

Top-25 Trailer Build Off 5.2%

Most truck-trailer manufacturers had a good year in 2016. It was not a record year, but it was not supposed to be. The Top-25 (plus two) trailer and container chassis builders reported a combined total of almost 315,000 trailers and chassis, compared to almost 338,000 in 2015.

The production picture is a little brighter when comparing only complete trailers. Eliminating the container chassis numbers, manufacturers built 282,680 complete trailers in 2016, down 5.2% from the 298,081 in 2015.

Dry freight van trailers are built by the eight largest trailer manufacturers. Those approximately 185,000 dry vans represent two-thirds of the entire trailer build, and refrigerated vans another one-sixth. Dry and reefer vans together account for 84% of the entire complete trailer build.

It was a great year for refrigerated trailers. The Top-25 van builders turned out some 47,000 refrigerated vans, a 2.5% increase in a down year.

Some of those same van builders manufactured 5,125 converter dollies, double the 2,396 in 2015. Converter dollies are not counted as trailers, but they are a necessary part of operating doubles or twin trailers. That suggests an increasing number of the van trailers built were short 28-ft or so doubles rather than 48-ft or 53-ft vans.

These Top-25 manufacturers also built about 19,000 platform trailers and 7,500 tank trailers, both groups suffering greatly from the decline in drilling activity. However, late December and early January 2017 reports indicate the start of a possible resurgence in the oil patch. World Oil, a voice for the upstream oil industry, suggests 2017 drilling activity will increase 30% in the United States, 21% in Canada, and 9% in the Gulf of Mexico deep waters.

Some of these Top-25 companies also built approximately 5,000 dump trailers and refuse transfer trailers. Another group of Top-25 companies built 6,000 grain and bulk commodity trailers.

The three companies that built container chassis in the USA in 2016 reported production of 32,286 chassis, down 19% from the 39,780 chassis built by four companies in 2015. These 32,286 chassis are 10.25% of the total trailer and chassis build.

The trailer totals reported here cannot be compared directly with other domestic surveys that do not also include Canadian and Mexican assembly plants. This survey does not attempt to report on the many small manufacturing plants located throughout North America, so the total trailer build actually is a somewhat higher number than the Top-25 numbers shown here.

This *Trailer/Body Builders* survey is made by telephoning a member of the management team at each manufacturing company. The ranking of the companies does not necessarily reflect their relative success in terms of profitability or revenue received, but only the number of trailers produced. The dollar value of a trailer can vary greatly depending on design, type of construction, materials used, and quality level.

Here is how the individual trailer manufacturers performed in 2016:

Top 25 North American Truck-Trailer & Chassis OEMs			
Rank	Manufacturer	2016	2015
1	Wabash National Corporation Dry freight vans—49,650. Reefers—4900. Flatbeds—2,850. Tanks—2,100 Wabash also shipped 1,450 converter dollies and 550 truck bodies	59,500	62,950
2	Hyundai Translead Dry freight vans—45,886, Refrigerated 2,250, Platform—456 Container chassis—2,114, (Also produced 2,675 converter dollies)	50,706	49,713
3	Great Dane Limited Partnership (Also built 1,100 truck bodies)	48,000	51,500
4	Utility Trailer Manufacturing Dry vans—19,087, Refrigerated—25,269, Platform, Curtainside—1,684	46,040	49,187
5	Vanguard National Trailer & CIMC Intermodal Dry vans—10,582, Refrigerated—2,813, Container chassis—27,672	41,067	42,594
6	Stoughton Trailers LLC (Also produced 800 converter dollies)	16,400	16,000
7	Manac	7,750	8,200
8	Strick Corporation Dry freight vans—2,200, Platforms—200, Container chassis—2,500	4,900	4,300
9	MAC Trailer Manufacturing (Also built 184 truck bodies)	4,200	4,880
10	Wilson Trailer Company (estimate)	4,000	4,000
11	Pitts Enterprises	3,490	4,100
12	Fontaine Equipment Company	3,296	7,655
13	Reitnour Inc	3,077	3,609
14	Heil Trailer International, Co.	2,780	4,610
15	Timpte Inc.	2,758	3,924
16	East Manufacturing Co. Dump trailers—1,303. Platforms—927, Refuse transfer—252 (Also built 145 dump bodies)	2,482	3,289
17	Polar Tank Trailer	2,150	2,500
18	Trail King Industries (Also built 600 light-duty tag trailers)	2,100	2,500
19	Felling Trailers (Also built 3,598 light-duty trailers)	1,427	1,140
20	XPO Logistics Mfg (formerly Con-Way Mfg). New van trailers—400, Refurbished vans—1,000	1,401	2,600
21	Kentucky Trailer	1,336	1,216
22	Western Trailer	1,278	1,326
23	Doepker Industries Ltd	1,200	1,850
24	Towmaster Trailers (Also built 2,704 light-duty tg trailers)	1,060	1,301
25	Travis Trailers	937	912
Also:	Talbert Manufacturing	826	783
	Tremcar Inc (Also built 227 truck-mounted tank bodies)	805	1,222
Totals		314,966	337,861