

AUTOMOTIVE

Familiarizing consumers with driverless vehicles is key: Audi exec

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Still from Audi's *The Comeback*

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

NEW YORK While autonomous driving is making its way onto the roadway, an Audi executive explained at ad:tech New York 2016 the importance of educating the consumer on these technologies to combat fear.

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Driverless cars are making their journey to the mainstream, and during the Nov. 2 session, "Shifting Gears: How the Connected Car Will Change the Auto Industry," the executive discussed how the main goal is to introduce consumers to autonomous driving and make them comfortable with the idea. Audi is also working on integrating its in-car technology with infrastructure so that consumers will be informed of upcoming traffic lights, weather and pot holes while they travel.

"As we start to bring new technologies in the automotive space, we have to get more consumers using them," said Loren Angelo, vice president of marketing at Audi. "Our job is to get consumers who have a comfort level to understand that this a safer experience.

"When you see that 94 percent of accidents are caused by human error, we have an opportunity in this space to bring a better solution," he said.

Driving innovation

As technology continues to drive forward in all markets, especially in the automotive industry, consumers can become wary about innovations that seem too ahead of their time. The theory of autonomous driving still evokes caution in the majority of consumers, which means that it is Audi's and other automakers' responsibility to walk drivers through this innovation.

Getting consumers comfortable with autonomous driving needs to be accomplished through marketing content that demonstrates what it is exactly and how it works.

Audi is also experimenting with more connected capabilities that help inform drivers of happenings with the infrastructure of the path they are driving on. A major way this can be accomplished is by partnerships with Google Earth or local retailers.

The idea of "creepy" versus helpful is a major thought point with Audi when designing these technological capabilities. So instead of frightening consumers with how much information their vehicles can retrieve about them, Audi is focused on providing helpful experiences that use the information in ways that are most beneficial to drivers.



The 2017 Audi Q7

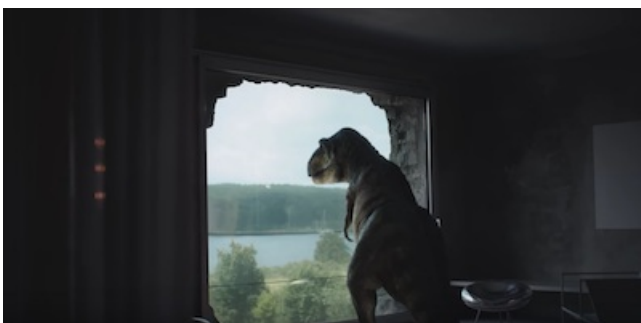
As per autonomous driving, Audi is focused on providing innovative technology that takes the dread out of driving when it comes to commuting and traffic. But the automotive brand focuses on including technology that allows consumers to gain back control of the vehicle whenever they want.

Audi caters to consumers who love to drive, which is why the idea of being able to switch back and forth between autonomous and manual driving is important for the brand.

Marketing to consumers

In its attempt to familiarize consumers with autonomous driving, the German automaker recently cast the ideal advocate for pilotless driving in a promotional film.

The automotive industry is neck-in-neck is developing functional, real-world autonomous driving, whether consumers are ready for the advances in technology or not. In Audi's "The Comeback," the automaker showed how autonomous driving can be a revitalizing experience for those tired of their day-to-day reality ([see more](#)).



Audi's the comeback sad T-Rex

Audi also recently visualized the arrival of the winter and holiday season, exciting fans ahead of its annual sales event with an aesthetically pleasing video campaign.

A series of ad campaigns were released by the brand in a manner that visualizes metaphors and shows off its vehicles' capabilities and announces the arrival of its Season of Audi Sales Event. A few of the videos feature Audi vehicles literally bringing in the holidays and the winter season, while others brought its metaphors to life, such as one showing the skull of an elephant morphing into the frame of the automobile ([see more](#)).

"What we can do best as an automaker is provide those solutions for consumers that need these innovative options," Mr. Angelo said. "So piloted driving helps those consumers in those stop and go traffic situations to be able to engage that vehicle to take over, it gives them their time back.

"But when they want to disengage and drive on that Sunday drive they can do that," he said.