

Our Point of View: Wiseman Provides Update on Toyota's Progress

May 28, 2010

by Jim Wiseman

Last week, I had the distinct pleasure of accompanying Toyota President Akio Toyoda to California to [introduce](#) our new partnership with [Tesla Motors](#) to develop electric vehicles at the former NUMMI plant in Fremont, CA.

Toyota is investing \$50 million in Tesla, which is buying the NUMMI plant. A big reason the partnership came together was that Mr. Toyoda took a spin in a Tesla Roadster with Tesla founder and CEO Elon Musk. Mr. Toyoda is a passionate driver and as he put it himself, “I felt the wind, the wind of the future.”

Along with my colleagues at Toyota, I share his excitement. Our investment in Tesla is a strong affirmation of Toyota’s continuing commitment to lead the auto industry in developing the most environmentally advanced vehicles, just as we led the way with the [Prius](#) hybrid.

The last time I saw Akio Toyoda was during his February visit to the United States, when he answered some tough questions from Members of Congress. That’s what made the headlines.

But what I remember most is a meeting afterward with Toyota dealers and suppliers. These members of the Toyota family in America gave our President a warm and heartfelt greeting after a tough grilling. I know Mr. Toyoda was deeply touched by their support, and [emotions](#) ran high. We heard him deliver the most important message for our customers at this pivotal moment: Our vehicles are safe and everybody at Toyota is making an all-out effort to ensure that they remain safe.

In these last four months, we’ve worked tirelessly to [deliver on this promise](#). We’re strengthening our focus on quality assurance in North America and around the world, listening to our customers more closely and moving faster to address their concerns. And, our dealers have made extraordinary efforts to service our recalled vehicles, with more than 3.5 million pedal and floor mat remedies completed to date.

It’s encouraging to me that our efforts to act more quickly on safety issues have been recognized by Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood and the Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, David Strickland.

At Toyota, we are determined to learn from our recent experience and to become a more responsive organization. I’ve been with this company more than 20 years and I know the values we stand for. I’m proud of the way Toyota has responded.

I look forward to continuing to update our loyal customers and the motoring public with the latest news from Toyota’s 30,000 employees in the United States.

[Jim Wiseman](#)

Chief Communications Officer