

As editor, I generally avoid contributing articles, in favor of relying on guest contributions. However, once in awhile, something works out so well, you just have to share.

Also, very recently, the topic of replacing the “off air” antenna has become a common thread on the Yahoo group.... So.... Here we go.

Most of us with older coaches have the old Concord/Braund automatic antenna- the one you really couldn't ever point to where you needed it to go. Many of these are getting old and cranky- and with Braund no longer in business, replacement parts are really becoming a problem. Mine finally passed away, so I decided to replace it with an omni-directional antenna- one with the most range I could find. After scouring the internet, I decided to try the **Lava OmniPro**. It is available in two styles specifically designed for the RV and Marine market (models 2015 and 2000) and sports a 30db gain, which gives it a rather large receiving range.



I removed the old motorized one, and configured a 12 inch square by 3/16th inch thick aluminum plate to cover the old holes on the roof. Using the existing wiring, I was able to install the antenna and wall mount plate where the previous antenna and controls had been, creating a clean looking final product, with minimal fuss and no cutting.

Inside, I covered one existing hole with a blank electrical plate, and installed the new wall plate in the second hole after removing the old one and carefully marking the antenna routing information on each of the cables prior to the installation.

The new antenna uses DC voltage to power an amplifier inside the antenna unit topside. To source that, I used the existing wiring from the old unit inside the motor home and carefully covered all of the old leads to prevent any ongoing issues. 12 volts is actually supplied to the new wall plate, and at least some voltage is injected into the cable routed to the roof. Be sure to test all of this before you make any permanent connections, as it works only in one direction.



Additionally, there is an alarm that goes off on the dashboard when the antenna is raised and you turn on the ignition switch. Be particularly careful to save the wires on the roof so you can connect them in such a way that the alarm is not triggered when you turn on the engine.

I am told by American Coach technical support that the alarm is also used by additional systems on the motor home, so you don't just want to remove the fuse to stop the alarm- be sure to test the wiring by turning on the ignition switch before you screw and caulk the unit down to the roof.



As you can see, the finished product is lower than the air conditioner shroud- and may not be suitable for those RV's with the aluminum side trim higher than the top of the motor home.

During our testing, we were able to receive all of the networks with this product, and in most towns we've traveled to since this new antenna has been installed, we have been able to receive between 20 and 50 digital high definition stations. I don't feel comfortable in endorsing or recommending any particular product- but we have certainly been more than satisfied with the results we have received thus far.

There are lots of antennas on the market, both directional and omni directional – but, we are pleased with the price/performance we have experienced with this product.

It was an easy install- with the main focus on ensuring that existing cabling continued to be routed to the destination it had prior to the new antenna's installation. Off air is HI-Def – and is free. You can't get much better than that.

There were several good websites that carried this particular product- All seemed to have a favorable rating of its usefulness. We found the best price and delivery on Amazon.