



Toyota Motor Manufacturing of Kentucky Uses Broadband and Computer Technologies To Meet Customer Demand

Name: Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Kentucky, Inc.

Internet:
www.toyotageorgetown.com

Products/Services:
Automotive Manufacturer (Camry, Avalon and Solara automobiles.)

Location:
Georgetown/Scott County

Leadership:
Gary Convis, president

Employees: 7,000+

Founded:
Toyota Motor Corporation, 1937
TMMK, Inc. 1988

Reach: International

Advice for Growing Companies: *"Get to know the needs and expectations of your customers and never lose sight of that."*

Way Internet Has Made You More Competitive: *"Toyota uses the Internet to order parts. With an electronic ordering system, it has the ability to track parts throughout the supply chain, and dealers have the ability to view the vehicle pipeline. It allows dealers to submit changes and provides the customer with exactly what they want."*

Ways to improve Kentucky's business climate: *"By supporting good economic strategies and working with our government officials."*

Georgetown, Ky. — Toyota's history began with invention and innovation. Today, Toyota is incorporating information technology (IT) into its supply chain management and customer relationship management to make corporate activities even more market-connected. Toyota's Georgetown facility, Toyota Motor Manufacturing of Kentucky, is also seeing significant production and capacity improvements due to these innovations.

The most significant improvement for the Kentucky-based plant has been the Global Body Line (GBL) and the Cartridge Robotic System, according to Gary Convis, president of Toyota Motor Manufacturing Kentucky Inc.

"The GBL system uses a mix of labor and robots which respond to programming to perform many different types of welds, providing tremendous flexibility and cost controls during major model changes," Convis explained. "The GBL system can be used in high- and low-volume plants and gives us the ability to adapt to market changes without going through heavy retooling, which is very expensive. Consequently we can bring a new model to market much quicker and keep costs down."

Convis noted that the most recent models produced by the plant, the Avalon and Solara, are prime examples of how GBL has benefited the manufacturer and the customer. When the new models were released, they contained more standard equipment, but were priced less than the previous models.

All of Toyota's operational processes from sales to production, distribution, procurement and development fully utilize information technologies (IT) and are seamlessly integrated into the whole. This makes it possible to meet customer needs and wants, and to provide products and services that perfectly satisfy any request.

Toyota maintains one of the largest virtual networks in the automotive industry, with an "electronic pipeline" to some 1,400 Toyota and Lexus dealers. Known as the Dealer Daily, the virtual network or Internet portal, content includes automated F&I forms, an inventory management and vehicle ordering component, on-line training, a virtual trade area for dealers to help find vehicles for customers at other stores and a customer relationship management (CRM) section. The Dealer Daily also has tools for employee records, customer satisfaction and accessing recall information.

Perhaps the greatest benefits for users of the Internet portal is its ability to access instant service bulletins and repair manuals for every model and year of Toyota and Lexus vehicles. Parts catalogs are also updated much more quickly than before. An even greater advantage on the horizon is the integration of the portal to its stores dealer management system (DMS). That, for example, will eliminate the need for double entry of data.

Convis believes any business that wants to succeed must take the time to meld the right technology with the business's specific requirements. Toyota's customer website www.buyatoyota.com which allows customers to see vehicle availability and obtain price quotes and financing is just one more example.

Convis emphasized, "you must know the challenges your customer encounters and then apply the proper technology." Thus, Toyota Motor Manufacturing Kentucky (TMMK) has prospered. Since the TMMK opened its doors in 1988, 5.5 million vehicles have rolled out of the plant. TMMK produces the Solara Coupe and Convertible, the Camry, America's number one selling sedan, and the Avalon sedan.

About KY 120: In the fast-pace world of technology-driven business, it should be recognized that best practices can be studied and emulated. [connectkentucky](http://connectkentucky.com) is profiling business initiatives in each of Kentucky's 120 counties to identify lessons learned on the path toward successful and sustainable innovation.