



Virtual reality

The very first digital Audi showroom in Asia—**Audi City Beijing** opened its doors in February. Covering 2,100 square meters, the cyberstore offers a virtual, hands-on experience of the premium brand as well as a chance to configure your dream car.

By Gerd Blank (copy) & Marvin Zilm (photos)

On your first visit to Beijing, you're in for a surprise—that is, if you're expecting to see streets crammed with bicycles. Those days are long gone. Once a pedal-powered people, the Chinese have in recent years been transformed into a nation of motorists. Rising prosperity means that an increasing proportion of the population can afford a car. Heavier and heavier traffic may be a major challenge for Beijing's city planners but for many of the roughly 20 million residents, this new-found mobility and the greater freedom it brings is something they refuse to relinquish.

While just a few years ago buying a car was way beyond the reach of young couples, it's now one of the first big decisions they face and must be carefully mulled over. Eve Wang and her boyfriend Ken Zhao attach great importance to quality and have already done their homework by consulting friends and the Internet. For some time now, they've been toying with the idea of buying an Audi—a popular choice in China where the four rings is a highly desirable brand. In 2012 alone, the Ingolstadt carmaker sold 30 percent more cars in China than in the previous year. Models with plenty of horses under the hood such as the Audi A6, Audi A8, Audi Q5 and Audi Q3, but also the Audi A1 Sportback, move fastest out of dealerships. Yet with such a wide palette of attractive options, the couple won't have time to test drive all of them. The solution is Audi City Beijing, which opened on Changan Street just off Tiananmen Square in February.

At a total of 2,100 square meters Audi is not only presenting 14 current models: On both floors of the interactive showroom visitors can view the entire model range of the brand digitally and customize vehicles according to their own wishes. For Eve, who works in the hotel industry, and her companion, the visit to Audi City Beijing is like a trip to automotive wonderland. On so called powerwalls, that stretch almost from floor to ceiling, cars can be selected and explored interactively. In addition to transmission and chassis animations, more technical features are presented. Thanks to the dynamic acoustic system, the multimedia immersion is rounded out with >>



Fuel consumption and CO₂ emissions figures can be found on page 23.



01



02

the perfect soundtrack—including the real-life engine sound of the car selected. The multi-touch table makes putting together their dream car from the several million possible configurations feel almost like a game. From exterior color to optional extras, every selection or alteration is immediately visible. And with a mere flick of the wrist, the personalized car is then projected life-size onto the screens. The couple can rotate the car 360 degrees. Eve Wang is totally taken with the experience: “I have every detail of the interior laid out before me.”

But the interactive showroom is much more than just a thrilling amusement park for grown-ups. Situated in trendy locations, Audi City is a kind of real-world cyberstore that serves as a hub for fans of the four rings to pique further interest in the brand. Following London, Beijing is the second city to become home to this exceptional retail format. “With its megacities, Asia is the perfect location for this new high-tech showroom,” said Luca de Meo, Member of the Board of Management for Sales and Marketing at AUDI AG at the opening event.

The satisfaction on the faces of Eve Wang and Ken Zhao as they leave the glass building is proof positive—the concept has taken off. The visit to Audi City Beijing has brought the couple much closer to reaching a decision on which first car to buy. They now know for sure it will be an Audi. “But we haven’t managed to agree on the model yet,” laughs Wang. To help them through the final steps, they have been given a USB stick with their chosen configurations which they can review at home at their leisure. So when in future friends are looking to buy a car, Eve Wang can be relied on to recommend a visit to Audi City. “And, of course, I’ll be sure to join them.” //

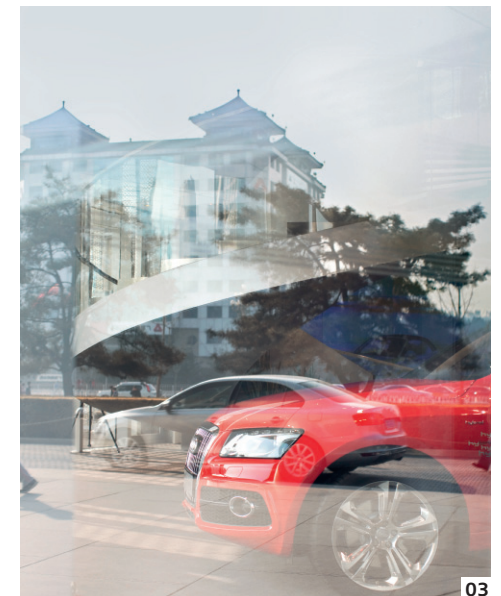
Audi City

The Beijing interactive showroom opened on February 1. Following the London cyberstore, this is the second retail outlet of its kind to allow Audi customers and enthusiasts to explore models and configure their dream car using multimedia. The third Audi City is set to welcome visitors in Berlin later this year.

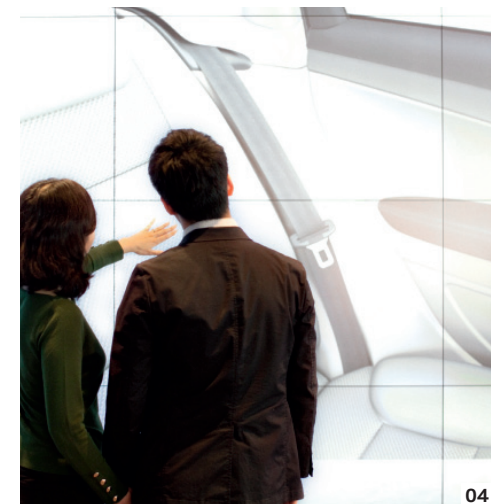
 Discover Audi City on our exclusive website microsites.audi.com/audi-city/en/index.html.

 Watch videos of the celebrations at the Audi City Beijing opening on the Audi YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/audi.

Audi A1 Sportback fuel consumption urban/extra-urban/combined (in l/100 km): 7.5–4.4/ 5.1–3.4/ 5.9–3.8. CO₂ emissions combined (in g/km): 139–99, EU5. Audi A6 fuel consumption urban/extra-urban/combined (in l/100 km): 10.8–5.9/6.6–4.4/8.2–4.9. CO₂ emissions combined (in g/km): 190–129, EU5. Audi A8 fuel consumption urban/extra-urban/combined (in l/100 km): 13.0–6.4/7.3–5.6/9.4–6.3. CO₂ emissions combined (in g/km): 219–147, EU5. Audi Q3 fuel consumption urban/extra-urban/combined (in l/100 km): 10.2–6.2/6.4–4.7/7.7–5.2. CO₂ emissions combined (in g/km): 179–137, EU5. Audi Q5 fuel consumption urban/extra-urban/combined (in l/100 km): 11.4–6.0/7.1–4.9/8.5–5.3. CO₂ emissions combined (in g/km): 199–139, EU5.



03



04

01 After talking about their expectations, visitors can configure their dream car. **02** Prime location: Audi City Beijing is situated in Changan Street just off Tiananmen Square. **03** The Audi City Beijing showroom features 14 of the latest models. **04** Customers can view their chosen configuration from every angle on one of six powerwalls that stretch almost from floor to ceiling. **05** Spread across two floors, the display area provides ample room for lavish presentation of the vehicles.



05