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After a successful year 2012: Audi intends to continue its growth in 2013 (BILD)



Ingolstadt (ots) -

- Approximately 1.45 million automobiles of the Audi brand were shipped in 2012; EUR 48.8 billion revenue, EUR 5.4 billion operating profit and an operating return on sales of 11.0 percent.
- Rupert Stadler, CEO of AUDI AG: "We surpassed our targets in 2012 and added an attractive premium brand, Ducati, to our brand portfolio."
- Audi continues its record investment program: approximately EUR 11 billion until 2015 for new technologies and innovations and for the expansion of worldwide manufacturing structures.
- New Audi employees: In Germany alone, the company plans to recruit approximately 1,500 people and will offer 700 young people an apprenticeship.

The Audi Group surpassed its targets for the year 2012. Despite the significant effects of the debt crisis in some countries and a contracting overall market in Europe, the company posted record figures for production, shipments, revenue and earnings. In the past financial year, the brand with the four rings sold more than 1.45 million automobiles and increased its revenue to EUR 48.8 billion. The Audi Group was also able to increase its operating profit to EUR 5.4 billion, a record result in the company's history so far. In the full year, the operating return on sales of 11.0 percent was above the strategic target corridor of eight to ten percent. In 2013, the company intends to continue its growth and gain additional customers. In addition, the automobile manufacturer from Ingolstadt plans to recruit approximately 1,500 new employees in Germany alone, and will offer 700 young people an apprenticeship or traineeship.

Audi presented all of its key figures for the past financial year at its annual press conference held today at the company's headquarters in Ingolstadt and attended by more than 300 international journalists. Rupert Stadler, the CEO of AUDI AG, stated: "2012 was a very successful year for us. We surpassed our targets and added an attractive premium brand, Ducati, to our brand portfolio. We intend to continue our growth in 2013 and with two new plants this year, we will create the right conditions to reinforce our claim to leadership over the long term." As of 2016, Audi will produce the next generation of the Q5 at its new plant in San José Chiapa, Mexico.

2012 was another year of record figures for Audi: Worldwide, the company shipped 1,455,123 automobiles of the Audi brand (2011: 1,302,659). That represents growth of 11.7 percent or approximately 152,500 additional customers. The brand with four

rings increased its revenue by 10.6 percent to EUR 48,771 million (2011: EUR 44,096 million).

Despite the increasingly difficult economic situation, the Audi Group slightly increased its operating profit to the new record figure of EUR 5,380 million in 2012 (2011: EUR 5,348 million). The operating return on sales of 11.0 percent (2011: 12.1 percent) was once again significantly above the target corridor of eight to ten percent.

Distribution costs amounted to EUR 4,593 million in 2012 (2011: EUR 3,599 million). The increase compared with the prior year is due to the larger sales volume and higher marketing costs, as well as the market launch of additional models and the implementation of strategic sales concepts such as Audi City in London and Beijing.

The Audi Group's net financial income in the year under review amounted to €576 million (2011: EUR 692 million). As a result, the Group posted profit before tax of €5,956 million (2011: EUR 6,041 million).

The main return figures reflect the company's strong profitability. They demonstrate that the Audi Group continues to be one of the world's most successful automobile manufacturers. In addition to the operating return on sales of 11.0 percent, the return on sales before taxes reached the excellent level of 12.2 percent (2011: 13.7 percent). The return on capital was 30.9 percent (2011: 35.4 percent).

For Axel Strotbek, Board of Management Member for Finance and Organization at AUDI AG, the company's high profitability reflects the success of the growth strategy. The CFO regards investing in the future as evidence of farsighted management: "We already initiated the biggest investment program in our history in 2011. We now plan total investment averaging more than EUR 3.5 billion each year until 2015, in order to effectively pursue our growth path."

The company would not be able to meet its targets without highly motivated employees. The Board of Management therefore thanks all members of the Audi workforce for their efforts and commitment. Once again, the employees of AUDI AG will benefit from a profit share for last year: Employees at the German sites covered by collective pay agreements will receive an average profit share of EUR 8,030. For the year 2013, AUDI AG plans to recruit 1,500 additional employees in Germany alone. And once again, approximately 700 young people will start an apprenticeship or traineeship at Audi this year.

The Audi Group anticipates a slight increase in revenue in the years 2013 and 2014. The development of earnings will profit not only from the targeted growth in unit sales, but also from the continuous improvements in productivity and processes initiated in the past, as well as from efficient corporate structures. Despite high expenditure for new products and technologies - in particular to fulfill stricter CO2 regulations all over the world and investments to expand the international production network - the company anticipates an operating return on sales at the upper end of the strategic target corridor of eight to ten percent.

Further information: www.audi-mediaservices.com/apc2013

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