

Stoneridge closes contract with Toyota and wants to expand supply to automakers

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(Translated from Portuguese to English)

Stoneridge Brazil is a major automotive equipment manufacturer related to driver assistance, such as instrument panels, infotainment centers, tracking and parking sensor systems. This, in fact, deserves special mention, since the company, since last October, supplies the item as original factory equipment (OEM, from English Original Equipment Manufacturers) for Toyota's Yaris line.

Rickyson Pinelli, head commercial OEM / aftermarket from Stoneridge Brazil recalls that the partnership with the Japanese-based automaker is old, started approximately ten years ago, and that this is the third time that the company joins the Toyota production line sensors for special versions of the compact Etios and Corolla). "This proves that the previous experiences were very successful", says the executive.

Now, Stoneridge is responsible for the parking sensors for the entire Yaris line - hatch and sedan. The contract is an important validation for the company, which seeks to gain market share in OEM supply.

"There are a series of parameters and technical standards that need to be strictly adhered to when we seek to supply an assembler, under penalty of failure. When we talk about Toyota, the challenge is even greater, since the company has very high quality and excellence parameters", remembers Pinelli.

He continues: "Many people imagine that the sensor only needs to indicate the distance of the car in relation to a wall", says Rickyson Pinelli. The executive explains that the device is much more complex than it initially appears: "There are many other requests, such as minimum height of obstacles, detection of moving objects, coverage area, need for triangulation of sensor capsules, level of information accuracy, among many others", he explains.

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The fact that Stoneridge is the only manufacturer of parking sensors installed in the country represents advantages for the automaker, such as the prompt service in case of need (both commercial and engineering) or exchange rate amortization - a very important item, especially in times like the current. But, as Pinelli recalls, no car manufacturer closes a deal with a supplier just because it is installed locally.

“It is essential to be competitive, whether in terms of cost or technology, even when competing with suppliers from other countries”, he says.

For Stoneridge, the new contract with Toyota also represents an important step in the preparation for the coming years as there are studies for mandatory that all cars produced in the country be equipped with parking sensors. Being an OEM supplier right now will provide very important strategic advantages, so that the company is fully qualified to meet the demands that the market will demand in the future.

According to Luciano Leite, Toyota's regional service parts, accessories and project planning manager for Latin America, there are chances of this partnership growing. “We are starting a new era, adding even more value to our products by personalizing our vehicles. Toyota started this new project in October and intends to expand further in the coming years. The partnership with Stoneridge guarantees excellence in the quality of our brand with genuine Toyota products”, he said.

And the organization has been preparing for these new demands for some time: Stoneridge is finalizing an investment of R \$ 15 million in its factory, located in Manaus (AM). Although it is also active in the supply - as OEM - of instrument panels, telematics modules, audio equipment and infotainment centers, the company works to, in the short and medium term, expand its client portfolio in this area, in addition to joining in the tachograph segment, in which the company has an important participation in Europe.

In addition, Stoneridge Brazil is part of the Stoneridge Inc. group, holder of the Pósitron brand, which is present in the tracking markets, developing solutions for corporate customers and end consumers, and in the aftermarket, a segment in which it has a significant participation with alarm systems , blockers, multimedia centers, parking sensors and reverse cameras, among other products.

In a slightly more distant future, Stoneridge Brazil should invest in Mirror Eye, camera technology intended for use in commercial vehicles that replaces rear-view mirrors, providing more security (the system provides clear images, regardless of the lighting conditions and the climate, in addition to covering a wider field of view), convenience when maneuvering and fuel economy. Because they are smaller, the cameras interfere less in the vehicle's aerodynamics. Stoneridge Brazil may bring the system from any of its units abroad or produce the equipment at its plant in Amazonas.

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