

OVERLANDING INDUSTRY



Rick Thomas is CEO of FOCUS Investment Banking, a Washington DC-based Investment banking firm that helps private business owners with mergers, acquisitions and capital raising. As a member of the automotive aftermarket team at FOCUS, Rick has led our firm's expansion into overlanding by helping several companies raise capital by selling all or parts of their businesses. As an overlanding enthusiast himself, Rick long ago identified overlanding as a growth category for our firm so internally we have branded him as our 'COE - Chief Outdoor Enthusiast'.

We spoke with Rick recently about his personal connection to overlanding and how we help firms in the industry.

Interview with Rick Thomas CEO and Chief Outdoor Enthusiast of FOCUS

What types of Overlanding experiences have you had and where have you done them?

Like lots of people, I have enjoyed being outdoors for as long as I can remember.

Growing up in Michigan I did everything from camping with my parents as a kid, car camping in National Parks with my Dad, and going on cross country car camping and hiking trips with friends across the US in the Adirondacks, Acadia, Yellowstone, Yosemite plus all the southern Utah Parks.

But the overlanding bug bit me when I worked in South Africa in my mid-twenties. I was introduced to a whole different way in which the South Africans experience the outdoors. We did everything from beach surf fishing trips to excursions into the Drakensberg

mountains to wildlife safaris in and around Kruger National Park, Hluluwe, and Umfolozi - essentially across South Africa.

This led to longer excursions throughout Southern Africa over many years and I still go back to Botswana, Zimbabwe, Namibia and places like that. In all, I would guess I have spent close to 200 nights overlanding in that region. Once you have been there it is hard to shake off. There really is nothing else like it

Three years ago, my family and I moved to Central Oregon, and we have continued to enjoy overlanding throughout the Western US. It's just part of who we are.

OVERLANDING INDUSTRY



As a consumer and user of overlanding and outdoor products, services and vehicles, what are some of the things you look for in products and vehicles?

For me, simpler is better and living 'inside out' is really important to my family. For a long time in the US and still to a large degree people want to have a set up that allows them to cook and live indoors while they are outdoors. I've found that doesn't work for me. In Australia and South Africa, the inside is for sleeping and storage - period. Everything else like cooking, eating meals, relaxing, and napping happens outdoors, under awnings of course when possible. I find it makes for a much more enjoyable experience. Weather dictates a lot of this of course but tolerating a few days of rain is well worth the experience of truly being outdoors when overlanding.

Where do you see the market for overlanding vehicles and products headed and why?

The market has been growing and will continue to grow strong for several reasons. First, people and especially younger people want to have richer experiences and want to be outdoors as much as possible. Second, with mobility technology and a wider acceptance of 'working from home', people are taking advantage of that. Some of this involves going far off the grid and some of it means staying closer to home but setting up "camp nearby." We see this out west where people can set up remote camp sites for a week within an hour of their home and can get back to the home or office fast, if necessary. Third, the rising costs

of housing, hotels and Airbnb's will push more people to look at overlanding as an alternative form of a vacation home or rental. A good overlanding setup can provide that quality alternative with the variety of "camping" at a different places and seeing more of the world.

It's been interesting to watch the market in the US grow from basic camping and RV's to a wide offering of trucks, vans, and trailers. We still are way behind the range of choices and acceptance that they have in places like Australia and South Africa. But the population and market in the US dwarfs those regions - 330 million population in the US vs 85 million in those countries combined - and the US has a larger potential market as we have more wealth here. Beyond the vehicle and trailer companies, there is a huge set of other supporting products like awnings, cookware, vehicle upfits that will see growth as more adoption happens.

As investment bankers, how can we help overlanding companies with our services?

As advisors on mergers, acquisitions and capital raising we're working with several overlanding and outdoor products companies that are either looking for partners to help fund growth or owners that are looking to exit through a sale. Many companies will get picked up and consolidated earlier than we would typically see in a more mature market because larger companies are seeking innovative products and brands that they can fill their

OVERLANDING INDUSTRY

sales channels with. We provide the expertise to help business owners access the capital markets and get the outcome they're looking for.

Are there certain size and profitability requirements that FOCUS looks for in helping companies with selling, buying and capital raising?

We typically work with companies that have at least \$10 million in sales and \$1 million in profitability in sight, but with overlanding we would work with companies with \$5 million in revenue if they are on a significant growth trajectory.

Why should a company in the overlanding business hire FOCUS?

We know the industry firsthand as users of products and I have been following the industry for over 20 years in the US, Australia and South Africa. We understand what works, what scales, and what buyers looking for in partners and business opportunities. We have an extensive banker team that has focused on the vehicle side of the business for their entire careers and much of the overlanding business is an extension of this. And lastly, we are passionate about the overlanding business and helping owners achieve their goals. These transactions we work on often provide generational wealth for a family and we have decades of experience in working with owners to get successful outcomes.



FOCUS

Investment Banking

About FOCUS Investment Banking LLC

With more than four decades of experience, [FOCUS Investment Banking](http://www.focusbankers.com/) is a trusted name in M&A advisory services worldwide. FOCUS works to understand each client's strategic and financial objectives, craft the best plan to achieve these goals, and deliver success. Whether helping to sell, buy, or raise capital, FOCUS strives to maximize the value of every transaction to the benefit of its clients. FOCUS bankers are seasoned operating and financial executives with extensive transaction experience. Securities transactions conducted by FOCUS Securities LLC, an affiliated company, registered Broker Dealer member FINRA/SIPC. For more information on FOCUS, please visit <http://www.focusbankers.com/>.