

## **RV Experts: Industry Success Indicative Of Economy**

### ***RV Sales Up In 3 Quarters During 2009***

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**LOUISVILLE, Ky.** -- The 47th annual National RV Trade Show is in Louisville and while it's a wholesale show for manufacturers, dealers, and suppliers, it applies to consumers, too.

Industry experts said there's good news when it comes to sales and that is good news for the country.

"This industry's been off 60 to 70 percent for the last couple of years, but now we're on the way back up," said Richard Coon, president of the RV Industry Association.

Attendance at this year's show, held at the Kentucky Expo Center is down, thanks to the economic downturn.

Coon said the economy caused the industry to lose 30 percent its dealers nationwide, but despite the losses, they're celebrating victory.

"Since about April of this year, we've seen increases in the 16 to 25 percent category depending on which product you're looking at. We're expecting a 27 percent increase next year," Coon said.

"This industry tends to lead the general economy into and out of recessions," said the president of Airstream, Bob Wheeler.

"It's strictly discretionary income. You don't need to buy an RV. So it's people that have discretionary income," said Coon.

An increase in RV orders and sales seems to indicate more people have that discretionary income, putting the economy on a road trip to restoration.

While only time can tell, one of the most well-known RV companies is already feeling the positive impact.

"We've actually increased production twice, and by Jan. 4, we will have doubled our production output from where we were in August of this year," said Wheeler. "By January, we will have rehired everybody on our layoff list."

That will mean 60 more unemployed people with a job.

Wheeler said his and other companies are cautiously ramping up production, looking to meet dealer and consumer demand without overreaching.

The optimism for what this could mean for the rest of the economy is tangible.

"To see the glimmer of recovery and glimmer of hope just really buoyed everybody's spirits here," Wheeler said.

Coon said the trade show itself is helping boosting the local economy. He said around 10,000 people are in town for the event that ends Thursday.