

AUTOMOTIVE

Audi hosts adventure seekers in the desert for Airbnb experience

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Audi partners with Airbnb for desert adventure experience

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

German automaker Audi is taking Emmy viewers on an adventure with an enticing trip to the desert as part of its sponsorship for the awards ceremony.

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During its sixth consecutive sponsorship of the Emmy Awards, **Audi** is teaming up with home-sharing site Airbnb for an advertisement it hopes will attract thrill seekers to want to drive its R8 Coupe vehicle through the desert. The television spot details Audi and Airbnb's partnership that allows adventurers to book an exclusive and coveted rental in the middle of Death Valley, CA, while also getting to drive the R8 Coupe on desert terrain.

"This is truly a one-of-a-kind experience because it turns a fantasy into reality," said Loren Angelo, vice president of marketing at **Audi of America**. "For a short time, we are handing over the keys to an architecturally stunning home and the award-winning 205 mph Audi R8 for a bucket-list worthy experience unlike any other on the planet."

Extreme marketing

Audi will be accepting the role as host for Airbnb customers looking to pair an exciting stay with a thrilling driving experience. Driving enthusiasts can book a trip to stay at the Rondolino Residence, located in Death Valley with no address.



Audi driving experience in the desert

Those that book the thrilling getaway will receive a ride from the Las Vegas McCarran International Airport with a luxury chauffeur, meals provided by a personal chef and an array of activities. Audi will let guests drive its R8 Coupe, accompanied by an experienced professional, off the road at top speeds throughout the desert terrain.

Drivers will be able to test out the Audi R8 Coupe at its full potential. The experience is priced at \$610 a night and guests are responsible for their own airfare.

Booking will be available after Sept. 18 and new dates will be announced throughout the month. Airbnb customers can book their stays on a first-come-first-serve basis starting at 6 p.m. PDT everyday.

Audi's experience is being showcased during Sept. 18's Emmy Awards ceremony, which the automaker is sponsoring, through a television spot. The Desolation spot depicts the story of a family living in the extraordinary environment of the desert at the Rondolino Residence but going about conventional tasks.



Audi's Desolation television spot

A father is shown walking out to get the newspaper in the middle of the desert, which is the front yard of the house. He walks back and casually reminds his kids not to play with scorpions as they hang out outside.

When his wife informs the protagonist that they are out of coffee, he rushes to his Audi R8 Coupe and speeds through the dessert to a small retail shack, kicking up dust along the way. He quickly realizes he forgot his wallet, and moments later his wife appears in a similar vehicle, bringing the wallet and a cloud of dust with her.

Audi R8 and Airbnb commercial – Desolation

Speeding up

Audi values innovation and adventure, and its marketing initiative reflects that. The automaker recently put more resources toward Formula E team ABT Schaeffler Audi Sport to ramp up its focus on electric mobility.

ABT Schaeffler has carried Audi's name since the 2014/2015 Formula E season, but starting in the 2016/2017 season, the automaker will give the team financial and technical support. As Audi looks to be a leader in electric vehicle production, having this increased association with its namesake team will help it raise awareness among fans of the sport ([see more](#)).

Audi also transformed the market with the first offering of a futuristic technology. The brand announced that select 2017 models built in June or later are equipped to vehicle-to-infrastructure communication technology.

The newfound capabilities will create a more relaxing environment for drivers and also gives Audi a head start in cultivating loyalty based on the burgeoning technology ([see more](#)).

"At the heart of this innovative partnership is Audi's ongoing commitment to work with likeminded, progressive

brands that provoke conversation," Ms. Angelo said. "Audi is consistently looking to engage customers in unique and dynamic ways, and Airbnb follows that same approach, a disrupter of the status quo."

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