



## Freightliner Columbia Customer Takes His Showroom On The Road

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PORTLAND, ORE. – When promoting and selling aftermarket motorcycle parts, it helps to be where the bikers are. For Rob Hassay of Hubbard, Ohio-based RacePro ([www.888RacePro.com](http://www.888RacePro.com)), that means loading up a 2003 Freightliner Columbia® truck and following the crowds that gather each year at major Harley Davidson rallies across the country.

Hassay’s entire operation is based out of his Freightliner Columbia, which is mounted with a full-size motorhome and pulls a 46-foot trailer outfitted with a showroom, lounge, and living area. For almost 20 years, RacePro has been setting up shop for up to three weeks at a time at about ten different rallies a year.

“Our crew travels all over – from Daytona Beach’s Bike Week in March to the Sturgis rally in August and Reno’s Street Vibrations rally in September,” said Hassay. “Some of our customers travel to several rallies, too, so it’s not unlikely to see the same people at a few shows each year.”

### Hitting the Road

RacePro started when Hassay noticed big rig trucks promoting aftermarket auto parts at automotive drag races in his home state of California. As a former professional motorcycle racer and long-time motorcycle enthusiast, he and his wife Laura determined that bikers could also use a traveling aftermarket parts retailer.

With several friends in the trucking business, Hassay didn’t have any trouble getting recommendations for his first truck. In 1997, he purchased a Freightliner FL70 and purchased four more Freightliner vehicles over the years. Then, as his business grew, he decided to

upgrade to the Columbia in 2003.

## **Setting up Shop**

Hassay's rig features a 17-foot motorhome mounted to a Columbia chassis with a 450-hp Caterpillar C12 engine. The motorhome sleeps four comfortably and is equipped with a full size bathroom and shower, convection microwave oven, full-size refrigerator/freezer, and a 14-foot slide-out alcove.

The two-level trailer contains product displays and parts inventory, and features an air conditioned customer lounge, living area, and upper-level bedroom with bathroom and shower.

"Our motorhome and trailer save us hundreds of dollars a day in hotel costs during the events," said Hassay. "Plus, sleeping so close to the showroom gives me a sense of security."

A 75-foot awning spans the side of the motorhome and trailer, which, when extended, creates a covered outdoor showroom complete with a two-bay drive-in shop for installing motorcycle parts on the spot. Plus, the roof of the trailer has a covered observation tower that holds up to 20 guests.

"Our rooftop is great for entertaining clients or just watching the motorcycle races," said Hassay. "With such a big setup, we definitely attract a fair share of attention."

## **Columbia Admiration**

Sometimes, customers who approach Hassay will admire his truck before they even start talking about their motorcycles.

"I can tell a guy is a trucker when he's checking out my rig and the motorcycles," he said. "The Columbia owners I've talked to love their trucks. They like the roomy driver's compartment, the gauge layout, and the smooth steering. We all agree that it's a great truck for doing business on the open road."

In addition to his ProTour rig, Hassay operates a 2004 Freightliner Columbia with a 500 hp Detroit Diesel Series 60 engine for American Ironhorse Motorcycles, a custom motorcycle manufacturer. That rig has a 70-inch SleeperCab and pulls a 53-foot trailer that can haul up to a dozen custom motorcycles and includes a lounge and a separate bedroom. A 50-foot awning creates a fully enclosed, climate-controlled showroom.

In addition to the Columbia's comfort options, Hassay also appreciates the truck's fuel saving features.

"My driver, Steve, always tells me that even with the powerful 500 hp engine, our truck gets great fuel economy," said Hassay. "The Columbia's aerodynamic features let us run them pretty hard and still get 6.5 miles a gallon."

With two trucks on the road at a time, Hassay often needs to juggle his business and his life at home with Laura and their daughter, Mckenna. Luckily, as his business grew, Hassay has been able to hire staff to help him out at events.

"Now, I have a crew of 4 to 5 people I can rely on to take the trucks to the shows and run the entire operation. I usually just come in for a few days of the show, if at all. That's a far cry from the years I used to spend 300 plus days on the road," said Hassay. "I've always said that the whole point of growing your own business is that you can set your own schedule and spend more time with your family, and I'm pleased to have gotten to that point."

[Freightliner Trucks](#) is a division of [Freightliner LLC](#), headquartered in Portland, Oregon, and is the leading heavy-duty truck manufacturer in North America. Freightliner LLC produces and markets Class 3-8 trucks and is a company of [DaimlerChrysler](#), the world's largest commercial vehicle manufacturer.

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