



## Dayton Toyota at Rts. 130 and 522 Has Full Line of New and Used Cars

Jean Stratton, May 2, 2007

In the 50 years since Toyotas first arrived in the U.S., they not only boast the best selling car in the country – the Camry – but they are on the brink of becoming the number one auto company here as well.

As sales increased throughout the 1960s, '70s, and '80s, the company established its U.S. headquarters in Torrance, Calif. and also opened factories across the country. Now, whether in a car, mini-van, SUV, crossover, truck, or hybrid, Toyota is on the move!



How did a company that once produced textile looms accomplish such a feat?

There are basically three reasons, point out Dave Nappa, new owner of Dayton Toyota and Pre-Owned SuperCenter at 2291 Routes 130 and 522 in Dayton. “First there was the complacency of the U.S. auto industry; second, the product quality of Toyota and its manufacturing process; and third, the cars were smaller and got better mileage.”

Certainly, a major reason for its success is quality. Toyotas have a superb longevity profile. “It depends on maintenance, too,” points out Mr. Nappa. “But if people take care of it, with regular oil changes, etc., they can keep the car 10, 15, 20 years.”

“In the manufacturing process, there is a Japanese term, ‘Kaizen,’ meaning continuous improvement. There is input from people working on the assembly line and an effort to create efficient and comfortable working conditions. Also, if someone finds a defect – a loose bolt, or whatever – they stop the assembly line and immediately try to fix it.”

Mr. Nappa, who has a masters degree in business as well as a background in the auto industry, having grown up in his father’s and uncle’s Ford dealership in Wayne, is delighted with the impressive and spacious new Toyota showroom, which is purchased in October. “We actually have five different businesses in the dealership,” he explains. “(1) new vehicles, (2) used vehicles, (3) service, (4) parts, and (5) body shop. The challenge is to keep them all running smoothly.”

That seems to have been achieved. The setting for the new cars is handsome, with a staff of friendly, helpful, and knowledgeable salespersons, and even includes an internet café. “Customers can sit down and create their own car on the computer,” says Mr. Nappa. “Then, they can print it out and take it to a salesperson.”

Customer service is key, he adds. Part of the showroom is designed with the Feng Shui emphasis on harmony in one’s surroundings, and in addition, customers are offered complimentary refreshments, such as coffee, donuts, and muffins, etc. as they take a look at the new Hybrid Highlander SUV, Sienna mini-van, or the hot selling Rav-4 cross-over.

The service center can accommodate 33 cars at one time, and 18 loaner cars are available for customers, if needed. There is regular service by appointment and also special “Express Lube” done in 29 minutes for \$31.95.

The previously-owned cars are displayed in a showroom of their own, as well as on a lot. Currently 220 are available, half of which are Toyotas. “We sold 101 used cars in December,” notes Mr. Nappa, “and we sold 35 cars on eBay last month, including some to Russia.”

Among the new cars, the hybrids are very important. Equipped with hybrid synergy drive, they qualify as the “best of both worlds:” powerful gasoline engine and innovative high-torque electric motor, combining power, optimized fuel efficiency, and extremely low emission.

“Prius, Camry, and Highlander SUV are all available as hybrids,” says Mr. Nappa. “We sold 24 Priuses last month, and they are 20 percent of our total sales. It takes time to develop these hybrids. Toyota probably started 15 years ago, and now the technology advances all the time. The next step could be to plug the car in overnight because with new technology, the batteries become smaller and smaller.”

Most of Toyota’s new cars are also available with all-wheel drive system options, and while silver remains the color of choice, there is a wide range to please anyone’s color palette.

Mr. Nappa looks forward to participating in Toyota’s continuing progress and is also very proud of his Dayton dealership.

“We are the oldest Toyota dealership in New Jersey and the third oldest in the U.S. Lew Reynolds started it in 1959, originally in Jamesburg, and he is now a customer of ours. Ninety-five percent of the people who work for us today were employed here previously, and we are one of only a handful of Toyotas dealers in the U.S. who have won the Toyota President’s Award 10 years in a row, which is based primarily on customer satisfaction. So much of what I enjoy is helping to advance the careers of people who work for us.”

Another way in which Dayton Toyota pleases its customers is through its New Owner’s Clinic. “Toyota owners are invited to dinner here, and we will answer questions they have about their car,” reports Mr. Nappa. “The next one is June 13, and all Toyota owners, not just new ones, are welcome.”

He says he hopes to add more Princeton residents to his list of new owners, noting that Dayton Toyota is a short and easy drive from Princeton. “We look forward to introducing ourselves to more people in Princeton, and also to continued growth in all areas of the organization. It is fun and exciting to be part of this business with all the advances in technology.”