

AUTOMOTIVE

## Audi working with Google to advance infotainment

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*Audi partners with Google for new infotainment innovation*

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

German automaker Audi is appealing to drivers that rely on Android operating systems in a new partnership that embeds Google into its dashboard.

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During the Google I/O developer conference on May 17 the automaker showcased the new Audi Q8 sport concept technology platform. The interface will allow users to interact with various Google applications through Audi's infotainment system, without having to need a smartphone.

"Mobility sites at the center of the connected individual's life. It is the connective tissue that binds our life experience and interactions across the physical and digital domains," said Michael Becker, managing partner at **mCordis**, San Francisco.

"The Google Android and Audi integration is one of a slew of similar integrations that are happening across nearly every aspect of our lives, integrates that are blurring the lines between the digital and physical," he said.

"They're a hallmark of what is to come as businesses learn that the physical product or service is just one element of success, in the future successful product will seamlessly integrate the physical and digital, as well as the sensorial and emotional, to serve the individual and create a lasting and meaningful bond for those they serve."

Mr. Becker is not affiliated with Audi or **Google**, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. **Audi** was reached for comment.

Driving innovation

Audi's new concept platform goes beyond a surface level of being able to use connected apps through the user's smartphone.



### *Audi teases new Google integration*

The sport concept technology platform will have Google applications embedded in the technology and dashboard. While Audi will still have its HERE navigation system, users who prefer to use Google Maps can opt for that app within the dashboard.

Google and Audi have partnered to develop a new version of the former's mobile operating system.

A touch display in the vehicle will allow users access to apps such as Spotify, Google Play Music and Google Assistant without needing their mobile devices.

Users can control these apps through the MMI touch display in the center of the dashboard and in Audi's virtual cockpit that offers better visibility for drivers. A message center for calls and messaging is also included.



### *Audi unveils new concept at Google I/O developer conference*

The Android Open Source Community is developing the solution for Audi.

Audi and automaking

Audi has been heating up on the automotive innovation front. The carmaker is continuously developing new solutions and making new acquisitions to cater to the ever-changing consumer and keep up with technology.

For instance, the German automaker looked to make a big impact in the electric vehicle community, releasing its design and accompanying campaign years ahead of production for its versatile concept model.

Released at Auto Shanghai on April 18, Audi's e-tron Sportback design is being shared with interested consumers through a new video spot. With an emphasis on electricity in theme, as well as functionality, Audi's e-tron Sportback and campaign hypes the vehicle well ahead of production ([see more](#)).

Audi also upped its investment in car rental service Silvercar as it looks to further innovate mobility for changing consumer needs.

Building on an existing relationship that dates back to 2012, Audi is acquiring the Austin, TX-based tech company that focuses on vehicle sharing. With renting and sharing replacing car ownership for many consumers, automakers are turning to alternative mobility developments to remain a part of consumers' daily lives ([see more](#)).

"The bridging of the physical and digital, on the surface, as not as innovative as one might think, in fact, it is becoming a standard expectation now," mCordis' Mr. Becker said. "It is hard to say if this Google + Audi integration is innovative, the proof will be in the pudding as the saying goes.

"We won't know if what they're doing is truly innovative or not until we see it, until we can see that their execution is flawless," he said. "True innovation will manifest itself in the seamless experience and interface between the technologies.

"If Google and Audi do it right, the technology will cease to exist in the conscious mind, it will recede into the background, and the natural voice, gestures and touch experiences will rise to the top of the top as individuals use the services to empower their lives."

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