

Holman

Driving What's Right



**FLEET UPFITTING ESSENTIALS:
BUILD VEHICLES THAT WORK AS HARD AS YOU**

Why It Matters

Upfitting turns vehicles into mission-ready tools that drive productivity and support core business functions. A well-planned strategy ensures each unit is optimized to generate revenue, reduce downtime, and meet operational demands. While compliance remains important, efficiency and alignment with job roles are often the top priorities.

Another critical consideration is safety; leveraging ergonomics and equipment designed to reduce accidents and minimize injuries during loading and unloading at job sites.

To develop an upfit strategy that truly supports your business, keep these key factors in mind.

Strategic Planning Essentials

- **Engage Stakeholders**

Specs should reflect real-world use. Collaborate with fleet personnel, frontline employees, and other fleet stakeholders to avoid disconnects between design and daily function.

- **Plan Ahead**

Allow 6–9 months for delivery of your vehicles, potentially longer for complex builds. Align with OEM production schedules and upfit partner capacity to avoid delays.

- **Budget Smart**

Think lifecycle, not just upfront cost. Under-spec'd vehicles often lead to higher operating expenses, reduced productivity, and shorter lifecycles. Forecast **3–5 years out** for greater financial flexibility and long-term value.

- **Align With Strong Partners**

Build long-term relationships across your supply chain – OEMs, upfitters, fleet management companies, and vehicle equipment manufacturers – to ensure continuity, adaptability, and shared visibility into your fleet strategy.

Build for Efficiency & Flexibility

- **Standardize Where Possible**

Standardization improves resale value and allows flexibility across your fleet. Streamline specs to reduce complexity and minimize costs.

- **Component Quality Matters**

Material choice impacts safety, payload, durability, and fuel costs. Steel, aluminum, and composites each offer unique strengths – choose wisely for your fleet’s needs.

- **Stay Flexible**

Even with proactive planning, disruptions can happen. Be prepared to adapt your upfit strategy to unforeseen challenges, whether sourcing delays, stock purchases, or shifting operational needs. Quick-install packages and off-the-shelf solutions can help keep vehicles on the road without compromising functionality.

Emerging Trends

- **Model Shifts**

With compact commercial vans no longer produced in the U.S. and certain EV models lacking ladder rack support, fleets are shifting to light-duty pickup trucks with bed caps to achieve similar functionality while managing payload and weight challenges.

- **Last-Mile & Mobile Service Vans**

Rapid growth in these segments demands innovative layouts for efficiency and safety.

- **Cargo Management & Theft Prevention**

Equipment theft is surging, making integrated security a standard spec. Fleets now combine GPS tracking, geofencing alerts, and advanced locking systems like Daken Locks to protect tools and assets.

The Bottom Line: Strategic Upfitting Matters

Your fleet is more than just a collection of vehicles; it’s a strategic asset. Consider the best practices outlined above to help you in your upfit decisions.

Keep in mind, there’s no one-size-fits-all solution for developing an effective upfit strategy. While these factors are important, you’ll want to develop a unique upfit strategy based on what’s most critical to your business’s success.

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