.

Q: How would you describe UFP Factory Built in a nutshell?

Eastin: Our expertise is in structural solutions. We provide expansive product options to help RV OEM/manufacturers increase efficiency, reduce material waste and grow their businesses. Our mission is to provide high-quality, factory-built solutions that ensure strength, durability, and consistency across the board to expedite manufacturing on the assembly line, while delivering unmatched buying power and sourcing to benefit our OEM partners. We strive to align ourselves with our customers' needs through a wide-ranging and creative product mix.

We possess an outstanding talent pool of operations, procurement, engineering, sales and customer support teams. Many team members have decades of industry

experience, including experts with deep knowledge of both wood and wood alternative solutions.

Q: You reference high-quality structural solutions. What's special about your processes and/or quality control measures that are distinguishable in the marketplace?

Eastin: We offer a diverse mix of UFP manufactured products and other essential third-party components to help OEMs build quality solutions from one source.

We recently reinvented the way we build bow trusses and have almost doubled our manufacturing capacity by eliminating a few non-value steps. We have also added lamination that complements specific product categories, expanding our offering and capabilities.

Our structural components adhere to

strict quality controls that are built to exact, manufacturer-mandated specifications to fit a certain model type. Our rigorous in-house testing process ensures that the product meets our partners' quality requirements, including dimensions and strength.

Q: Do you have a facility in Elkhart, Ind. to serve the capital of RV manufacturing?

Eastin: Yes, we believe it's important to be near our customers. We serve our customers in Elkhart County through our manufacturing and assembly plant and multiple distribution warehouses. We have key personnel including operations, engineering and sales leaders in the area, along with a full team of product managers, inside sales and customer support representatives.

Our national footprint allows us to best serve customers, offering the capacity

to source and supply materials from other plants in the event of calamity or natural disaster to ensure our manufacturing partners' assembly lines aren't disrupted.

Q: Tell us more about your specific UFP Factory Built product offerings.

Eastin: Our engineered components and structural solutions are used by many RV manufacturers to build RVs. We also offer products from our house brands including Deckorators Decking, ProWood, Treated Wood and Endurable Railings, along with expansive third-party options like Moen Faucets, Armstrong Flooring, Progressive Dynamics and many other leading brands which are available through UFP distribution. We also offer a comprehensive range of critical parts to support the entire build such as wire harnesses and cable kits, sinks and faucets, adhesives and tapes, LP tanks/accessories, DWV pipes for water and waste, plus interior décor like flooring, paneling, and finishes.

While we may not supply every nut and bolt required for RV construction, we pride ourselves on being a one-stop source that streamlines the manufacturing process. Our goal is to maximize efficiency and savings for our customers by offering a wide range of essential products and services.

Q: Speaking of Deckorators ... we understand UFP Industries is making a significant investment in this brand. Can you elaborate?

Eastin: Deckorators is our brand of decking solutions with a specialty in composite decking for RVs. The products are lightweight and easy to install on the assembly line. In addition, they are moisture-resistant, easy-to-clean and feature a scratch-resistant cap material to maximize durability to benefit retail customers.

Because of these outstanding product advantages, UFP Industries, Inc. is, in fact, focusing on a major expansion which includes securing a 30-acre site in Lackawanna, N.Y. to strengthen our market position as we double our production capacity for Decorators' product. This represents an initial \$77 million investment and will include a campus with two buildings offering 240,000 square feet of manufacturing and warehouse space. This project is part of a significant \$250 million, five-year plan to expand the product line.

Q: Wow, that's impressive. What's the timing on this initial manufacturing investment?

Eastin: The construction of the facility is set to begin this summer and is expected to be operational by year-end. The development is expected to create 50 plus jobs in production, logistics and administration.

Q: Besides your strong product offering and solutions-based approach to business,



Chad Eastin, right, executive vice president of UFP Factory Built, with co-workers.

are there any other major benefits associated with your organization?

Eastin: With our multi-faceted business model and buying power, along with our logistics and infrastructure, financial backing and diversity of operations, we are better insulated against economic, natural or geopolitical volatility. Our size, scope and customer service allow our manufacturing partners to keep their assembly lines humming.

Q: Let's shift gears and discuss your customer approach in the niche markets you serve. In some instances, you are primarily a top supplier of bulk products, while in other circumstances, your team creates customized products and/or logistical services to meet specific needs. Can you provide insight and examples here?

Eastin: While three players primarily dominate the RV industry, each owns several brands featuring hundreds of models with different floor plan variants.

As you know, space and weight are premium considerations in RV design. Our team works closely with many partners to custom design, engineer and manufacture solutions to meet their unique model needs, encompassing everything from custom moisture-resistant flooring systems to a custom bow truss design that can be directly installed on the assembly line. Whatever the specifications, our in-house CNC and precision machining capabilities allow us to customize sizes and designs for roof trusses, framing lumber and other structural components to maximize flexibility and options. The process involves engaging in brainstorming sessions with our product innovation team, followed by technical drawings and then the building of actual prototypes before mass manufacturing.

We also provide value-added services including assistance with code compliance and inventory management. For many partners, we are the first access point for technical, regulatory, warranty and code compliance documentation.

In addition, our distribution arm - UFP Distribution - offers logistical support including up to last-mile delivery. We

unload, store, palletize, and deliver products to RV OEMs on a pre-determined schedule. By offering last-mile delivery, we free up warehouse space and trucking headaches for those who may lack space or product inventory expertise. We also offer custom components assembly.

Q: Is your company engaged in practicing/promoting sustainability?

Eastin: We strive to be good neighbors wherever we call home. At UFP Industries, we recycle our waste including sawdust and other wood fibers which amount to about 25,000 tons annually. We use recycled materials to produce ancillary wood products or sell to others such as biomass companies. Our commitment to sustainability is shared across UFP Industries and more fully addressed in our corporate Governance Report.

Q: What's next on the horizon for UFP Factory Built?

Eastin: As a top leader in quality and customer service, we are striving to 'go further and faster' than ever before.

We are committed to actively researching and developing innovative products to solve our customers' most challenging problems. For example, in addition to the high-quality wood products for which we are known, we are also well underway and invested in developing newer wood alternative solutions.

We are also expanding our custom product design capabilities, a practice which clearly sets us apart from the competition.

We are also well underway on the launch of an exciting new house brand of structural solutions which we expect to announce this summer, with further updates throughout the calendar year.

We continue to work in collaboration with our key partners to help promote the RVing lifestyle and sales of recreational vehicles and will continue to support industry platforms. We take a strategic approach to brand-building with a 'go-to-market plan' to engage all stakeholders including retailers and consumers. Our marketing team works closely with our OEM partners to drive awareness about the quality of build materials so that their customers are better educated and can make an informed decision on the purchase.

We believe we have the best people in the industry, and we plan to continue our employee education programs and add new talent as we grow. In addition, our company's leadership supports our budgeted capital investments and desire to acquire to drive shareholder value and return to investors.

Bottom line, as I stated earlier ... we want to grow the RV industry with our partners — further and faster. **RVB**