

## Economic Engines Honoree

Category: Products



## Earnhardt Automotive Group

[www.earnhardt.com](http://www.earnhardt.com)



Photos: Earnhardt Automotive Group



Tex Earnhardt began selling cars in the Valley in 1951.

The Earnhardt Automotive Group employs approximately 1,300 people in Arizona and has an additional 100 employees in Texas.

### Year Established

1951

### AZ Employees

1,300

has grown to encompass Toyota, Scion, Mazda, BMW, Dodge, Ford, Honda, Nissan and Hyundai, with dealerships in Mesa, Chandler, Gilbert, Avondale and El Paso, Texas. The group's newest dealership is San Tan Hyundai at the Santan Motorplex in Gilbert.

Earnhardt now serves as the company's chairman of the board, while his sons, Hal and Jim, are president and treasurer, respectively.

The company fuels the economies of Arizona and Texas through the sales of cars, parts and services. In 2007, the combined Earnhardt Automotive Group dealerships sold nearly 30,000 vehicles, contributing a significant amount of sales tax revenues to state and local communities. It also creates jobs, employing approximately 1,300 people in Arizona and an additional 100 in Texas. The company generates temporary jobs and additional tax revenue each time the family builds a new dealership.

"In good times as well as challenging markets (such as today's environment), they have maintained a focus on satisfied customers, resulting in their continuing contribution to Arizona's economic growth," says Carleen Shilling, partner in charge of tax services at Eide Bailly.

The Earnhardt Automotive Group is active in several organizations. It is a member of the Arizona Automobile Dealers Association and the National Automobile Dealers Association, as well as several chambers of commerce in the communities it serves.

Drive down any street in the Valley, and it won't take long before you find a car with a license plate frame that has the words "No Bull" emblazoned across the bottom. The trademark slogan of the Earnhardt Automotive Group has helped make the Earnhardt family and their business a well-known and respected entity in the Valley and the automotive industry.

Established in 1951 by Tex Earnhardt, the Earnhardt Automotive Group initially began as a Ford dealership located at Rural and Baseline roads in Tempe. In the 1980s, Earnhardt was asked by the CEO of Chrysler Corporation to open a Chrysler dealership. Today, the family business



Tex Earnhardt and his steer, Rex, have become cultural icons in the Valley.