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Features

Paul's picks

by Paul Abelson Technical editor

While many of the major suppliers to our industry stayed away from this year's Great American Trucking Show, the attendees were there in steady numbers. Saturday, Sept. 8, the second day of the three-day show, the aisles were almost as jammed as at Mid-America. Most exhibitors I spoke with were pleased with the traffic at their booths, both for quantity and quality. A large number of attendees were owner-operators or fleet operators. Exhibitors like Ten-Four Stairs (see Paul's Picks, Aug./Sept. 2001) reported getting significant orders at the show. Here are my favorites from the 2001 GATS, products I believe offer quality and functionality.

- Splash and spray is a problem for our industry. They affect both safety and image. About 15 years ago, Congress directed the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to do something about the problem. Fleets experimented with Astroturf mud flaps and whiskers at wheel wells, but the advent of aerodynamic trucks reduced the problem by about 50 percent. Congress and NHTSA were satisfied, but the problem wasn't solved. It may be now. **Vortex Splash Guards** (1-888-848-7141, www.vortexsplashguards.com) are louvered mud flaps. The slots are angled to direct air and water through and down behind the flaps, minimizing any side spray. Using sound aerodynamic principles, the flaps should go a long way toward eliminating much of the remaining spray, improving both your rearward vision and other motorists' forward vision.