

Pushing the limits for Better

“TOYOTA GAZOO Racing embodies Toyota’s commitment to overcome every limit to make ever-better cars. To forge new technologies and solutions under the extreme conditions of motorsports, we will never stop innovating. We race our cars to push ourselves to learn from the toughest challenges. Competing on every kind of road, no matter what the challenge, inspires us to build "ever-better" cars. We're engineering Toyota's future DNA. We'll keep competing to bring the freedom, adventure and joy of driving to everyone.”

Over the years, Toyota has been participating in many different forms of motorsport, including Formula One, the World Endurance Championship (WEC) and the Nürburgring 24 Hours endurance race. These activities were conducted by separate entities within the company, such as “Toyota Racing”, “Lexus Racing” and “GAZOO Racing”.

Of those, “GAZOO Racing” in particular first entered the Nürburgring 24 Hours race in 2007 with two used Altezzas, supported by a team of mechanics that comprised employees selected from various departments within Toyota, under the belief that “the roads build the people, and the people build the cars”.

This was very much in line with the thinking of Toyota’s founder, Kiichiro Toyoda, who said already in 1952: “Motorsport is more than just entertainment. It is vital to the development of the car industry. Just as athletes test their capabilities by competing with all their strength in the Olympics, automakers use racing as an opportunity to push a vehicle’s performance to the limits and compete for supremacy, enabling them to discover new ways of advancing automotive technology.”

With this in mind, in April 2015, Toyota went back to the basis and united Toyota’s motorsports activities into “TOYOTA GAZOO Racing”, placing motorsports as a fundament in its commitment to make ever-better cars.

Toyota’s technology has been further improved through participation in races, and has translated into improving its road cars. Between its first FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) race in 2012 and winning the championship in 2014, the experience with the highly performant powertrain featured in the TS030 and TS040 HYBRID LMP1 race cars significantly progressed the development of hybrid powertrain technology for its road-going models in areas such as downsizing and motor cooling.

By participating in motorsport activities Toyota has broadened its knowledge by stepping out of its comfort zone. Through these experiences it has been able to improve its skills, resulting in further development of human resources.

Last but not least, through motorsports, Toyota conveys the excitement of driving to its customers and fans, and shares its passion with them.

With Toyota’s return to the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) in 2017, “TOYOTA GAZOO Racing” has singled out another highly demanding series where it will push its cars to the limit, in the pursuit of “ever-better cars”.

Toyota's return to WRC

From smooth asphalt to rough, unpaved roads, WRC is a merciless and riveting high-speed chase through nearly every type of public road in the world. Drivers must instantly judge the road conditions in each country in this high-impact, full-throttle challenge.

But building world rally cars is about far more than just theory. It's about crafting a vehicle that can be driven to the limit on each and every type of road, based on thorough first-hand experience and knowledge. With this in mind, TOYOTA GAZOO Racing has decided to take on the WRC in 2017.

With Tommi Mäkinen spearheading the project, the Yaris WRC is nearing completion. The team is comprised of highly dedicated specialists who are passionate about rally racing. "The most important ingredient in creating a winning vehicle is to have a group of people with the same goal who all find joy in what they do," says Mäkinen. "We want to show the world a team coming together under Toyota's 'I love cars!' spirit as we work diligently towards our goals."

The meaning of GAZOO

Today, "GAZOO" refers to the word "Garage", a very intimate place where people work together to improve the smallest details, with the aim of delivering ever-better cars and services for each customer, in each garage. As such, the name embodies the spirit that drives TOYOTA GAZOO Racing.

But the origin of the name goes back nearly twenty years to the creation of GAZOO.com, a website gathering images of the vehicles on stock at each of the dealerships. Its name, "GAZOO", was derived from the Japanese word "gazo" which means image or photo. Although the use of imagery on website is commonplace today, it was revolutionary for the automotive industry in Japan in the mid-1990s when internet technology was at its infancy. GAZOO.com offered consumers a wide choice of products, allowing them to find the best deal available, and this is where the philosophy of providing ever-better cars to the Toyota customer originates.