

AUTOMOTIVE

Audi taps augmented reality to deepen nature connection in new campaign

February 10, 2023



The new electric vehicle from Audi utilizes augmented reality to allow drivers to explore more, and see more of the natural world. Image credit: Audi

By EMILY IRIS DEGN

German automaker **Audi** is introducing a nature-centric model, using the power of augmented reality technology.

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Thanks to the brand's activesphere concept, drivers are able to immerse themselves in the natural world that their vehicle allows them to explore. Between the augmented reality capabilities, e-bikes and storage space, glass-heavy design and electric model, Audi is expanding the boundaries of what green-vehicle ownership can look like.

"It is possible for drivers to deepen their relationship to nature via automotive ownership, but this idea is nothing new" said Dave Undercoffler, editor-in-chief of Autolist.

"Cars have been providing people with access to nature since they were invented more than 100 years ago," Mr. Undercoffler said. "In fact, it was this ability of cars to connect people to nature that drove their initial acceptance of automobiles and what's helped maintained it ever since.

"Audi is simply putting a 21st-century spin on the idea with this campaign."

Natural drive

Audi has released a video campaign series in celebration of the new concept vehicle, highlighting the exploratory possibilities.

Speaking to the look and capabilities, the designers of the vehicle pointed out the deep intentionality that went into the conceptualization. Designed with discovery, remote roads, nature and immersion in mind, the electric car is meant to bond drivers to the landscapes that they traverse.

A space to reconnect with nature / The Audi activesphere concept

The concept vehicle positions itself as a futuristic take on mobility freedom, making excursions into nature more accessible for Audi drivers.

The car is shown driving deep into lush forests, up snow-blanketed mountains and across remote terrains. With the

support of augmented reality glasses, drivers use technology to understand the world around them.



With the help of augmented reality glasses, passengers in the Audi activesphere can use the technology. Image credit: Audi

The activesphere capabilities allow passengers to see the terrain and geographic data, view their schedule for the day, communicate and among other things, navigate in an interactive way.

Sustainable exploration is at the heart of this imagining, with the video campaign depicting drivers riding their e-bikes among the trees and soaring over pristine lakes on their electric hoverboards all while their Audi vehicle autonomously drives to them for a seamless pick-up.

The campaign series also showed tablets that notified owners of when their vehicle would arrive, clubhouse privileges and other perks.

This is truly about the future of mobility technology, and Audi is painting it green.



The activesphere prioritizes drivers' ability to move around the natural world- whether that be on electric bikes, hoverboards or within vehicles. Image credit: Audi

"The integration shown in Audi's campaign is highly sophisticated and therefore many, many years away," Mr. Undercoffler said.

"But this is definitely a movement that will quickly start evolving the way we interact with our cars."

Augmented reality check

Automakers are just beginning to explore the possibilities of augmented reality.

This is the fourth model in Audi's imaginings of the technology, having taken inspiration from the brand's Sportback model for added trekking capabilities. The third imagining, the urbansphere, took a more city-centric approach to immersive technology ([see story](#)).

This is brand new to the automotive world, as luxury fashion and beauty seem to be the main players in the development so far. Bulgari recently joined the line-up of those using the technology to create more engaging shopping experiences ([see story](#)).



Audi status updates allow drivers to communicate with their vehicle, furthering independent transportation. Image credit: Audi

While the concept car from Audi is not available to purchase, its creation signals a move towards a deeper integration of augmented reality capabilities. In a modern retelling of vehicle ownership, the brand is imagining a world where automobiles can carry people deeper into the wild, rather than away from it.

Other luxury brands are taking note, joining the push for furthered mobility and more engaged explorations of the world. When vehicles that fully use the technology will hit the market, however, is tough to say.

"AR is already starting to trickle into high-end cars by overlaying turn-by-turn navigation instructions onto heads-up displays or digital instrument panels," Mr. Undercoffler said.

"But it's early days in terms of how thoroughly automakers can and will integrate AR tech into the driving experience, and later, the autonomous experience."

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