

# OC's Auto Dealers Adapt and Win

## Sales Up 15% To \$4.9B; SUVs Lead

By KARI HAMANAKA

The SUV segment's sales strength isn't a new story, but it certainly hasn't gotten old for dealers.

The segment continues to be a bright spot in an operating environment that's seeing plenty of retail headwinds: the inventory crunch due to the parts shortage and supply chain constraints, plus the continued impact of digital and direct-to-consumer models changing how dealers do business.

Still, if any industry is going to find the bright side, it would be those in sales with dealers adapting as best they can to obstacles, while still continuing to come out strong as buzz builds around an incoming raft of new electric vehicle models expected to hit the market in the coming years.

To that end, the **Orange County Automobile Dealers Association** reported a 25.6% jump in new car and vehicle registrations in July and August to 28,211, with light trucks continuing to gain share. The segment rose 3.7 percentage points to 65.9% for the same reporting period.

Notably, it was the luxury compact SUV segment in August that saw the biggest increase in market share locally, moving up 3.9% as midsize cars fell the most at 1.3%, according to OCADA.

The biggest mover was Fountain Valley-



Genesis' SUV momentum continued with the reveal in September of its first dedicated EV, the GV60

based **Genesis Motor America Inc.**, notching the highest surge in new vehicle registrations to 193 for the July/August period. That reflects a 154% increase.

The luxury badge, the sister brand to **Hyundai** and **Kia**, capitalized on consumers' appetite in the SUV segment once its **GV80** and **GV70** SUV models were introduced last November and this summer, respectively.

That trend has continued through September for Genesis with the two vehicle models leading the automaker's sales volume.

In fact, former Genesis CEO **Mark Del Rosso** told the Business Journal earlier this summer before his leave from the company that, regardless of whether the SUV demand was coming from the general market all the way to the super luxury market, the appetite was sustainable over a longer term.

### Big Movers

Other big brand movers in OC included **Maserati**, which doubled registrations to 44, **Volvo** up 81.7% and **Tesla** rising 57.8%.

"It's a challenging time in the automotive and dealership world right now having to deal with the supply constraints," OCADA Executive Director **John Sackrison** said.

"It's an exciting time from the standpoint of the new vehicles, the electrification, the new technologies that are upon us. The desire to have a personal vehicle has accelerated during COVID. There was a lot of talk five years ago that personal vehicle ownership was diminishing and everyone's doing ridesharing. I think that's in the rearview now. Our vehicles provided us with a lot during the pandemic because we probably didn't want to be riding around with people who weren't in our household. It's what got us to the grocery store."

(For more thoughts from Sackrison, see page 3.)

### Multi-Door Strategy

Among the 30 largest local dealers, sales climbed 14.8% to \$4.9 billion, according to this week's Business Journal list. The ranking measures sales for the 12 months through June 30 with a year-over-year comparison.

Outside of sales growth, another industry trend that's not stopping: the growth of dealership groups.

It didn't take long for **Garth Blumenthal**, the former general manager of **Fletcher Jones Mercedes-Benz** in Newport Beach, to make good on that. The auto vet in 2019 purchased the remaining 49% of **Mercedes-Benz of Temecula** that he didn't already own to become sole owner of the dealership.

Fast forward to this year he bought in March **Volvo Cars Mission Viejo** and **Audi Mission Viejo**, forming the **Unstoppable Auto Group**. The group added **Polestar** to its fold in June.

The goal now is for the Unstoppable portfolio to own more than 25 luxury dealerships by 2025.

There's also the **Newport Beach Automotive Group** that's focused on the high-end automotive segment. The group earlier this year bought a 3.5-acre parcel for a 1,500-square-foot Bugatti showroom that began construction in February. Showrooms in the **Irvine Auto Center** by Newport Beach Automotive also include construction on **McLaren Newport Beach** and **Koenigsegg Newport Beach**, both set for completion in the first quarter of next year. ■

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## THE LIST AUTO DEALERS



**JUDY ELMORE**  
General Manager  
Elmore Toyota



**ERIC GROMBACHER**  
General Manager  
Crevier BMW



**JUAN GUZMAN**  
General Manager  
AutoNation Toyota Buena Park



**ROBERTA HARDIN BECHTLOFF**  
General Manager  
Hardin Honda



**DAVID JOHNSON**  
General Manager  
Mazda of Orange



**GARY STONE**  
General Manager  
Audi South Coast



# THE LIST AUTO DEALERS

RANKED BY SALES VOLUME

Rank	Company •Address Rank	Company logo	Sales volume for 12 months ended June 30, 2021 (millions) •yearly % change	New cars sold for 12 months ended June 30, 2021 •yearly % change	Used cars sold for 12 months ended June 30, 2021 •yearly % change	Salespersons •Service personnel	Make(s) sold	Principal financing source(s)	Owner(s)/Parent company •General manager •Phone/fax	
1	<b>Fletcher Jones Motorcars (Mercedes-Benz)</b> (1) 3300 Jamboree Road Newport Beach 92660-8528 Website: fjmercedes.com Email: rhanki@fjmercedes.com		\$661.4 <sup>(1)</sup> NA	5,900 <sup>(1)</sup> NA	3,800 <sup>(1)</sup> NA	50 <sup>(1)</sup> 250 <sup>(1)</sup>	Mercedes-Benz	Mercedes-Benz Financial Services	Fletcher Jones Jr. David Gonzalez (949) 718-3000/(949) 718-3100	
2	<b>Crevier BMW</b> (2) 1500 Auto Mall Drive Santa Ana 92705-4737 Website: crevierbmw.com Email: ckoeller@penskeautomotive.com		\$397.3 23%	3,369 26%	2,554 -18%	31 96	BMW	BMW Financial Services	Penske Automotive Group Eric Grombacher (657) 231-5000/(714) 835-0881	
3	<b>Toyota of Orange</b> (3) 1400 N. Tustin Ave. Orange 92867-3995 Website: toyotaoforange.com		\$338.9 26%	6,603 16%	2,555 26%	27 108	Toyota	Comerica Bank	David Wilson Allen Moznett (714) 639-6750/(714) 771-0363	
4	<b>House of Imports</b> (4) 6862 Auto Center Drive Buena Park 90621-3691 Website: mbz.com Email: davissons@autonation.com		\$313.1 21%	2,466 6%	2,419 15%	35 11	Mercedes-Benz	AutoNation	AutoNation David Kim (714) 562-1100/(714) 562-1212	
5	<b>Toyota of Huntington Beach</b> (6) 18881 Beach Blvd. Huntington Beach 92647-2007 Website: toyotaofhuntingtonbeach.com		\$244 23%	3,921 14%	2,578 10%	38 59	Toyota	Comerica Bank	David Wilson Bucky O'Connell (714) 847-8555/(714) 847-3675	
6	<b>Mercedes-Benz of Laguna Niguel</b> (5) 1 Star Drive Laguna Niguel 92677-4589 Website: mblaguna.com Email: pbolter@mblaguna.com		\$214.2 <sup>(1)</sup> NA	2,300 <sup>(1)</sup> NA	1,200 <sup>(1)</sup> NA	25 <sup>(1)</sup> 120 <sup>(1)</sup>	Mercedes-Benz, Sprinter, AMG, smart	Mercedes-Benz Financial Service USA LLC	Penny Spellens Pat Bolter (949) 899-6281	
7	<b>Newport Lexus</b> (7) 3901 MacArthur Blvd. Newport Beach 92660-3012 Website: newportlexus.com		\$204.3 18%	2,355 9%	1,280 9%	18 60	Lexus	Comerica Bank	David Wilson/A.J. D'Amato Jr. Anthony R. D'Amato (949) 477-7088/(949) 477-7175	
8	<b>David Wilson's Villa Ford</b> (10) 2550 N. Tustin Ave. Orange 92865-5666 Website: davidwilsonvillaford.com		\$198.1 36%	2,627 22%	1,635 47%	34 71	Ford	Comerica Bank	David Wilson Scott Wade (888) 248-5750	
9	<b>AutoNation Toyota Irvine</b> (11) 9101 Research Drive Irvine 92618-4206 Website: autonationtoyotairvine.com Email: parky@autonation.com		\$180.2 30%	2,960 21%	2,077 14%	38 13	Toyota, Scion	Toyota Motor Credit Corp.	AutoNation Mark Mehta (949) 585-6888/(949) 597-0249	
10	<b>Newport Auto Center</b> (9) 445 E. Pacific Coast Highway Newport Beach 92660-6133 Website: newportautocenter.com		\$176.4 19%	781 20%	504 13%	13 6	Bentley, Porsche	AutoNation	AutoNation Tim Tauber (949) 673-0900/(949) 675-0634	
11	<b>Honda World Westminster</b> (8) 13600 Beach Blvd. Westminster 92683-3202 Website: ochondaworld.com Email: cbruno@ochondaworld.com		\$146.2 -13%	3,357 -19%	1,192 -17%	25 48	Honda	Comerica Bank, Honda Financial Services	William Piercey Chris Bruno (714) 890-8900/(714) 895-7274	
12	<b>Tustin Lexus</b> (NR) 45 Auto Center Drive Tustin 92782-8402 Website: tustinlexus.com		\$146.1 22%	1,817 25%	813 2%	16 46	Lexus	Comerica Bank	David Wilson/DWWTL Inc. Anthony R. D'Amato (714) 544-4800/(714) 544-4937	
13	<b>Audi South Coast</b> (14) 1425 Auto Mall Drive Santa Ana 92705-4733 Website: audisouthcoast.com Email: ckoeller@penskeautomotive.com		\$140.8 28%	1,427 26%	863 38%	13 37	Audi	VCI	Penske Automotive Group Gary Stone (657) 231-5500/(714) 835-0881	
14	<b>South Coast Toyota</b> (15) 1966 Harbor Blvd. Costa Mesa 92627-2670 Website: southcoasttoyota.com		\$123.6 18%	2,222 10%	1,056 12%	23 51	Toyota	Comerica Bank	David Wilson Chad Roberts (949) 722-2000/(949) 764-4121	
15	<b>Tuttle-Click Ford Lincoln</b> (12) 43 Auto Center Drive Irvine 92618-2802 Website: tuttleclickford.com		\$121.8 6%	1,110 -4%	412 -4%	20 30	Ford, Lincoln	Chase Bank	Tuttle-Click Automotive Group Johnson King (949) 472-5200	

Sales volume is total dealer revenue and includes cars sold, parts, service and body shop.

Abbreviations: NA: not applicable; NR: not ranked

Note: To the best of our knowledge, this information is accurate as of press time. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy and thoroughness of the list, omissions and typographical errors sometimes occur. Unless otherwise noted, the information on this list was provided by the companies themselves. List may not be reprinted without permission of the editor. Photos show the general

manager listed.

<sup>(1)</sup> Business Journal estimate

Researched by Meghan Kliever

# THE LIST AUTO DEALERS

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RANKED BY SALES VOLUME

Rank	Company Prev. Rank	Company logo	Sales volume for 12 months ended June 30, 2021 (millions) •yearly % change	New cars sold for 12 months ended June 30, 2021 •yearly % change	Used cars sold for 12 months ended June 30, 2021 •yearly % change	Salespersons •Service personnel	Make(s) sold	Principal financing source(s)	Owner(s)/Parent company •General manager •Phone/fax	
16	<b>Tuttle-Click Chrysler Jeep Dodge Ram Irvine</b> (19) 40 Auto Center Drive Irvine 92618-2802 Website: tuttleclickchrysler.com		\$121.5 42%	1,763 33%	318 1%	22 23	Dodge, Chrysler, Jeep, Ram	Chase Bank	Tuttle-Click Automotive Group Ahmad Soleman (888) 557-5715	
17	<b>Elmore Toyota</b> (16) 15300 Beach Blvd. Westminster 92683-6296 Website: elmoretoyota.com Email: shannon@elmoretoyota.com		\$115.3 14%	1,728 -3%	1,448 30%	23 42	Toyota	Toyota Financial Services	Judy Elmore Judy Elmore (714) 894-3322/(714) 379-6412	
18	<b>AutoNation Toyota Buena Park</b> (20) 6400 Beach Blvd. Buena Park 90621-2813 Website: autonationtoyotabuenapark.com Email: shind@autonation.com		\$107.5 33%	1,743 39%	1,244 -8%	24 8	Toyota	AutoNation	AutoNation Juan Guzman (714) 522-6144/(714) 224-5270	
19	<b>Santa Margarita Ford</b> (18) 30031 Santa Margarita Parkway Rancho Santa Margarita 92688-3601 Website: santamargaritaford.com Email: sales@santamargaritaford.com		\$106 13%	1,396 5%	677 -10%	17 34	Ford	Comerica Bank	Santa Margarita Auto Group James Graham (949) 459-6800	
20	<b>Freeway Honda</b> (17) 1505 Auto Mall Drive Santa Ana 92705-4738 Website: freewayhonda.com		\$102.8 5%	2,191 -11%	1,018 5%	20 44	Honda	Comerica Bank	David Wilson Derrick Van Nieulande (714) 547-3555/(714) 667-5160	
21	<b>Santa Margarita Toyota</b> (24) 22722 Avenida Empresa Rancho Santa Margarita 92688-2150 Website: smtoyota.com Email: ebarcelo@smtoyota.com		\$94.9 57%	918 -17%	348 -46%	21 44	Toyota	Comerica Bank	Santa Margarita Auto Group Ephraim Barcelo <sup>(2)</sup> (949) 766-2000	
22	<b>AutoNation Ford Tustin</b> (22) 2 Auto Center Drive Tustin 92782-8401 Website: autonationfordtustin.com		\$87 35%	911 27%	1,134 37%	20 5	Ford	AutoNation	AutoNation Scott Clement (714) 832-3300	
23	<b>Hardin Honda</b> (13) 1381 S. Auto Center Drive Anaheim 92806-5612 Website: hardinhonda.com Email: rhardin@hardin.com		\$84.9 -24%	2,154 -33%	857 -28%	11 47	Honda	Honda Financial Services	Dennis Hardin/Hardin Automotive Roberta Hardin Bechtloff (714) 533-6200	
24	<b>AutoNation Honda Costa Mesa</b> (23) 2888 Harbor Blvd. Costa Mesa 92626-3911 Email: wesseim@autonation.com		\$75.3 21%	1,419 -2%	1,118 54%	19 4	Honda	AutoNation	AutoNation Brian Walker (714) 436-5050	
25	<b>Weir Canyon Honda</b> (21) 8323 E. La Palma Ave. Anaheim 92808-2511 Website: weircanyonhonda.com		\$74.8 10%	1,482 -4%	903 6%	19 29	Honda	Comerica Bank	David Wilson Michael Russell (714) 777-3300/(714) 777-2924	
26	<b>Mazda of Orange</b> (NR) 1350 W. Katella Ave. Orange 92867-3524 Website: mazdaoforange.com		\$66 64%	1,368 66%	651 20%	16 18	Mazda	Comerica Bank	David Wilson David Johnson (888) 850-0266/(714) 516-9550	
27	<b>Subaru Orange Coast</b> (27) 1350 Auto Mall Drive Santa Ana 92705-4753 Website: subaruorangeoast.com Email: ckoeller@penskeautomotive.com		\$60.1 5%	1,249 -4%	308 26%	9 32	Subaru	Subaru Auto Finance	Penske Automotive Group Jim Parsons (657) 231-5400/(714) 835-0881	
28	<b>Tuttle-Click Tustin Inc.</b> (26) 40 Auto Center Drive Tustin 92782-8401 Website: tuttleclicktustincjd.com		\$59.7 5%	743 -17%	252 15%	17 21	Chrysler, Jeep, Dodge, Ram	Chase Bank	Tuttle-Click Automotive Group Al Dimont (888) 313-3903	
29	<b>AutoNation Infiniti Tustin</b> (25) 33 Auto Center Drive Tustin 92782-8402 Website: autonationinfinititustin.net Email: gilevskij@autonation.com		\$54.3 -6%	453 -40%	888 32%	13 3	Infiniti	AutoNation	AutoNation Zayn Abdulkader (714) 832-6111	
30	<b>Hardin Buick GMC</b> (28) 1321 S. Auto Center Drive Anaheim 92806-5612 Website: hardinbuickgmc.com		\$53 <sup>(1)</sup> NA	620 <sup>(1)</sup> NA	630 <sup>(1)</sup> NA	10 <sup>(1)</sup> 20 <sup>(1)</sup>	Buick, GMC	GM Financial	Hardin Auto Group Jared Hardin (714) 594-7911	

Sales volume is total dealer revenue and includes cars sold, parts, service and body shop.

Abbreviations: NA: not applicable; NR: not ranked

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<sup>(2)</sup> managing partner

<sup>(1)</sup> Business Journal estimate

Researched by Meghan Kliever



# Inventory Constraints Put the Squeeze on Automakers

## Supply Chain Issues, Chip Shortage Woes

By KARI HAMANAKA

Cox Automotive Inc. economists employed a bit of humor in their recent third-quarter forecast presentation, dubbing Depeche Mode's "Just Can't Get Enough" as the best track to describe the current vehicle supply situation.

Funny. Although, automakers likely can't chuckle much as inventory—and the lack of it—continue to hamper sales in OC and across the country.

The largest automakers headquartered here saw their sales slump in September, against the year-ago period.

Fountain Valley-based **Hyundai Motor America Inc.**, OC's largest automaker by annual vehicle sales and headquartered here, reported a 2% decline to 53,800 vehicles sold last month.

**Randy Parker**, senior vice president of national sales at Hyundai, applauded dealerships' work in navigating through the current challenges.

"Hyundai dealerships continue to do an outstanding job of working with customers during this challenging inventory environment, resulting in market share gains for the brand," Parker said in a statement.

Sister company Irvine-based **Kia America** also remained upbeat, despite the 4.7% decline in September sales from a year ago to 52,906 vehicles.



Hyundai's 2022 Kona electric vehicle

"Kia sales continued to break records and build upon the momentum seen since the start of the year, despite the ongoing supply chain issues facing the industry," Vice President of Sales Operations **Eric Watson** said.

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### Normality on Hold

Automakers will need to practice stoicism with economists not forecasting a return to any semblance of normality until 2023.

That's the word from economists at Atlanta industry researcher Cox Automotive, who are revising their 2021 seasonally adjusted annual rate, an industry figure used to take into account the impact of seasonality on sales, forecast from 16.5 million to 15.5 million. The forecast for 2022 is 16.3 million.

While inventories will continue to improve, there will be "no return to 'normal' until 2023—if ever," Cox posited in the company's recent presentation.

### Local Activity

The group of automakers with local offices are still up in sales on a year-over-year basis when looking at the 12-month period ended June 30, according to this year's Business Journal list.

Although, the figures are not necessarily a fair indication of performance given the year-ago period counts an unprecedented, pandemic year.

That said, OC's cluster of automotive manufacturers, which total eight, reported U.S. vehicle sales of 3.8 million for the June period, up 18.5% from the prior year.

**Toyota Motor North America Inc.**, with an

office in Irvine and headquarters in Japan, sold the largest number of vehicles, 1.9 million, in the period.

Fountain Valley luxury automotive company **Genesis Motor America LLC** saw the largest percentage gain, with sales up nearly 50% to 28,142. The increase accounts for newer additions to its lineup, such as the **GV80** SUV and **GV70** compact SUV, both of which led vehicle sales in September.

Despite the shortage of chips and other parts, segments such as midsize and compact sport utility vehicles have helped lift manufacturers' sales.

Electrics also continue to gain ground nationally.

Cox reported **Tesla's Model X** crossover saw sales up 168.2% in the third quarter, compared to a year ago.

Hyundai's **Kona** compact SUV also saw a jump in sales, up 83.9% in the same period.

Even in a rugged inventory environment, local manufacturers' OC headcounts have ballooned since the last time the Business Journal surveyed the companies here, with a 46.5% spike from a year ago to 3,468 OC workers in September.

The run up is led by Irvine electric vehicle startup **Rivian Automotive LLC**, with a workforce that surged 333.3% to 1,300 as of September as the company readied for the release of its **R1T** truck, which began deliveries last month, and the upcoming **R1S** SUV.

The automaker filed paperwork to go public in August, with the documents becoming public at the start of the month. See page 1 for more on Rivian's IPO. ■

## THE LIST AUTOMAKERS



**DIANA DAVIS**  
General Manager, LA Region  
Toyota Motor North America Inc.



**JEFF GUYTON**  
CEO and President  
Mazda North American Operations



**CLAUDIA MARQUEZ**  
COO  
Genesis Motor America LLC



**JOSÉ MUÑOZ**  
CEO and President  
Hyundai Motor America



**RJ SCARINGE**  
CEO  
Rivian Automotive Inc.



**SEUNGKYU 'SEAN' YOON**  
CEO and President  
Kia Motors America Inc.



# THE LIST AUTOMAKERS

RANKED BY NUMBER OF OC EMPLOYEES

Rank	Company •Address •Rank	Company logo	OC employees •yearly % change	U.S. vehicle sales for 12 months ended June 30, 2021 •yearly % change	•OC authorized dealers •U.S. authorized dealers	Operations in OC	Parent company •Headquarters	Top local official(s) •Title •Phone/fax	
1 (3)	<b>Rivian Automotive Inc.</b> 14600 Myford Road Irvine 92606-1005 Website: rivian.com Email: customerservice@rivian.com		1,300 333%	0 NA	0 0	Vehicle engineering and design, electronics, software, propulsion, battery systems, supply chain and logistics, IT, as well as teams building and operating customer-facing platforms	Rivian Automotive Inc. Irvine	RJ Scaringe CEO (888) 748-4261	
2 (1)	<b>Mazda North American Operations</b> 200 Spectrum Center Drive, Ste. 100 Irvine 92618-5004 Website: mazdausa.com		541 -1%	339,374 26%	5 544	North American headquarters, research and development, design, and Western region operations	Mazda Motor Corp. Hiroshima, Japan	Jeff Guyton CEO/president (949) 727-1990/(949) 727-6813	
3 (2)	<b>Hyundai Motor America</b> 10550 Talbert Ave. Fountain Valley 92708-6031 Website: hyundaiusa.com Email: consumeraffairs@hmausa.com		520 10%	756,807 21%	6 827	Hyundai Motor America and Hyundai Motor North America headquarters, Hyundai Motor America Western Region	Hyundai Motor Company Seoul, South Korea	José Muñoz global COO, Hyundai Motor Company/ CEO, president, Hyundai Motor North America/CEO, president, Hyundai Motor America (714) 965-3000/(714) 965-3861	
4 (5)	<b>Kia Motors America Inc.</b> 111 Peters Canyon Road Irvine 92606-1790 Website: kia.com		386 16%	701,279 22%	3 700	North American headquarters, sales, marketing, consumer affairs, finance, human resources, legal, product planning, corporate communications	Hyundai Kia Automotive Group Seoul, South Korea	SeungKyu 'Sean' Yoon CEO/president (949) 468-4800/(949) 468-4515	
5 (4)	<b>Karma Automotive LLC</b> 9950 Jeronimo Road Irvine 92618-2014 Website: karmaautomotive.com Email: info@karmaautomotive.com		350 <sup>(1)</sup> NA	380 <sup>(1)</sup> NA	1 26	Global headquarters, engineering, design, customization, retail, customer treatment	Wanxiang Group Corp. China	Lance Zhou CEO (714) 723-3474	
6 (6)	<b>Toyota Motor North America Inc.</b> 2 Banting Irvine 92618-3602 Website: toyota.com; lexus.com		161 0%	1,932,351 15%	11 1,240	Toyota Los Angeles regional office (Irvine), Lexus Western regional office and training facilities (Irvine), Caltex Design Research studio (Newport Beach)	Toyota Motor Corp. <sup>(2)</sup> Toyota, Aichi, Japan	Diana Davis general manager, LA region (949) 727-2700/(949) 727-2810	
7 (7)	<b>Isuzu Commercial Truck of America Inc.</b> 1400 S. Douglass Road, Ste. 100 Anaheim 92806-6904 Website: isuzucv.com Email: brian.tabel@icta-us.com		160 3%	26,350 10%	1 301	North American headquarters	Isuzu Motors Ltd. Anaheim	Shaun Skinner president, America, Canada (714) 935-9418	
8 (8)	<b>Genesis Motor America LLC</b> 10550 Talbert Ave. Fountain Valley 92708-6031 Website: genesis.com		50 <sup>(1)</sup> NA	28,142 50%	2 331	North American headquarters, North American design center	Hyundai Motor America Inc. Fountain Valley	Claudia Marquez COO (714) 965-3000	

Abbreviations: NA: not applicable

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<sup>(1)</sup> Business Journal estimate

<sup>(2)</sup> Toyota and Lexus are owned by Toyota Motor Corp.

Researched by Meghan Kiewer