



Mauck2

A Step Forward for Small Buses

by Larry Plachno
Photos courtesy of Mauck2, LLC

The Mauck2 fits into the special category that ranges from larger vans to smaller buses. Although designed primarily for personal transportation, the Mauck2 is also used for commercial applications. One of its major positive features is the use of the proven and economical Mercedes-Benz Sprinter chassis.

Brand new on the market, the Mauck2 can be categorized in a special market that extends from large vans to small buses. It offers a proven chassis with a unique body that marks a sharp break from the traditional box-on-a-truck chassis often found in this market. Although primarily designed for personal transportation, the Mauck2 also has merit in smaller commercial applications.

While the Mauck2 shares a similar heritage with the Mauck Special Vehicle that was popular in the 1990s, it is a totally different vehicle. The Mauck2 is a smaller vehicle and uses the proven Mercedes-Benz Sprinter chassis that not only is well regarded but is also known for economical operation and low life-cycle costs. So far, the Mauck2 vehicles are being built as they sell, in a "ramp-up" mode. Here is the interesting story behind the Mauck2 and how it was developed.

The history behind the Mauck2 is basically the story of Andy Mauck, an Ohio native who "felt that there should be a better vehicle." His interest in designing and developing vehicles started in his high school days when taking road trips to races, concerts and skiing. It expanded when he gained some experience in racing.

Mauck's interest in vehicle design brought him to Sutphen Fire Apparatus in Columbus. Here he spent 12 years as a project engineer. Mauck was responsible for taking the customer specs, the salesman's proposal, and then creating the final build documents for the shop to manufacture unique fire trucks.

A family trip in 1990 found Mauck riding on a traditional box type shuttle bus. This started him thinking that someone had to "create a better mouse trap." The thought lingered and he soon found himself spend-

ing nights and weekends doing concept drawings and basic engineering. This, in turn, led to spreadsheets and a business plan.

In 1991, Mauck left Sutphen Fire Apparatus and created what became Mauck Special Vehicles. His plan was to focus on a uniquely styled high-end transportation vehicle for discriminating buyers. A new vehicle was created that was approximately the size of a small bus but offering state-of-the-art design and construction techniques more integral than body-on-chassis.

By 1998, Mauck Special Vehicles had grown into company with 35 staff members operating out of a 45,000-square foot facility. More than 80 units had been sold to customers all over the world including Quincy Jones, Alan Jackson, George Forman, Nike, Merv Griffin, Paul Allen and others. Custom Coach Corp. in Columbus, Ohio con-



A major advantage of the Mauck2 body is that it offers 10 more inches of space between the walls at the floor level than the standard Sprinter body. This provides considerably more space for interior customization.



Several options are available on the Mauck2 including an automatic rear hatch, wheel and suspension upgrades and various HVAC upgrades. This unit offers an underfloor compartment and special rear compartment.

verted many of these vehicles with motor home or personal travel interiors.

The MSV was a very unique vehicle for its day and years ahead of its time. It was very attractive and showed very well. The only area where it did not excel was the drive train, which was unique to the MSV rather than an existing chassis. The new Mauck2 avoids this issue by using a proven and well-regarded drive train and chassis.

In 1998, Mauck Special Vehicles was merged into Advanced Bus Industries, LLC, a group led by several former management people from the defunct Flexible Company. ABI elected to take the MSV concept and create a 30-foot transit bus version. Since this was substantially different than Mauck's concept of providing high-end transportation for discriminating buyers, he decided to voluntarily leave ABI to take advantage of other opportunities.

More recent years found Mauck working for Owen Connaughton at Creative Mobile Interiors. Mauck and Connaughton originally met when Connaughton worked for Custom Coach Corp. and was responsible for interiors in many of the MSV vehicles. In more recent years, Connaughton founded Creative Mobile Interiors in Grove City, Ohio that has developed an enviable reputation for both quality and variety in the conversion business.

In recent years, CMI has been particularly active in converting Sprinters into small recreational vehicles and personal travel vehicles, an area that always interested Mauck. While Connaughton credits the Sprinter with high marks in quality, economy and durability because of its Mercedes-Benz heritage, he does suggest that many Americans would like a wider and more unique body. Mauck could not resist that challenge.

Mauck left CMI and founded a new company in June of 2006 known as High-End Transport Developments. The initial goal of the company was to "raise the bar" on the appearance, quality and aerodynamics of shuttles, RVs, limousines and other similar market segments.

Due to the overwhelming positive response for the proposed design, the company was expanded in May of 2007 followed by a name change to Mauck 2, LLC. Plans for a prototype were completed in August of 2009 and then weld and assembly fixtures were created. The prototype emerged from the factory in April of 2009. Executive Coach Builders installed a limo interior and showed it at the Limousine, Charter and Tour Show

in Las Vegas in January, 2010. It was an immediate attention-getter.

The Mauck2 body is designed specifically for the 3500 170-inch wheelbase cab-chassis Sprinter. It would be difficult to find a better platform for a vehicle of this size. Designed by Mercedes-Benz, the Sprinter has been made in Germany for more than 10 years. More than one million Sprinters are in service around the world. They have a reputation for economical operation, durability and low life-cycle costs. Fleets of Sprinters are currently in use by both large and smaller delivery companies.

The Mauck2 body is open all the way to the cab. Standard features include a pas-

Many years of vehicle design and engineering experience are behind the Mauck2. One of its major goals was to move away from the box-on-a-truck chassis concept and into an attractive body on a high quality chassis. Production of the Mauck2 takes place at this facility in Columbus, Ohio.



senger sedan-style door on the right side, automotive-type bonded windows with vented lower sections, and a top-hinged rear hatch with a window. Like the big coaches, the frame structure is made from steel tubes with larger square tubes for floor support. Composite flooring is standard. Optionally available are acoustic/thermal barrier materials and galvanized underlayments.

Body panels on the Mauck2 are gel-coated fiberglass, bonded to the frame. Optionally available are wall and ceiling insulation treatments per customer specifications. The body is approximately 16 feet and four inches long from the back of the cab with 85 inches of rear overhang. Externally, the body is 85 inches wide and 83 inches high from the top of the frame. The interior height is 78 and a half inches. One of the best advantages of the Mauck2 is that the interior is 80 inches wide at the base of the car hoops, providing 10 inches more interior room than the conventional Sprinter body.

Body wiring is in a standard harness in a protective loom and numbered. The side body windows and rear hatch windows are made from tempered safety glass and offer a 12 percent privacy tint. The body weight is 1,915 pounds. Since the Sprinter has a GVWR of 11,000 pounds with a 4,700-pound chassis, this leaves more than 4,000 pounds for the interior and payload.

There are several options available on the Mauck2. These include rocker compartments, an automatic entry step, an automated rear hatch, and wheel/suspension



Interiors in the Mauck2 can range from a simple shuttle bus with seats to a rather elaborate mini motor home complete with a bed and small galley. Creative Mobile Interiors in Grove City, Ohio has had some substantial experience in this area and can convert the Mauck2 into a personal or commercial vehicle for many different purposes and tastes.

upgrades. Auxiliary air conditioning and heating systems are available, a deep-well in the rear roof underwing can be provided for concealed installation of rooftop air conditioning units, and various brackets, supports and mounts are available for gensets,

tanks and other accessories. Custom finish paint can be provided to customer specifications. In addition, the Mauck2 can be substantially modified to meet various special vehicle needs.

Currently, the Mauck2 vehicles are being built as orders are taken. The original unit with a limo interior proved to be so popular that a version seating 14 or 15 passengers is being contemplated. Increasingly popular is the Mauck2 Golfmobile/Tailgater personal transportation vehicle that can conveniently transport two foursomes and their clubs or provide hospitality at pre-game gatherings.

Mauck2 has also recently delivered its first Guest Transport Vehicle to the Hyatt Place Grandview Yard, in Columbus. Mauck2 did the entire interior conversion in-house, incorporating a few unique features that make it suitable for additional uses for the owner. The company plans to market this new shuttle version to the hospitality, corporate and tour segments of the small bus market.

The Mauck2 is also available from Creative Mobile Interiors with a small motor home interior, as a custom personalized transportation vehicle, for product display, or a wide range of other interiors. Phone Creative Mobile Interiors at (614) 539-4600 or (866) 204-8264 for details and options. □

Conversion companies are able to install a wide range of interiors into the Mauck2. Delivered units have included a limo interior as well as a hotel shuttle bus. Particularly popular is the Golfmobile/Tailgater that can transport two foursomes for a day of golf or provide hospitality at pre-game gatherings.





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