



Toyota at the 1999 London Motor Show

15 October 1999

Toyota's Ambitious Approach to Europe

With a total production in 1998 of almost 5.2 million vehicles, including Daihatsu, Toyota is the third largest manufacturer of cars and light commercial vehicles in the world.

In Japan, the company has been the market leader for many years and currently Toyota has a market share in its domestic market of around 40 per cent. In North America, where Toyota is firmly established as a much-desired quality brand, the market share is 8.7 per cent and for the past two years the Camry has been the best selling car overall.

In Europe, however, where Toyota's market share is around 3%, there is still room for growth. And Toyota is determined to realise this growth, through products which are targeted at European needs and tastes; through doing more in Europe for Europe; and finally by further strengthening its sales efforts to achieve the goal of 5% market share or 800,000 unit sales by the year 2005.

According to Mr Fujio Cho, the new president of Toyota Motor Corporation since June this year, Toyota's presence in Europe is still too weak. During a press conference in Frankfurt prior to the IAA International Motor Show, he stated that Toyota is seeking a greater presence in Europe. With the current 3% market share, Toyota's presence is less prominent than in other world markets, such as the US and Japan.

Toyota has achieved a significant increase in volume in Europe in recent years and, with January to August sales of 387,000, the company is looking forward to achieving 600,000 units this year, compared with 541,000 in 1998. Yaris, the new small car designed in Europe for Europe, is contributing substantially to this sales growth. Since its introduction this spring until August, over 112,000 Yaris have been ordered in Europe with over 90,000 delivered.

FOCUS ON EUROPE

According to Mr Cho, Toyota's strategy for enhancing its presence still further in Europe, is based on three pillars.

"First, we are strengthening our distribution network to be more efficient and customer-oriented to support our sales effort to enlarge our market share towards 5%," said Mr Cho.

"Next is the approach to production," he said. "Of all Toyota vehicles sold in Europe, I would like to see about 50% manufactured locally. In particular the B, C and D segment products, which have very large markets in Europe, should be produced here in Europe. The liftback Corolla and the Avensis are already produced in our plant in Britain. And Yaris will be produced in our new plant in Valenciennes, France, which will be in operation in 2001," he explained. This year the Burnaston plant will produce in excess of 1998's production figure of 172,000. Output from the engine factory in Deeside will reach around 110,000 units.

Toyota's expansion of its production facilities in Europe continues. In early September, the company announced the construction of a transmission plant in Poland. This plant, which will be operational in 2002, will produce 250,000 transmissions per year. Thus, Toyota's European production bases will be in the UK (Burnaston and Deeside), France and Poland.

The third pillar is the development of products that are even more compatible with European demands and tastes. Europe is the benchmark for car technology, perceived quality and for car styling.

Toyota clearly recognises that, to be successful in Europe, cars have to be designed to fulfil completely the needs and tastes of the demanding European customer. Or, as Mr Kato, Executive Vice President of Toyota Motor Corporation with responsibility for product development, stated: "We cannot be satisfied with making cars that simply satisfy our customers. We must develop automobiles that truly inspire them."

Yaris has clearly set the scene for a whole new generation of Toyota products that indeed inspire the customer. The exciting new Celica, the versatile Yaris Verso, the impressive MR2

Roadster and the environmentally-friendly hybrid Prius, all on show at the London Motor Show, underline that Toyota is changing and is changing fast.

TOYOTA EMBARKS ON MASSIVE RANGE RENEWAL

London marks the beginning of product offensive for next century

Toyota announced that it is going to embark on a massive range renewal between now and the Geneva Motor Show 2001. During this period the company plans to launch a significant product offensive to achieve its ambitious goals for Europe.

The 1999 London Show marks Toyota's world of new beginnings with the premiere of four new models: The Yaris Verso, the new Celica and MR2 Roadster and the Prius hybrid car now specifically engineered for the European market. In addition the successful Yaris family is extended with a new 1.3 litre, 85bhp VVT-i engine and automatic gearbox option in addition to the 1.0 litre version, plus a more youthful and sporty 1.3 SR version.

Toyota also displays an updated version of the Land Cruiser Colorado off-roader offering better value for money while the mighty Land Cruiser Amazon 4.7 VX gets Vehicle Stability Control and Traction Control as standard. The Picnic, Toyota's mid-size six or seven seater MPV is also displayed in a new limited edition, high specification 'SE' guise.

Toyota, the world's third largest car maker, has the most diverse product range offered by any manufacturer. In every segment and niche of the market, Toyota offers highly competitive and appealing products with proven reliability.

Toyota's UK premieres are prominently displayed on a modern and contemporary stand. In addition, visitors to the stand receive information via the most modern audio visual equipment such as monitors on the stand floor, LED video displays and an impressive brand-wall with projections on the outside and a full brand story on the inside.

YARIS VERSO

Toyota introduces no less than four completely new products at the London Motor Show. A key attraction will be the new Yaris Verso, a completely new concept for young families.

The Verso is a completely new addition to the Yaris family. It is a modern-styled compact MPV, which adds a completely new dimension to the B-segment. With a total length of only 3.86 metres, Yaris Verso is a compact B-segment car. The interior space, however, is clearly that of a C-segment car. And Yaris Verso is more than just a new car. Yaris Verso is a concept. An innovative and clever concept, which is practical, versatile and, above all, fun to drive.

Powered by a 1.3 litre VVT-i engine with a maximum output of 85bhp, Yaris Verso combines great driving characteristics with all the benefits and the versatility of an MPV. For example, the Verso's rear seats can be completely folded under the floor, resulting in a practical and large cargo space. The Verso will be available with either manual or automatic transmissions when it goes on sale early in 2000.

NEW SEVENTH GENERATION CELICA

The new Celica, designed at Toyota's Californian design studio, Caltex Design Research, Inc., is a complete re-think of the sports coupe concept. Moreover, the new Celica is real proof that less can be more. The new Celica is 90 mm shorter than its predecessor, but it offers more interior volume and more luggage space. With only around 1100 kg the total weight is 5% less than the current Celica and the power-to-weight ratio has been increased by around 30%. With a maximum output of 140bhp the new Celica offers a power-to-weight ratio which is the best in its class. The coupe accelerates from 0 to 62mph in only 8.7 seconds and has a top speed of 127mph.

With its increased and relatively long wheelbase for optimum stability and a newly designed double wishbone rear suspension, the new Celica offers exciting cornering and superb road holding. All in all it is a car that delivers the fun and pleasure of driving a compact, sporty coupe, combined with the best customer value in its class. The new Celica goes on sale from 12 November 1999.

NEW MR2 ROADSTER

The brand new Toyota MR2 Roadster is in many aspects a unique design. The car combines the genuine and classic enjoyment of open roadster driving with state of the art styling and technology.

The MR2 was principally designed as a 'mid-ship' roadster. The short front and rear overhangs give the car a sturdy and boldly confident appeal, while the bodylines give it the elegance one expects from a roadster. During winter the MR2 Roadster can be equipped with a specially designed hard-top, which gives it the appeal and look of a coupe.

Modern design and materials technologies have made it possible to develop a contemporary roadster, offering all the comfort and safety aspects customers deserve.

The mid-engine concept, which has always been a characteristic of Toyota's MR2, together with an ultra-stiff body construction, make the MR2 a car that offers the fun of open air motoring, without compromising on road performance. UK customers will be able to buy it from March 2000.

PRIUS FOR EUROPE

Toyota launched the Prius, the world's first hybrid production car in Japan in December 1997 and since then it has sold around 30,000 units. After further developments to make this unique vehicle compatible with European tastes and standards, the award-winning Prius will be sold in Europe and the UK from next summer.

Prius is a hybrid car with the shape and size of a normal family saloon, but with excellent fuel economy and the lowest possible exhaust emission figures, thanks to the modern hybrid technology. The drivetrain consists of a 1.5 litre petrol engine combined with an electric motor, an innovative and realistic option for Europe's environmentally conscious customers. However, the Prius does not compromise on performance, practicality or driving pleasure, making it an attractive vehicle for all motorists.

HIGH SPECIFICATION PICNIC SE

Also on the stand is a new high specification version of Toyota's Picnic MPV. The limited edition Picnic SE sports more equipment and a new kind of seat trim to make it a highly attractive family car.

NEW LOOK FOR LAND CRUISER COLORADO

The Toyota Land Cruiser Colorado gets a fresh new face and improved interior and exterior specifications this autumn, which can be seen for the first time at the London Motor Show. The new Land Cruiser Colorado is instantly recognisable with its newly designed front grille and clear, multi reflector headlamps.

The large front bumper adds presence, and the new rear combination lamps are of the high brightness type. The door mirrors can now be electrically retracted on all models.

In addition the Colorado has a fresh interior with newly designed door trims, new seat materials and a higher specification level.

These changes will help keep the Land Cruiser Colorado among Europe's best-sellers in the medium-sized off-road segment. It complements the class-leading Land Cruiser Amazon, which simultaneously receives Toyota's Vehicle Stability Control and Traction Control as standard on the 4.7 litre V8 VX model.

MOTOR SPORTS

In addition to existing production models and new model premieres at Earls Court, Toyota will display its WRC Corolla rally car on the motor sport days - 27 and 28 October. Toyota currently leads the Manufacturers' Championship of the World Rally Championship while Frenchman Didier Auriol is chasing the Drivers' Championship. Last week, Toyota also announced that ex Formula One driver and TV commentator Martin Brundle will drive a works entered Corolla WRC on the 1999 Network Q Rally of Great Britain.

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