



Airtronic 3: new Eberspächer air heater generation

The Eberspächer Group is one of the world's leading system developers and suppliers for the automotive industry. Besides its exhaust technology, air conditioning and automotive electronics, most customers – including in the RV sector – know Eberspächer for its auxiliary heaters from the Climate Control Systems Division

Words Enrico Bona

Regardless of the weather and season, Eberspächer heating systems ensure that the right temperature always prevails within the "four walls on wheels". This means you can travel as you please with the motorhome year-round – even when it's not always warm outside. Like in the spring or fall, when the days and especially the nights

grow increasingly cold. Or maybe while in the mountains, where sudden swings in weather can blow in. Whether it's about providing heating to campervan conversions or additional heating for an RV's existing propane heating system, fuel operated heaters are particularly suitable for campers who value self-sufficiency and comfort when cooler out-

door temperatures prevail.

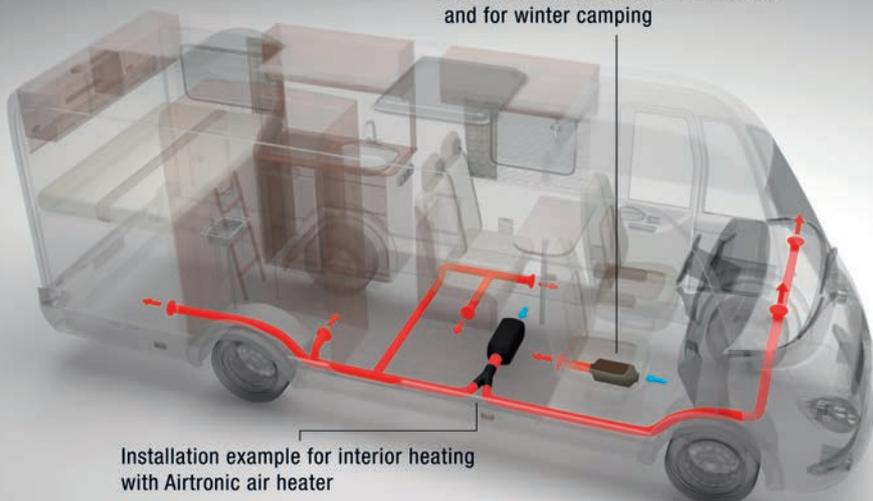
The thermal management experts from Esslingen, Germany, offer two different fuel operated heating systems for use in motorhomes or campervans: air and water heaters. Air heaters are particularly suitable if fast interior heating is required. With the Airtronic air heater, Eberspächer has just the right solution. This year the company is introducing the third generation of the proven all-rounder. We talked to Steffen Such, Executive Vice President of the Special Markets Business Unit at Eberspächer, about the new product generation.

Aboutcamp BtoB: Eberspächer will be presenting a new generation of the Airtronic air heater for RVs at the Caravan Salon 2021. Why did a new generation have to be developed?

Steffen Such: With the third generation of our proven Airtronic fuel operated air heater we have relaunched the product family. We have now brought all performance classes up to the same technical level. The second generation comprised two model variants in a total of six versions with heat outputs ranging from 2 to 4 kW. With four model variants in 12 versions going forward, the Airtronic 3 will cover output classes up to a heat output of 8 kW. We can thus offer customers the perfect heating solution for every vehicle size and purpose of use. Whether you are travelling to mild regions with cooler nights or to cold, frosty climes – the Airtronic 3 meets all the requirements.

RV application with an Eberspächer Airtronic air heater

Installation example for a small airtronic air heater as additional heater for the front area and for winter camping

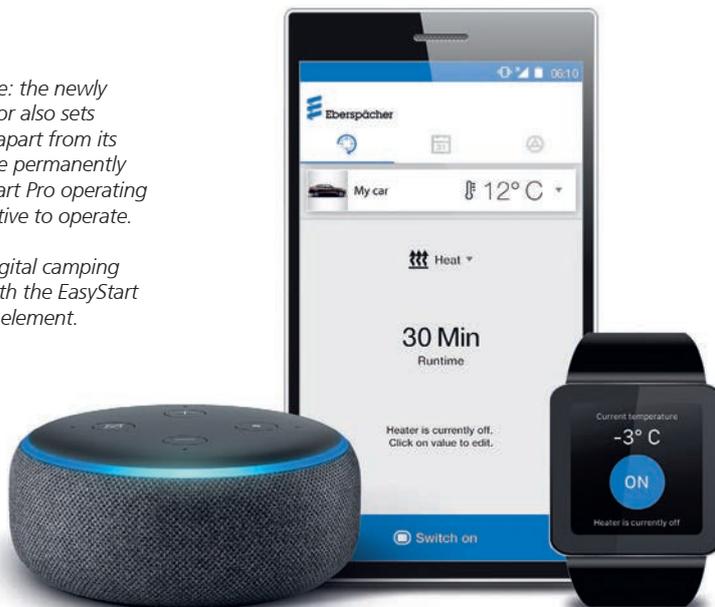


Installation example for interior heating with Airtronic air heater



On the left page: the newly designed exterior also sets the Airtronic 3 apart from its predecessor; the permanently installed EasyStart Pro operating element is intuitive to operate.

On the right: digital camping convenience with the EasyStart Web operating element.



Aboutcamp BtoB: Sounds exciting. What can customers look forward to?

Steffen Such: The Airtronic 3 combines state-of-the-art technology with proven functions – and all this in a new design. We have, for example, upgraded the automatic altitude adjustments now covering heights of up to 5,500 meters – depending on the variant. We carried out special product tests for this purpose. The sky is the limit for your mountain trips with the Airtronic 3. We have also redesigned the combustion chamber to lend more flexibility regarding the heater's mounting position in the vehicle. This is a considerable advantage, especially for installation, as it lets you make the best possible use of the RV's limited space. With the new heat exchanger, which ensures better flow conditions, we have once again boosted efficiency – as we did with the sensor-controlled starting sequences.

Aboutcamp BtoB: That's a lot of technical details. What about comfort in terms of noise and precise control of heat output?

Steffen Such: We continue to rely on our optimized metering pump technology, which means no more of the traditional "ticking" sound when filling up. The Airtronic 3's stepless heat output control also contributes to its extremely quiet operation. The modified positioning of the temperature sensor has further improved the temperature control. For us, comfort includes durability: the proven brushless motor makes a service life of 5,000 hours possible.

Aboutcamp BtoB: Can you tell us about the altitude tests?

Steffen Such: A fascinating topic! As I mentioned, with the new generation we have increased the automatic altitude adjustment from 3,000 to 5,500 meters for the most popular product versions. Our technicians have run tests in an altitude chamber. Several test cycles were defined for this purpose, covering different use cases for the heaters at different altitudes as well as the extreme case. Over 50 measurement cycles were performed to test the cold-start capability and measure emissions, for example.

Aboutcamp BtoB: What are the main advantages of air heaters like the Airtronic 3?

Steffen Such: Air heaters are generally known for making heat available very quickly. Its energy-saving operation means the Airtronic 3 is also especially suitable for heating at night. We have optimized this in the new generation and further reduced power consumption for long operating times. By using a fuel operated heater like the Airtronic 3, the propane consumption of the RV can be minimized significantly. Further space or weight for large propane tanks is not required. Therefore, fuel operated heaters are the ideal solution for RVs with a limited space capacity and to meet permissible total vehicle weight standards. With the Airtronic 3, users are well prepared for all-year-round camping or especially camping in cold regions and seasons.

Aboutcamp BtoB: Which variants of new Airtronic 3 heaters does Eberspächer offer?

Steffen Such: As I mentioned, the product generation includes four model variants in 12 versions. In the RV sector, the Airtronic S3 Commercial (2 kW), the Airtronic M3 Commercial (4 kW), the Airtronic L3 Commercial (6 kW) and the Airtronic XL3 (8 kW) are used, depending on the vehicle size and purpose of use. Diesel and gasoline versions are available for both the Airtronic S3 and M3. The Airtronic M3 Recreational (4 kW) was specially developed for RV applications with a complex air ducting system. To determine which variant is the most suitable in a given case, apart from the size of the vehicle the intended application plays the biggest role. Where does the user want to travel with the RV, or what sort of temperatures and temperature fluctuations awaits him there? Where in the vehicle is the quickly available heat particularly important?

Aboutcamp BtoB: How is the heater controlled?

Steffen Such: We offer various operating elements to ensure easy and convenient control of our heaters – depending on the customer's requirements. The most common control vari-

ant is EasyStart Pro, a permanently installed operating element. The desired start time and heating duration can be set in advance with a timer. The display and an LED color ring around the operating button indicate the current function status. In Europe, digital control with EasyStart Web is also available. Using a digital device – a smartphone, Amazon's Alexa, or any other Internet-enabled device – the heater can be controlled through the corresponding app regardless of physical range. EasyStart Pro and EasyStart Web can also be combined for the ultimate in comfort, allowing you to conveniently operate the heater in the vehicle itself via the permanently installed element and via the app when on the road.

Aboutcamp BtoB: How does Eberspächer react on new standards in the industry of central controlled applications?

Steffen Such: For RV applications, we also offer our Airtronic M3 Recreational as a CI-BUS variant. Then, the heater can be easily integrated in the OEMs CI-BUS-based central operating device. With our CI-BUS variant, we followed this trend.

Aboutcamp BtoB: Is a retrofit of the Airtronic 3 also an option for RV users?

Steffen Such: Absolutely! Our air heater can also be used as an additional heater for the front area of big motor homes. Also if users wish for more self-sufficiency while travelling in cooler temperatures, fuel operated heaters are an ideal solution: they use the vehicle tank's fuel for heating. Space-saving installation is possible either underfloor, in a false floor, in a seat base or storage compartment. We have a large network of partners around the world who retrofit Eberspächer heating solutions.

Steffen Such

