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Saatchi and Saatchi, Oasis Agencies Team Up for Toyota Prius Ad Campaign

TORRANCE, Calif., Feb. 17 -- Toyota Motor Sales, (TMS) USA today announced that the advertising campaign for the revolutionary Prius hybrid gas/electric vehicle has been awarded to two agencies, Saatchi and Saatchi LA and Oasis Advertising of New York.

In an unusual move, Toyota will utilize both agencies to produce and place advertising for the environmentally friendly Prius, which is scheduled to go on sale mid-2000.

"We're taking a unique 'hybrid' approach to advertise our advanced hybrid car," said Steve Sturm, vice president of marketing for TMS. "By combining Oasis' previous experience developing Prius creative with Saatchi's unparalleled media placement and strategic integration capabilities, this important campaign will have the best of the best."

Saatchi and Saatchi LA traces its heritage to 1975 as the agency of record for Toyota Motor Sales, USA, the marketing, sales and customer service arm of Toyota in America. Oasis has executed a successful corporate image campaign for Toyota in the U.S. since 1993.

Prius was the focus of a recent corporate image campaign created by Oasis, highlighting Toyota Motor Corporation's global commitment to creating environmentally responsible vehicles. In one print ad, the Prius was described as "A car that sometimes runs on gas power and sometimes runs on electric power, from a company that always runs brain power."

Prius is the world's first mass-produced vehicle to use a combination of electric and gasoline power to boost fuel efficiency and dramatically lower exhaust emissions. A stylish, roomy four-door five-passenger sedan, Prius requires no charging stations, nor any change in consumer driving habits. With more than 34,000 sold in Japan, the Prius is already a commercial success.

As the Prius transitions from advanced technology to consumer product in North America, Toyota's marketing department recognized the need to combine messages about the car's environmental advantages with its desirability as everyday transportation. The outstanding capabilities of both advertising agencies led Toyota executives to adopt the unusual team approach.

"Saatchi and Saatchi clearly understands Toyota's customers, as well as our overall marketing strategy and brings tremendous resources to assure a completely integrated launch," said Sturm. "We were equally impressed with

the creative work by the Oasis team. In the end, it made the most sense to utilize each agency's strengths."