

2017 North American International Auto Show (NAIAS) - Akio Toyoda

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*As prepared for:
2017 North American International Auto Show – 2018 Toyota Camry Debut
Cobo Hall, Detroit
Jan. 9, 2017
Toyota Motor Corporation President Akio Toyoda*

Hello and welcome!

Ok, I know I'm taking a chance here... but what do you think of our new Camry?!

I know, right? They almost make me wonder if I'm at the right press conference!

They are... by far...the best representatives we could have for Toyota. They say everything about where we want to go with our brand...a place where practical can still be passionate... and where affordable can still make heads turn.

And between this new XLE and XSE... our customers will have two very distinct Camry's to choose from: sexy and really sexy.

Now I know calling a Camry "sexy"... might be overstating it for some...but I truly do believe our designers hit it out of the park this time.

Our goal was to make the XLE far more premium...and the XSE...so sporty and distinctive...it would be easy to identify from 200 yards away.

It's no secret that I like to involve myself in the design process...although my team might call it something else!

But together, we chose this initial sketch of the new Camry... from three finalists...and as you can see...our designers and engineers really stayed true to the concept.

This sketch by the way... came from one of our talented designers who was on assignment in Japan from the U.S., at the time. Say hello Ian.

I'm not going to even try to pronounce Ian's last name.

Thanks in part, to our Toyota New Global Architecture...or TNGA...our engineers were able to accommodate the new design's low center of gravity... and the extreme sculpting of the sheet metal.

This Camry has been our flagship vehicle since it was first created in 1982...and as such... it remains very important to all of us at Toyota... especially the 136,000 team members here in the U.S....responsible for engineering, manufacturing and sales.

The Camry has been one of the reasons why we've invested 22 billion dollars in the U.S. over the last 60 years and why we will be investing another 10 billion here ...in just the next 5 years alone.

We are deeply grateful to the millions of customers who have made Camry the number one selling car in America for the last 15 years.

It's an honor that we cannot take for granted... and with these new Camrys, we hope it's evident that we won't.

In fact, we view this as an opportunity to reignite the mid-size sedan market...I mean, why should SUVs get all the glory?

After all, this segment is still one of the largest in the industry...and the Camry is a huge part of our manufacturing here in the U.S.

And according to Cars.com...the Camry continues to be the number one...most "American" car...of any built today... by any OEM.

I'm not sure if that's widely known by our customers...but it's something that our team members at Toyota's largest manufacturing plant, in Georgetown, Kentucky... are very proud of.

And so am I.

As we speak, they make a Camry nearly every minute!!

It is this type of team work that has helped Toyota produce more than 25 million vehicles in the U.S. over the past 30 years... which honestly, never ceases to amaze me.

Our line-off for these new Camrys will begin very soon at TMMK...and I believe they will be the best generation we've ever built.

Our goal was to simply make this new Camry as unexpected...and provocative as possible... so in addition to what you see here...it will also be available in this new, extra sporty...two-tone version...

AKIO:

Hi Bob, Nice wheels.

BOB [Carter, Toyota Motor Sales Senior Vice President of Automotive Operations]:

I know! Check out the red leather interior! Isn't this car awesome?!

AKIO:

It is! You're always so excited Bob! Is this your favorite?

BOB:

Actually my favorite one is this one...Ladies and Gentlemen... introducing our new Nascar Camry!

As you know... we won the Sprint Cup Championship in 2015...

AKIO:

But not this year.

BOB:

No... not 2016. But Kyle was really close...

AKIO:

Close doesn't count, Bob.

BOB:

I know... but we did win the Daytona 500 and the Sprint Manufacturers Championship...with 16 out of the 36 races last year.

In fact... I've got a little surprise for you...ladies and gentlemen... please welcome the 2015 Sprint Cup Champion Kyle Busch... and the 2016 Daytona 500 Champion Denny Hamlin.

KYLE:

Akio ... on behalf of the entire Toyota Nascar team ... it gives me great pleasure to present you with the 2016 Manufacturer Championship Cup.

AKIO:

Thank you Kyle... this is great... but seriously, what happened?? You were right there at the end... So close...

KYLE:

I know ... I know... don't worry Boss ...we'll get 'em next year!

AKIO:

And is this Daytona 500 trophy for me, as well?

DENNY:

No I just brought this out so Kyle could look at it up close.

KYLE:

Thanks, man. You're the best.

BOB:

Well the good news is our entire team will be driving our new Camry this year... which will make its debut next month at the Daytona 500... so I'm counting on that trophy staying with the Toyota family!

KYLE:

You got it.

DENNY:

No problem.

AKIO:

Ok, good! Kyle and Denny ...ladies and gentlemen!

I tease those guys, but honestly, I'm so proud of what they've accomplished.

As a driver myself...I know how much they put on the line, every time they race for us...and I couldn't be more grateful.

It's been 10 years since we began racing in Nascar ...and I feel like we are really part of the family now...which is a tremendous honor.

It's also an honor to be with all of you today.

I want to personally thank you...the journalists...for all your feedback...input and support.... for pushing us to be better.

It doesn't go unnoticed... and in fact...it's what drives us to create cars like this new Camry.

A car I'm truly proud to call a Toyota!

Thank you all very much!