

AUTOMOTIVE

Porsche keeps dealers in loop as it launches US online car sales

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With digital, the sky's the limit: Porsche Cayman. Image credit: Porsche

By STAFF REPORTS

German automaker Porsche is entering the ecommerce market for the first time with the launch of online car sales in the United States, albeit with the participation of its dealer network.

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The Atlanta-based Porsche Cars North America will let consumers shop and buy new and pre-owned cars in stock from computers and mobile devices to complete paperwork from selection to contract. The joint pilot project commences with 25 participating dealers out of the 191 independently owned and operated in the U.S.

"For our dealerships, who are at the core of our strategic initiatives, we think this blend of digital and physical interaction with customers will only strengthen their business," said Klaus Zellmer, president/CEO of Porsche Cars North America, in a statement.

A launch in Germany will follow the U.S. Porsche debut of online car sales.

Easy ride

The online capability lets consumers handle buying, financing or leasing a selected vehicle, including payment and trade-in calculators, credit approval and financing and insurance options through Porsche Financial Services.

Making it easier, shoppers can upload photographs of their personal documents for ID verification and car pictures for trade-in valuation. Once the data is submitted, the dealer prepares the paperwork for signing when the customer arrives.

The online process is integrated into the Web sites of participating dealers across the U.S.

Porsche's move comes two months after another similar digital stride with mobile-based, short-term car rentals.

Porsche Cars North America launched its Porsche Passport and Porsche Drive mobility services in four new cities in North America after a successful pilot in Atlanta that expands on-demand access to customers.

Up to 20 current Porsche model variants will benefit from Porsche Passport and Porsche Drive for short-term driving rather than a traditional lease or outright purchase ([see story](#)).

THE ONLINE purchase and short-term rental options are in line with Porsche's efforts to stay relevant with digitally focused millennial affluent consumers.

Even more important is the fact that Porsche is taking along its dealer network in these new initiatives.

"Physical and digital retail experiences have to work hand in hand, yet stay typically Porsche," said Detlev von Platen, member of the executive board for sales and marketing at Porsche AG, in a statement.

"Offering our customers an enhanced digital option for acquiring a Porsche makes this experience even more accessible and more convenient," he said.

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