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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN WORK TRUCK INDUSTRY - RISE OF EUROPEAN-STYLE VAN



By **Brian Levan, CEO at Levan Machine & Truck Equipment**

If you didn't think modes of transportation could be exciting, think again. The rise of the European-style vans has hit the States and offers some new efficiencies and choices in a segment which has otherwise been very traditional and standard.

Levan has had the pleasure of upfitting a number of the European-style vans being offered by Ford, RAM, Mercedes and Nissan for many local contractors, HVAC, plumbers, electricians, cable installers and general service providers, just to name a few. These new popular work vans are available in a variety of roof heights and rear-door or side-door options. Even better, the automobile manufacturers have designed these trucks with the tradesmen(women) in mind. Essentially, Euro-style vans offer a mobile workspace configured to handle tools and equipment in a temperature controlled, efficient layout – all protected from the elements of weather.

Manufacturers such as Ford and RAM engineers are making an effort to survey the end user to learn how they can improve their models. According to *the NEWS*, representatives from Ford and RAM both anticipate sales of their work vehicles will only continue to increase in the next year as their Euro-style vans continue to gain popularity, at least in part due to the higher resale value of work vans compared to work trucks.

The advantages of these newer style vans are that they feature a high-roof design – visually, think taller and square, multiple wheelbases, with a roomy cargo space. As compared to the traditional vans, the Euro-style offers plenty of space to walk around, with enough room to safely secure tools and equipment, potentially even more since there are a number of manufacturers that we deal with that offer customizable interiors. The Euro-style van also touts better fuel economy, cargo capacity, payload - with enough room for an efficient work space.

I recall being at a trade industry conference and listening to a guy say, "trust me, these style vans are going to hit the States." At the time, I had a hard time believing him, but now I see why the Euro-style van is gaining market share over the American-style, box van. The Euro-style van may look foreign but they are sleek and innovative.

Especially in our business, we see the benefits of upfitting the interior of these types of vans. At Levan, we offer three different options that work really well with the Euro-style vans. One option offers van



equipment made out of steel – the advantage of this configuration is that it is cost effective, durable and offers a traditional interior. The second option is aluminum shelving, which is quiet vibration free shelves, efficient ergonomic design, which is marketed to reduce injury and increase productivity – made out of tough and durable materials. All layouts are designed to ensure that tools and equipment are safely secured. You really want to keep your tools and equipment secured in case you are in an accident. If your tools going flying around, the side panel of vans are thin and can easily be damaged showing up on the outside which doesn't make a great impression for your business. The last option is made out of composite materials – which are lighter weight and offers modular configurations that are transportable to job sites. It is amazing the organization and storage capability with this solution, ensuing improved worker efficiency.

With these different options available to enhance the workspace in the Euro-style van, we definitively see this trend staying, and gaining in popularity. The end goal is to be able to make your mode of transportation safe from tools flying, efficient on fuel, and offer an effective and organized work space.

Brian Levan, CEO at Levan Machine & Truck Equipment, third generation family business, been leading the company for the past 25 years. He grew up in the business and spent many years working under his father and grandfather.



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