



Audi Communications

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Simple, yet progressive - the new rings from Audi.

- **Audi introduces a new two-dimensional design of the four rings on the exterior of its vehicles.**
- **The new Audi Q8 e-tron will be the first model to receive the new corporate identity.**

New Zealand, 16 November 2022 – Audi stands for Vorsprung durch Technik, for innovative mobility. A promise that the four rings aim to reflect through a progressive design. In this interview, designer André Georgi and brand strategist, Frederik Kalisch explain what it means for Audi now that its cars bear new rings.

“The introduction of the new corporate identity is an exciting new progression for the Audi brand”, said Dean Sheed General Manager of Audi New Zealand. “As a brand that stands for innovation and progress, we are constantly evolving to ensure the highest level of quality, and experiences, for our customers. This new upgrade looks to make our iconic Audi rings even more unmistakable.”

The four rings are one of the most important identifiers of the Audi brand. Why the change now, right on the vehicle itself?

Frederik Kalisch: As a progressive premium brand, Audi targets modern customers who value high-quality design and attention to detail. There are only two basic trends in brand presentation and product design today that precisely express this premium quality: the loud and very bold, or the restrained, pure, and clean.

The Audi Q8 e-tron will be the first model to receive the new corporate identity with a two-dimensional design of the four rings on the exterior, along with the model lettering and Audi logo on the B-pillar.

André Georgi: The purist approach is more in line with our philosophy. We know that strong brands win over customers primarily through their product’s underlying substance and discreet identifying elements. At Audi, this has always been the case, and we’re now making it even more consistent. Our philosophy is that every detail must convey a meaning or serve a purpose. On the product, it is above all, our four rings. Unmissable on the front and rear of every Audi model, that makes an Audi an Audi. We want our quality to speak through the design



Modern, but not fashionable – that is Audi's claim. However, a two-dimensional logo seems to be the current trend. What role does the zeitgeist play in the design?

Kalisch: Two-dimensional rings originated at Audi in 2016 as a consequence of digitalisation, essentially to depict the rings in a manner that suited the medium. Three-dimensionality on two-dimensional displays would not have met our technical and aesthetic requirements. So, we opted for a 3D look. Our brand logo is highly graphic – which is an advantage – as it looks great in two dimensions. To ensure a consistent brand presence across all customer touchpoints, we coordinated with the design team to kick off the process of redesigning the rings on our vehicles.

Georgi: Using a two-dimensional logo on the outside of our vehicles first came up in 2019. Then things really took off at the beginning of 2020. Our vision is to move the corporate identity from the digital area we just described onto our vehicles and to standardise vehicle identification across all models. We want the four rings to look the same everywhere in the future: Whether in a magazine, on your smartphone, including on or inside the car.

What exactly has changed in terms of design?

Georgi: Our vehicle logo contains three components with a high-contrast black-and-white look. It's as though the striking white floats are embedded in a black glass body for an even greater radiance. By optically brightening the logo, the white lends the rings a flat, premium-quality look, which still appears three-dimensional in detail.

But it's not just the color scheme; the materiality is also new. Can you explain that in more detail?

Georgi: Today's chrome rings stand for high quality; the material alone conveys that message. But we believe that we have found the "new chrome". The clarity of the new black and white rings makes our corporate identity unmistakable. The thin black border around the rings makes for a consistent, premium-quality appearance, regardless of the car's paint or radiator grille color. And customers can continue to opt for our new rings in black. This variation replaces the white with a dark gray that looks like high-gloss black.

From now on, all new Audi models will not only bear new rings, but you have also updated the vehicle identification scheme. Why?

Kalisch: In 2020, our team reworked the brand strategy and corporate identity. This rework led to our new vehicle identification strategy, including the vision of two-dimensional rings on our vehicles. The updated identification scheme matches our new brand strategy, which means more sophistication.

Georgi: It's not only that vehicle identification has become more premium; we have also standardised the fonts in and on the vehicle. In the future, our models will only use Audi's



unique font, known as “Audi Type”. The basic tone is significantly more restrained without compromising on distinctiveness or quality. We’ve now designated the B-pillar as the detailed model, derivative, and technology identifier. This designation is because it has an identical design across all vehicles: always two parts in high-gloss black and always in the passengers’ field of view when entering and exiting. The lettering on the B-pillar was deliberately engraved tone-on-tone.

Kalisch: Besides distracting from the design of our cars, overly noticeable identifiers probably wouldn’t go down well with our contemporary, progressive customers either.

Georgi: Identification and vehicle design now act as a unit that aligns with Audi’s new brand positioning.

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Short biographies

André Georgi studied automotive engineering and completed a second degree with a major in transportation design. He began his career at AUDI AG over 20 years ago. For the first ten years, Georgi worked in the Exterior Design department, where he was responsible for headlights and rear lights. Later, he headed Product Design at the Design Studio in Munich. Georgi has been involved in interior design since 2017, leading the Interface team and overseeing the redesign of the rings.

Frederik Kalisch studied industrial design and started his career with an internship in design strategy. After completing his degree in brand strategy, Kalisch worked externally for AUDI AG in the Design Strategy department. In 2011, he returned to Audi to work as a brand strategist. After working briefly in the Digital Business Strategy team, Kalisch continued his role as a brand strategist in 2019. Currently, he is responsible for the naming and identification strategy for the existing and future model range.

The Audi Group, with its brands Audi, Ducati and Lamborghini, is one of the most successful manufacturers of automobiles and motorcycles in the premium segment. It is present in more than 100 markets worldwide and produces at 16 locations in twelve countries. 100 percent subsidiaries of AUDI AG include Audi Sport GmbH (Neckarsulm), Automobili Lamborghini S.p.A. (Sant’Agata Bolognese, Italy) and Ducati Motor Holding S.p.A. (Bologna, Italy).

In 2017, the Audi Group delivered to customers about 1.878 million automobiles of the Audi brand, 3,815 sports cars of the Lamborghini brand and 55,900 motorcycles of the Ducati brand. In the 2017 fiscal year, AUDI AG achieved total revenue of €60.1 billion and an operating profit of €5.1 billion. At present, approximately 90,000 people work for the company all over the world, more than 60,000 of them in Germany. Audi focuses on sustainable products and technologies for the future of mobility.