

The History of Toyota

The 20th Century realized more changes than any other century before it, and at a rapid pace. Among the many changes one, in particular, was transportation. From 1901 to 1999, we went from horseback to automobile to space shuttles, but the automobile was the fastest growing form of transportation and remains so today.

We have all heard of Ford and General Motors and of their existence since the first and second decades of the 20th century, but how many of us know that the Toyota Motor Company was soon to become a major contender with the American Automobile Manufacturers starting in the mid 1920's?

Toyota's founder, Mr. Sakichi Toyoda, set forth plans for automobile manufacturing in the 1920s after he invented his Toyoda Automatic Loom in 1924 for the textiles industry. Under his request, Mr. Toyoda's son, Kiichiro Toyoda, traveled throughout Europe and America to research automobile production and the gasoline-powered engine. Upon Kiichiro's return home, automobile production was turned over to him. In 1936, the first Model AA rolled off the assembly line.

The Toyota Motor Company started under its founder's name of Toyoda, but due to Japanese custom and culture, the name Toyota was considered to bring more luck and good fortune than the name *Toyoda*. To write the name Toyota took exactly eight strokes of the brush, and in Japan, the number eight is considered lucky, and so it was changed.

Throughout World War II, Toyota manufactured mainly trucks for the Japanese Imperial Army. After World War II, their economy suffered, and truck production slowed substantially. Around 1950, commercial car production started to escalate, and when the late sixties rolled around, it was clear that the Toyota Corolla was here to stay when their sales surpassed that of Datsun's (Nissan) similar class. The 1973 oil crisis pushed Toyota in front of all the rest as the best economy car in fuel efficiency on the market. It was also around that time that Toyota had sold its one-millionth vehicle and gained a worldwide presence as one of the most fuel-efficient vehicles on the market.

Toyota's American presence has played a huge role in the parts manufacturing arena, and in putting Americans to work. Toyota introduced USA performance parts into the American marketplace in 1996 that were sold exclusively at Toyota dealerships and the TRD Catalog to include upgrade packages, superchargers and performance parts for cars and trucks. As of 2006, Toyota manufactured approximately 1.6 million vehicles in the U.S. and employed approximately 142,000 Americans.

In 2000, Toyota rolled onto the track of NASCAR's Goody's Dash Series with the Celica and scored their first win in 2001. From there, they went on to win the Championship in 2003 with Robert Huffman. They began racing trucks in the NASCAR Truck Series in

2004, and in 2007, the Camry became a major contender in the Nextel Cup and Busch Series races.

The Toyota Prius was first introduced in Japan in 1997 and in 1999, it became the world's top selling hybrid with worldwide total sales of 2.36 million units by August 2011.

Toyota has always been a formidable opponent in the U.S. and has always been one step ahead of its competition in terms of technology, desirability, and portraying keen insight with environmental awareness and practices. From manufacturing to the production of their vehicles in which customers commute each day, Toyota is committed to listening and delivering what the public needs. From the model AA to the Corolla, from the Celica to the Supra, from the Lexus to the Scion: Toyota has always supplied just the right vehicle, at just the right time, for just about everyone.

References:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Toyota

<http://nascar.about.com/od/manufacturers/a/toyota.htm>