

INGENIOUS IDEAS

DEPARTMENT

Making Vehicles More Accessible



Toyota's 2004 Sienna "Rampvan" features a lowered floor and motorized ramp.

(NAPSA)—Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc., is helping put more people in the driver's seat by making their vehicles more accessible.

Toyota launched the first phase of its mobility initiative—the Toyota Mobility Assistance Program—in October 2001. The program provides cash reimbursement of up to \$1,000 to new Toyota vehicle buyers for the cost they paid to purchase and install qualifying adaptive equipment for physically-challenged customers.

For the second phase of the program, the company has joined with Independent Mobility Systems of Farmington, N.M., to produce the IMS Sienna Rampvan. This vehicle features a lowered floor with an entry ramp on the right side. The dropped floor decreases the ramp angle, making the vehicle easier to enter and exit, and increases interior headroom, providing a more comfortable ride.

Both the ramp and door open and close automatically, providing roll-up access in about 10 seconds.

When held up to a switch hidden in the rear taillight of the minivan, a special key fob automatically opens the door and deploys the ramp. In addition, the Rampvan has seating that can be switched from the driver's side to the passenger location, enabling a wheelchair user to move between driving and riding positions.

Research is already underway on phase three of the mobility initiative, which could bring swivel and lift-up seats to Toyota's vehicles. These aftermarket seats would make it easier for seniors and the disabled to get in and out of their vehicles.

"Toyota is committed to providing vehicles for all people," says Bob Swaim, national manager of mobility programs. "As baby boomers age, there will be significant demand for these products."

To learn more about the company's mobility initiative, as well as aftermarket accessibility products available to customize vehicles, consumers can visit the Web site at www.toyota.com/mobility.