

2018 Dallas-Ft. Worth Auto Show - Vinay Shahani Remarks

February 14, 2018

The Toyota logo is displayed in a large, bold, red, sans-serif font, centered within a light gray rectangular background.

As prepared for:
Vinay Shahani
Vice President, Integrated Marketing Operations, Toyota
2018 DFW Auto Show
Kay Bailey Hutchinson Convention Center
February 14, 2018

Good morning! I hope everyone is doing well.

We appreciate you joining us here at the 2018 DFW Auto Show... a show that's near and dear to us, because now that we've completed our move to Plano, North Texas is our home.

To celebrate we capped off 2017 with a bang!

Last year's sales can be summed up in three key points: First, Toyota is America's favorite brand for six years running; second, Camry is America's favorite car for the 16th year in a row; and third, the RAV4 is America's

favorite SUV. Now that's what I call finishing strong!

As we settle into our new digs here in Texas we've also embarked on another mission as the official mobility sponsor of the Olympic and Paralympic Games through 2024.

You've likely seen some of our messaging during the Winter Olympics or the Super Bowl, which really touch on our focus moving forward. Cars and trucks are obviously extremely important to us, but so is looking toward the future – a future we are committed to helping shape by making sure that everyone has the freedom to move, and the ability to reach their potential.

Start Your Impossible is a theme you will see from Toyota as we challenge ourselves and the world to provide mobility for all.

Speaking of Olympics, how about Chloe Kim winning gold in PyeongChang the other night! Don't forget to follow Chloe and our other Team Toyota Olympic athletes on social media – just look for the Team Toyota hashtag. We're looking forward to more medals as the Games continue.

Now, while we have an eye toward what's next we certainly have a firm grip on the present. We recently unveiled a very important vehicle, and today it is making its first appearance in Texas.

The all-new 2019 Toyota Avalon – designed, engineered, and assembled right here in the USA – sets a new standard for the premium segment with the highest quality, reliability, safety and craftsmanship in its class.

The Avalon represents our flagship sedan, and as you can see, the design reflects a higher level of luxury and speaks to a wider range of people.

When it goes on sale this spring consumers will have a choice of 4 gas-powered grades, all of which are powered by a 3.5-liter V6 engine designed to be more powerful with better fuel economy.

The hybrid variation is offered in 3 grades and is powered by a 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine with Toyota's latest Hybrid System, and it's important to note: the 2019 Avalon is the only full hybrid in the segment.

The Avalon is the latest example of our Toyota New Global Architecture first unveiled on the Camry last year. The new TNGA global platform allowed designers to create a longer, wider, and lower Avalon, one that features an extended wheelbase with shorter overhangs to improve handling and help create our most impressive Avalon to date!

For the first time, Avalon Touring grade will offer an available Adaptive Variable Suspension and standard multi-link rear suspension.

This AVS system adjusts on the fly in 650 levels reacting in just 20 milliseconds. That's fast! Most importantly the AVS was tuned and polished for our roads here in North America.

The Avalon appeals to a variety of driving styles. For instance, there's Eco mode for more leisurely drives, or for more fast-paced action the Sport Plus mode sharpens handling and improves throttle response.

And one of my favorite features in Sport Plus is the Engine Sound Enhancement, which helps amplify the engine's voice to create a more visceral experience.

When it comes to exterior styling there's more to love on the new Avalon.

The all-new XSE grade, available in gas or hybrid, joins the Avalon family and it welcomes in a younger buyer looking for premium qualities and athletic charisma.

The Limited and XLE, on the other hand, stay true to those who appreciate authentic premium design, highlighting the sleek and sophisticated technical beauty.

The 2019 Avalon's standard slim LED headlights – set above the 3D grille – are brighter than ever, and those new headlights, like the tail lights, also feature progressive turn signals.

Our sportier grades are set apart with Piano black accents, a new mesh black grille, and darkened 19-inch wheels and, if you can believe, quad exhaust tips. Remember, this an Avalon we're talking about!

The craftsmanship inside is better than ever with a simple and streamlined approach. There's authentic materials throughout like the available Yamaha-sourced wood trim, and the aluminum accents that complement the quilted design on the leather seats and doors.

Comfort and luxury aren't just for the front of the cabin, as the new Avalon offers a spacious back seat that touts best-in-class rear shoulder, knee, and head room.

A 7-inch multi-informational display provides the driver with information like turn-by-turn navigation, while a new 10-inch head-up display – biggest in the segment – makes it easy for the driver to see engine speed, direction, and audio settings. The Avalon also features Qi wireless charging, WiFi hotspot capability, and 5 USB outlets.

Every Avalon comes standard with a 9-inch capacitive touchscreen, which is super intuitive so you can navigate it just like your phone with pinch and flick movements. Entune 3.0 will be standard on all grades, and it will be our first vehicle fitted with Apple Carplay.

For music lovers looking for the ultimate sound experience there's an available 1200-watt, 14-speaker, 7.1-channel surround sound system.

Toyota Remote Connect allows drivers to control certain vehicle functions with their Apple or Android smartwatch or Amazon Alexa-enabled devices.

Speaking of ... we're also proud to be among the first to implement Alexa-connectivity. With home-to-car and car-to-home commands, guests can lock and unlock their doors, start their engine, or even check their fuel level all through touch or voice commands.

It is always our mission to provide our customers with the best available safety features, so it goes without saying that every Avalon will come equipped with Toyota Safety Sense, an active safety system highlighted by features like a Pre-Collision System with Pedestrian Detection, Full-Speed-Range Dynamic Radar Cruise Control, and Lane Departure Alert with Steering Assist.

As you can see we believe in sedans, and we are recommitting ourselves to this premium segment with our best Avalon to date.

We think you'll love it too!

OK, let's shift gears and talk about trucks.

Now, you might recognize our Tacoma TRD Pro over there.

Tacoma is the best-selling mid-size pickup for 12 years running ... so chances are you've seen it on the road at some point. But, if you're having trouble finding it, just look for the truck with the giant trophy in the bed.

The Tacoma TRD Pro was named Mid-Size Pickup Truck of Texas for the second year in a row by the Texas Auto Writer's Association. It's an award we're extremely proud of, especially considering pickup trucks are a way of life in Texas.

Speaking of TRD Pro, we recently made an exciting announcement.

Check out this video.

Awesome, right?

TRD Pros represent our flagship off-road vehicles crafted for our most adventurous truck buyers. They include unique parts designed by our Toyota Racing Development engineers who tapped into our rich racing and off-road heritage.

For 2019, all TRD Pros are equipped with tailor-made Fox Internal Bypass Shocks, which offer optimal tuning to dominate the trails without sacrificing road manners.

These shocks offer a level of precise damping tunability to adjust the suspension performance to suit both trails and roads across the country.

The front shocks are paired with TRD Springs that offer additional lift for off-road performance and a more aggressive stance.

Out back, the rear Fox shocks employ piggyback reservoirs to house additional oil to maintain peak performance in the toughest conditions.

When it comes to styling form follows function with sleek, black TRD Pro branding on every vehicle. That includes a vintage-inspired signature black grille, black TRD badges, and unique TRD Pro wheels.

TRD Pros always feature an exclusive color, and this year that is Voodoo Blue which you may remember from the iconic FJ Cruiser. Super White and Midnight Black Metallic are also available.

Now while all TRD Pros share similar styling, each vehicle also has unique features. The part that probably stands out most is the Tacoma's new TRD Desert Air Intake. Designed to help its engine perform best in dusty environments. The air intake is moved higher to draw from cleaner air up above the roofline.

Pretty cool, huh?

As for the Tundra TRD Pro, it will be better than ever thanks to a restyled front end that includes a new grille and hood scoop, and we can't forget about those new, forged aluminum BBS wheels.

The 4Runner will be equipped with the new Fox shocks, but it also gets a new TRD roof rack, a standard premium JBL Audio system with subwoofer, and an updated quarter-inch skid plate with red TRD lettering.

Now, even on our toughest off-road trucks safety remains our biggest priority.

So for 2019, all TRD Pros feature the Star Safety System, and both Tacoma and Tundra come standard with Toyota Safety Sense.

These TRD Pros represent our most impressive off-road vehicles to date. They're ready to tackle all the adventures Texas has to offer – both on and off the pavement – and they will be available in fall of this year.

It's been a great start to 2018, but we're just getting warmed up.

Stayed tuned because we've got some more exciting news to come very soon.

Thank you all again for joining us.

Be sure to stop by the Tacoma to grab a picture of our TAWA trophy and share it using the TRDpro hashtag. Oh, and don't forget to grab a TRD Pro Yeti Tumbler!

Thank you everyone, and have a great day!