

Ford/Toyota Collaboration - Takeshi Uchiyamada

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Takeshi Uchiyamada, Executive Vice President, Toyota Motor Coporation

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Thank you, Mr. Kuzak. We have just signed a memorandum of understanding for collaboration with Ford. Both companies will now begin making preparations for joint work on new technologies. We are counting on those technologies to benefit customers in the United States and around the world.

It has been more than hundred years since the first car was born, and our industry is now facing several challenges. Offering safe cars is a given for any automaker, but one can say the greatest challenges are “conserving energy” and “reducing greenhouse gas.”

Toyota achieved a breakthrough in these challenges in nineteen ninety-seven (1997). That is when we launched the first-generation Prius as the world’s first mass-production gasoline-electric hybrid.

Since then, we have begun producing hybrid vehicles in the United States, China, Europe, Australia, and Thailand, as well as in Japan. We have sold about three-point-three (3.3) million hybrid vehicles in about eighty (80) nations.

Our collaboration with Ford is a move to make hybrid technology more widely available in sport-utility vehicles and in trucks. Those kinds of models are indispensable to American customers. And providing them with our hybrid technology will help conserve energy and reduce output of greenhouse gas here in the United States. That was our thinking in considering the collaboration.

Ford was also a pioneer in developing hybrid technology. And it is a traditional leader in sport-utility vehicles and in trucks. So we are extremely honored to be undertaking preparations for joint work with Ford.

We need to think carefully about how to ensure that cars remain valuable to society in their second century. Great advances in information technology and in communications are transforming the world.

And automobiles need to be part of those advances.

Information technology and communications will play a big role in future transport. Vehicles will no longer be self-contained units. They will be part of a larger interaction with other vehicles and with the transport infrastructure.

Cars will fulfill a new role in people's lives. We at Toyota believe that cars can and will become partners in more-fulfilling lifestyles.

The foundation for the changes that I am describing will be telematics technologies. We at Toyota have commercialized several technologies in anticipation of the coming revolution in telematics. For example, we launched our Gazoo automotive portal site in nineteen ninety-eight (1998). And we began offering our G-Book telematics service in two thousand two (2002). In the U.S., we have just introduced the accessible, easy-to-use Entune. By sharing our know-how and experience, we would like to offer even better telematics services going forward.

In the future, plug-in hybrid vehicles and electric vehicles will be connected with home energy systems, and with energy infrastructure. That will help raise overall energy efficiency, and motoring lifestyles will become more rewarding.

Ford has also been building telematics systems and for the same reasons. By sharing our know-how and experience, we can transform what is considered as a "dream" into "practical reality."

In closing, let me sum up my thoughts on this collaboration.

We expect to create exciting and socially beneficial technologies with Ford, and we can do so because our 2 companies have enough experience to create a synergy effect in hybrid technology and in telematics. At the same time, we will compete harder than ever in the spirit of "making great cars." Our competitive stance will help maximize benefits for customers and for society at large.

We are counting on this collaboration between Toyota and Ford to benefit American society and to open a new page in the history of the world automobile industry. As an engineer, I will be deeply gratified to see us fulfill those aims.

We have a lot of details to work out with Ford before we can tell you more about our collaboration. In the meantime, we are grateful for your interest and understanding.

Thank you.