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## The Toyota Branding System?

Toyota recognizes the difference between just marketing products and actually investing in creating a brand.

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By John Teresko

Could Toyota, widely positioned as a role model performer with management practices such as the Toyota Production System (TPS), also be cited for its corporate branding skills? The automaker seems to fit the criteria described by Mike Stefaniak, vice president, client services and partner, with Milwaukee-based Scheibel Halaska Inc.

Stefaniak, a marketing communications professional, says Toyota recognizes the difference between just marketing products and actually investing in creating a brand for the company. He says Toyota seems to know the value of creating a corporate framework to facilitate customers' preference for the company's products. "Strong company reputations can contribute to the product being a safe choice," he notes.

Stefaniak says it is surprising how many industrial companies selling to other industrial companies don't take advantage of that approach. "Many industrial companies have traditionally focused on selling and marketing products versus also selling and marketing the company. The result: They tend to lose the means of creating the customer interest that ultimately leads to product loyalty."

One Milwaukee-based client, Cleaver-Brooks Package Boilers, finds that its branding program also helps unify employee culture, says Earl Pfefferkorn, president. Dave Lawrence, president of Milacron's D-M-E Div. launched a branding effort as a marketing differentiator, but also cites surprising success in improving employee culture in its global operations. "Everyone," he says, "is better equipped to interact with customers."

### See Also

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Hint, It's Not TPS](#)

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