

Toyota Celebrates 25 Years of Keeping Certified Used Cars on the Road

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The best new cars make the best used cars. That's why the Toyota Certified Used Vehicles (TCUV) program was started 25 years ago bringing the quality the automaker is known for to the certified pre-owned industry. And the program has been growing ever since.

"A certified used Toyota is a great way to get new people into the brand," says Ron Cooney, TCUV sales operations manager for Toyota Motor North America (TMNA). "It's great for our brand. It's great for the customer. For dealers, the program sells itself. It's just kept growing over the years."

And there's plenty of room for growth: While the new car industry sees about 16 million sales a year, the used car industry is much bigger – moving about 40 million vehicles annually. This year marks not only the 25th anniversary of TCUV, but also the 7 millionth certified used Toyota sold.

When a customer buys a used Toyota from the TCUV program, they get the quality they can trust, complete with a comprehensive coverage policy. With each passing year, TCUV is only getting more popular as the program adapts to changing customer needs.

“Just like everything we do at Toyota, TCUV is designed to satisfy the customer,” Cooney says. “I’ve always viewed my job as ‘What do the consumers want?’ They want peace of mind. And that’s what TCUV is all about.”

The Value of Certified Pre-Owned

According to Cooney, back in the 1990s the popularity of leasing created a lot of used Toyotas returning once those leases ended. With the establishment of TCUV, dealers now had an alternative to the traditional used car purchasing and ownership experience. Consumers looking for a late model used Toyota could now get that ‘like new’ experience.

“Our certified used vehicle program is a great outlet to accomplish a few things,” he says. “One, it makes sure that when a Toyota comes off-lease, a Toyota dealer wants it back. Two, it’s a quality vehicle because the dealers are going to get it as close to new car condition as possible.”

When a dealer receives a Toyota off-lease, the vehicle undergoes a comprehensive screening process. Immediately, Toyota ensures there are no open service campaigns or recalls — no matter what condition the vehicle is in — to protect both the customer and the dealer. If there’s a recall that hasn’t been completed yet, the car isn’t eligible to go through the screening process. And, if a car is ever in dealer TCUV inventory when a new recall is announced, the vehicle is no longer eligible to be sold until the recall is addressed.

TCUV partners with CARFAX to obtain the vehicle history report, ensuring the car doesn’t have disqualifying information like frame or flood damage. Only then will the dealership begin the 160-point screening to inspect every element of the vehicle. Once the mechanical inspection is completed, the vehicle is off to the detail shop for a full cosmetic inspection and detailing, inside and out.



“When a customer buys a Certified Used Toyota, they know they’re not only buying a quality used car, but they’re buying a quality used car that has already had the brakes inspected, the tires inspected, the wiper blades inspected, the oil changed and more,” he says. “Now you have a vehicle that has a higher value, because it’s not just a used car

And according to Cooney, certified cars sell fast. No matter what size market the dealer is in, the program markets the car as a TCUV on websites for certified pre-owned vehicles, on [ToyotaCertified.com](https://www.toyota-certified.com), and the dealer’s website, meaning consumers come in contact with the inventory very quickly.

“A dealer certifies a car through the system,” he says. “Only after the vehicle passes inspection and meets all certification criteria, it’s included in our nationally syndicated marketing feed and we get consumers’ eyes on those cars right away. Certified used vehicles don’t sit very long.”

Ensuring Peace of Mind

In addition to the rigorous standards needed to include a vehicle in the program, TCUV products come with a 12 month or 12,000-mile limited comprehensive warranty and a seven year, 100,000-mile limited powertrain warranty, whichever comes first, including roadside assistance. Unlike most Certified Pre-Owned warranties, the TCUV warranty starts the day it is purchased from the dealer, not the day the vehicle was purchased new.

“When a customer purchases the best used car and the dealer does all the reconditioning, it creates that peace of mind,” Cooney says. “But then with the certified program, if in fact something does go wrong, the TCUV owner has a suite of coverages and amenities to assist them.”

For example, the average three-year-old certified used vehicle has 35,000 miles on it. For other manufacturers with a seven-year warranty, three years of the warranty would already be gone the day the customer buys the car used, and they have what’s leftover. With TCUV, the warranty and roadside assistance start the day the TCUV owner buys the car.

“I think the warranty fits to the strength of our program,” Cooney says. “It speaks to Toyota’s investment and confidence to include a seven-year or 100,000-mile powertrain warranty and roadside assistance, because we’re confident that most customers aren’t ever going to need the warranty.”

The warranty can be used at 1,400 Toyota dealerships in the United States and Canada and includes other benefits, like towing and rental cars. According to Cooney, these added assurances mean that a customer’s investment in a Certified Used Toyota goes a lot further than it would if they bought the car from another used vehicle program or from a private seller.

A Customer-Focused Program

According to Cooney, the TCUV inventory is well balanced with sedans, SUVs and trucks to satisfy the needs of many different customers. In fact, Cooney has noticed that many of these customers are also purchasing their very first vehicle.

“When it comes to used cars, we’re seeing a lot of first-time car buyers,” Cooney says. “They are people moving out of cities or no longer taking public transportation. And we’ve also noticed more often than not that they’re buying a TCUV sedan.”

In fact, the person who bought the 7 millionth TCUV vehicle aligns with this story: He’s a young man in his twenties who used to drive his parents’ Camry, and for his first car, he bought one of his own. According to Cooney, because TCUV offers first-time car buyers the experience of Toyota quality and assurances at affordable rates, it creates customer satisfaction that lasts.

“Things last year have been a little different with current availability,” Cooney says. “But normally, with a customer that purchases a TCUV, many of them purchase a brand-new Toyota the next time they buy. The program is a great investment.”