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Audi Q3 Trans China Tour 2011 successfully reaches finish line

Beijing (ots) -

- 20 cars, 160 drivers and 5,700 kilometers in 16 stages
- Participants experienced the many different faces of China
- Versatile features of the Audi Q3 proved their mettle
- China is the biggest market for Audi, with growing potential

The Audi Q3 Trans China Tour 2011 has successfully reached the finish line. The 20 cars reached the destination in Shenzhen near Hong Kong yesterday after covering the 5,700-kilometer route. During the tour's 16 stages the roughly 160 participants experienced the dependability of the Audi Q3 in every situation, from drives through the country's dynamic metropolitan centers to the unpaved roads in spectacular mountain landscapes. The Trans China Tour proved the all-round qualities of the new compact SUV while showing the many diverse faces of the country that is now the most important sales market for the Ingolstadt-based carmaker.

The Audi Q3 Trans China Tour presented the rich and fascinating bounty that is China. The route for the first group of participants led from Beijing through the rapidly developing million-plus cities in the east like Jinan and Qingdao, and on to the sprawling metropolis of Shanghai with its spectacular skyline and futuristic urban freeway network. With its compact dimensions, high dynamics and clarity of design, the Audi Q3 proved ideal for the snarled traffic on the streets of the major Chinese cities.

The second group took over the cars directly on Shanghai's famous Bund boardwalk and continued the tour southward. Traveling on the mostly new and extremely modern highways, the Audi Q3 provided superb comfort over long distances. The route led along the eastern coast of China through regions with highly dynamic economies and rapidly growing affluence - which also highlighted the potential for further development of the market for premium cars in this country. Shenzhen was the final destination for this stage of the tour. Within less than two decades this area has developed into a metropolis with more than 14 million residents. The third and fourth groups ultimately were also able to experience the robust character of the new Audi SUV and its quattro permanent four-wheel drive in off-road conditions. The route led from the vast industrial regions surrounding Shenzhen over mostly smaller roads and pathways in the impressive rural region around Guilin, with its unique Karst mountain range and expansive rice fields. The participants reached the final destination of the Trans China Tour yesterday as they arrived in the metropolis of Hong Kong.

Each of the 20 Audi Q3 models had covered around 5,700 kilometers during the entire tour. Despite the unfamiliar surroundings there were no serious problems with keeping on the right path: the MMI navigation system in the Audi Q3 knows about three million kilometers of China's roads, and even small streets are digitized. All of the navigation systems offered by Audi in China have been adapted extensively to the requirements of highway traffic there. This development work was carried out in Audi's own Infotainment Tec Center (ITC) in Beijing.

The ITC is representative of how intensively Audi adapts its models for the specific challenges of this market. China has become the most important sales market for the Audi brand; around 300,000 units are targeted for the current year. Between January and September 2011, Audi delivered 223,631 cars in China, which amounts to an increase of 29 percent compared to the same period last year. This record result clearly confirms the brand's position as market leader in the premium segment in China. The locally produced Audi A4 L, A6 L and Q5 models lead their respective market segments by considerable margins. Audi is currently represented in the country by almost 180 dealerships. In coming years the network will be doubled to around 400 support bases.

Starting in 2012 the new Audi Q3 will be added to the product range offered in the Chinese market; plans call for the car to be produced locally at a later point at the Audi plant in Changchun, about 1,000 kilometers north of Beijing. The SUV segment is booming in China far above the market average and the compact Audi Q3 is the perfect match, especially for younger and female customers - a target group that is also growing significantly.

Audi has been present on the Chinese market since 1988, and produces the Audi A4 L, the Audi A6 L and the Audi Q5 in Changchun in a joint venture with its partner FAW. The Audi Q3 will also be built in Changchun in the future. In addition, Audi has had great success with import cars from the recently introduced Audi A1 to the flagship Audi A8L W12.

Note: Additional information, photographs and videos are available for downloading at <http://www.audi-q3-trans-china-tour.com/en> and at <http://www.audi-mediaservices.com/en>.

The Audi Group delivered around 1,092,400 cars of the Audi brand to customers in 2010. The Company posted revenue of EUR 35.4 billion and an operating profit of EUR 3.3 billion in 2010. In the first half of 2011, the Audi Group sold 652,970 vehicles bearing the four rings worldwide and achieved record figures in terms of revenue (EUR 21.5 billion) and operating profit (EUR 2.5 billion). Audi produces vehicles in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Changchun (China) and Brussels (Belgium). Aurangabad in India saw the start of CKD production of the Audi A6 at the end of 2007, of the Audi A4 in early October 2008 and of the Audi Q5 in July 2010. Production of the new Audi A1 has been running at the Brussels plant since May 2010. The Audi Q3 has been built in Martorell (Spain) since June 2011. The Company is active in more than 100 markets worldwide. AUDI AG's wholly owned subsidiaries include AUDI HUNGARIA MOTOR Kft., Automobili Lamborghini Holding S.p.A. in Sant'Agata Bolognese (Italy) and quattro GmbH in Neckarsulm. Audi currently employs around 60,000 people worldwide,

including around 46,600 in Germany. Between 2011 and 2015 the brand with the four rings is planning to invest more than EUR 11 billion, mainly in new products, in order to sustain the Company's technological lead embodied in its "Vorsprung durch Technik" slogan. By 2015, Audi plans to increase the number of models in its portfolio to 42.

Audi has long been fulfilling its social responsibility on many levels - with the aim of making the future worth living for generations to come. The basis for Audi's lasting success is therefore formed by environmental protection, the conservation of resources, international competitiveness and a forward-looking human resources policy. One example of AUDI AG's commitment to environmental issues is the newly established Audi Environmental Foundation. Under the heading of "Audi balanced mobility," the Company is directing its activities toward a major goal - comprehensive CO2-neutral mobility.

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Contact:

Product/Technology Communications

Stefanie Höcker

Tel: +49 841 89-38053

e-mail: stefanie.hoecker@audi.de

www.audi-mediaservices.com

Product/Technology Communications

Harry H. Meier

Tel: +49 841 89-42480

e-mail: harry.meier@audi.de

www.audi-mediaservices.com

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