
MICHAELS LAW GROUP

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JURY TEACHES TOYOTA A LESSON ON HOW TO TREAT ITS SUPPLIERS

Newport Beach, California (August 21, 2009) – Ending nearly two years of litigation, an Orange County jury recently voted unanimously in favor of SVP International and against Toyota Motor Sales USA, awarding significant damages to the Toyota supplier.

SVP was hired by Toyota in August 2007 to design and engineer a high-performance version of the Tundra truck that would serve as Toyota's entrance into the high-performance vehicle market. This case was of national importance, as it was Toyota's first attempt at entering the high-performance segment. SVP expected that after the performance Tundra was completed, it would build other high-performance vehicles for Toyota, possibly including the premier Lexus brand.

SVP, a company founded by former race-car driver Steve Saleen and entrepreneur Wayne Grafton, was selected by Toyota through a lengthy competitive bid process. Yet, after Toyota contracted with SVP, and after SVP began working on the project, Toyota cancelled the project with SVP and later cancelled the program altogether. When Toyota refused to recognize SVP's contract or any of the work that SVP had performed, Michaels Law Group filed suit against the manufacturer in the Orange County Superior Court.

Jonathan Michaels, founding member of Michaels Law Group, had the following to say: "What was most disappointing about this case is the way that Toyota handled it. They knew that a contract for the project had been issued, and that SVP had begun working on the project and had incurred expenses, yet they completely disregarded SVP altogether."

The jury apparently agreed with Michaels' assessment. After a 4-week trial, the jury returned a unanimous verdict against Toyota, awarding significant damages to SVP. "This case is important in that it shows that small businesses have a voice," says Michaels. "Toyota is not above the law, and we are not afraid to prove it to them."

Following trial, Toyota entered into a confidential settlement agreement with SVP, whereby SVP agreed to not disclose the amount of the jury verdict.

ABOUT MICHAELS LAW GROUP

Located in the heart of Newport Beach, Michaels Law Group is a full service business law firm, specializing in complex litigation and advanced business transactions, with a specialty in the automotive industry.

Founding member Jonathan Michaels, an avid car collector and automotive enthusiast, has litigated cases against nearly every automotive manufacturer and has been involved in structuring some of the most significant automotive transactions to date. With this unique background, Michaels Law Group has become well-known in the automotive industry as the “go to” firm for business transactions and automotive-related disputes.

If you'd like to schedule an interview with Jonathan Michaels, please contact Kelly Pion at 949.581.6900 or email Kelly at kpion@michaelslawgroup.com.