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PAUL'S PICKS Great West Truck Show • Las Vegas



From the floor of The Great West Truck Show, Senior Technical Editor Paul Abelson highlights some of the most innovative and practical new products out there.

The busiest exhibitors at this year's Great West Truck Show were, not surprisingly, those who offered aids to reduce fuel consumption. Heading up my picks from the show are **Aerowings from Aeromotive Innovations**

(wings4trucks.com, (970) 581-5277).

These automated cab extenders apply tried-and-true aerodynamic principles by completely closing the gap between tractor and trailer. That improves fuel

mileage by up to 8 percent. When activated, the folding flaps deploy at 45 mph to seal the gap. They automatically retract below 40 mph, so there is no interference when turning, even beyond 90 degrees.



Dometic (dometictruck.com, (804) 746-1313) introduced a battery box for mounting up to six of the Group 31 absorbed glass mat batteries to power their 12-volt air conditioners. The rugged, covered frame can be mounted between the rails or on either side. More high-capacity batteries allow longer cooling and efficient operation in higher temperatures. The AGM batteries can also power a ceramic heater through an inverter. The box is prewired with a circuit breaker and an inverter to cut installation costs. Dometic's CARB-compliant air conditioning can provide up to 17 hours of cooling.

Eco-Flaps (ecoflaps.com, 1-866-543-5277) by Andersen Flaps



Inc. have a unique design with columns of adjacent louvers. The sieve-like surface reduces the frontal area of your flaps,

resulting in about 2 percent improvement in fuel economy. Improvements were verified by SAE/TMC tests. They've re-engineered the product, improving aerodynamic efficiency and making the flaps stronger, lighter and more adaptable to various sizes and shapes. Fleets testing Eco-Flaps report payback periods of two weeks or less at today's fuel prices.

Tire pressure monitoring systems are now available on many cars and SUVs for fuel-saving purposes, and the feds want them on Class 8 vehicles as soon as they are practical. The lack of technology to transmit tire pressure readings from trailers to tractors has prevented such systems from being required on combination vehicles so far, but two companies showed tractor-trailer compatible monitoring systems at the show.

SAF-TTE, LLC (truckerspartstore.com, 1-877-435-2345) offers a tire temperature and tire pressure monitoring system. Each tire-mounted sensor weighs only 23 grams – that's less than an ounce – so balance isn't affected. Up to 22 tires can be monitored simultaneously.

Pressure Pro (tirepressuremonitor.com, 1-800-521-6820) learns and remembers sensors from various tire locations. The sensors transmit tire pressure and temperature data. The Pressure Pro is suited to drop-and-hook operations. The cab-mounted monitor unlearns sensors from the old trailer when it is unhooked. It is then easily programmed to learn its new sensors. Pressure Pro can monitor up to 34 positions.

