

AUTOMOTIVE

Audi makes vehicles accessible to aspirational Indian audience

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Audi Q3

By STAFF REPORTS

German automaker Audi is teaming up with Indian self-drive car rental company Zoomcar to rethink urban mobility.

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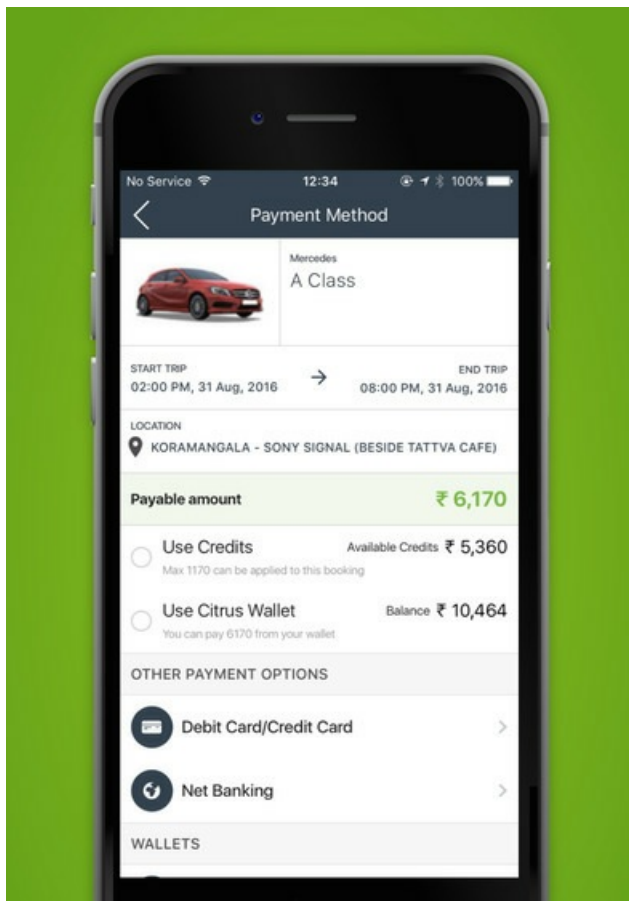
Consumers will now be able to book an Audi Q3 through Zoomcar's mobile application and Web site, which offers hourly, daily, weekly and monthly reservations. As consumers increasingly turn to alternatives to car ownership, automakers are finding new ways to remain part of consumers' lives.

Mobility minded

Founded in 2013, Zoomcar currently has more than 3,000 vehicles across India. The startup recently \$24 million in a Series B funding round led by Ford Smart Mobility.

"Audi has always been committed towards pioneering mobility solutions, embodying 'Vorsprung durch Technik'," said Rahil Ansari, head, Audi India. "Zoomcar represents both visionary car rental and modern mobility.

"It's no secret that the Audi Q3 is one of the most popular models in our product portfolio. We are pleased to see that luxury aficionados in the country can now experience our youngest SUVs in India in such a flexible way."



Zoomcar app

Recently, Zoomcar launched ZAP, a program in which consumers buy a car on behalf of the company and make it available to renters when it is idle, earning and sharing profits. With 20,000 registrations for this program so far, the company expects this model to greatly expand its fleet both in size and geographically, anticipating more than 25,000 vehicles in more than 50 cities by 2018.

With consumers living in urban environments eschewing car ownership, Zoomcar has also introduced keyless entry. Using their cell phone, a renter can unlock their car through an app and drop it off in their neighborhood when they are done.

Keyless entry also lends itself to car sharing. If a friend is borrowing a vehicle, there is no need to exchange keys, as the owner can just share an access code.

This feature sits under the hood and does not require any modifications to the car. Consumers who want to use their keys can still do so.

Audi and Zoomcar will work together to develop more mobility innovations.

"Audi's confidence in Zoomcar allows us to extend our reach even further, bringing the taste of high performing luxury vehicles to a wider cross section of aspiring Indian consumers," said Greg Moran, CEO of Zoomcar, in a statement. "It is our goal to accelerate the expansion of our successful ZAP business model to integrate these new shared mobility products into the market as soon as possible.

"We are confident that this will be a compelling alternative to 'car ownership' and help revolutionize the way personal transportation is viewed in the city in the years to come," he said. "Introducing a true car sharing model is a simple, yet powerful example of how technology can transform our cities. We're just now at a fundamental paradigm-shift across the country."

As tech companies rethink mobility, automakers are getting in on the action.

Fellow German automaker BMW's Indian subsidiary is partnering with the nation's popular transportation application Ola on a luxury service, part of its plan to capture a share of the on-demand mobility trend.

As Ola's luxury category partner, BMW India will help launch Ola Lux, a premium passenger experience that will operate a fleet of the brand's cars. Combining BMW's aspirational positioning and its desire to be part of the future

of mobility, this collaboration will allow BMW to introduce riders to its vehicles in an accessible way ([see story](#)).

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