

## Audi builds loyal customers with integrated e-commerce solution.

### Overview

■ **Challenge**

Develop integrated Web-based solution on proven e-commerce platform

■ **Solution: Integrating Stage**

B2C Web site for selling Audi-branded lifestyle accessories

■ **Why IBM**

Demonstrated commitment to e-business; WebSphere® Commerce Version 5.1 support for standards enabled easy integration with backend systems; WebSphere Application Server already chosen as Audi's corporate-standard

■ **Key Business Benefits**

Over 30,000 distinct visits per month

■ **Business Partner**

divine GmbH



By adhering to the company slogan, "Vorsprung durch Technik" (or "Innovation through Technology"), Audi has become a world-class producer of automobiles, parts and accessories for driving and racing enthusiasts.

The familiar four rings of the Audi emblem represent the 1932 merger of four German car companies that led to the formation of the present-day AUDI AG. For millions of car owners, these rings also symbolize quality workmanship and outstanding performance—values that have helped Audi sell 726,000 vehicles and take in sales of 1.3 billion euros (US\$1.26 billion) in 2001 with its worldwide staff of more than 50,000 employees.

*“Without business process integration, the pilot was expensive to run and inefficient. But before we could invest in integration, we needed a proven e-business platform that had demonstrated its staying power.”*

– Martin Bayer, e-commerce Manager, Lifestyle and Car Accessories, AUDI AG

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**Key Components**

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*Software*

- IBM WebSphere Commerce for Sun Solaris, Professional Edition, Version 5.1
  - IBM WebSphere Application Server Advanced Edition, Version 3.5
  - IBM WebSphere Studio Application Developer (formerly IBM VisualAge® for Java™)
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For owners of Audi cars, the brand is also a mark of their lifestyle, characterized by individuality, exclusivity and excellence. With such outstanding brand equity, it was only a matter of time before Audi discovered it could satisfy its customers' needs, reinforce their loyalty and generate additional revenues by marketing lifestyle accessories such as jackets, hats, shirts, key chains and jewelry branded with the Audi emblem. In 1983, Audi organized a subsidiary company, quattro GmbH, to market an exclusive collection of lifestyle articles. Subsequently, the subsidiary began to customize vehicles with its own line of car accessories.

Audi introduced a pilot online store for its lifestyle accessory items in 1999 based on Intershop Enfinity and Sybase, but did not integrate the front end with its fulfillment processes. "Without business process integration, the pilot was expensive to run and inefficient," says Martin Bayer, Audi's e-commerce manager for Lifestyle and Car Accessories. "But before we could invest in integration, we needed a proven e-business platform that had demonstrated its staying power."

To find the perfect e-commerce platform for its online lifestyle accessories store, Bayer had only to look at the Web center that Audi had established to create a standard infrastructure for its various Web-based enterprises, which included an online car accessories catalog. IBM WebSphere Application Server was Audi's corporate standard for these sites. "The compliance of WebSphere software with Java and other standard technologies makes integration easy," says Bayer.

Since Audi had already decided to build its internal skills on the WebSphere platform, the new venture stood to gain economies of scale from a development perspective. "We chose to put our vote where we had the most confidence," says Bayer, "which was with WebSphere."

For its commerce engine, Audi chose IBM WebSphere Commerce for Sun Solaris, Professional Edition, Version 5.1. As part of WebSphere Commerce, WebSphere Application Server, Advanced Edition, Version 3.5 manages the Java business logic. IBM Business Partner divine GmbH implemented the site and built an editing tool to provide Audi with an interface for changing product information on the Web site and gathering useful statistics for making marketing decisions.

*"With WebSphere Commerce we can sell our lifestyle articles profitably and demonstrate to our customers that Audi stands for excellence in service and technology."*

*—Martin Bayer*

Without any advertising or promotion, the Audi collection Shop has received 30,000 visitors per month since going live. “We have quite a large customer base that is requesting Audi-branded products,” say Bayer. “With WebSphere Commerce we can sell our lifestyle articles profitably and demonstrate to our customers that Audi stands for excellence in service and technology.”

**Smooth purchasing experience from integrated solution**

Buying an Audi jacket may not be as momentous a purchase as buying the car itself, but shoppers can be assured of a well-thought-out and meticulously designed buying experience nonetheless. They can browse the 300-product collection using a full-text search engine or by selecting one of four product categories: design, sport, traditional and authentic.

Using the shopping basket functionality of WebSphere Commerce, shoppers choose their products and check out. Enterprise JavaBeans (EJB) carry out the business logic with Audi’s commerce database, storing order data in a format modeled after the ERP file system of Audi’s fulfillment house, servicelogiQ. servicelogiQ provides warehouse and shipping service for all of Audi’s Web- and phone-based channels, along with call-center customer services. servicelogiQ’s fulfillment processes are also integrated with Audi’s backend inventory and financial systems to ensure a fully automated sales process. And credit card verifications are handled by the payment processing application included in servicelogiQ’s ERP system.

Every two hours, secure file transfer protocol (SFTP) transmissions of the orders to servicelogiQ’s proprietary ERP system set the fulfillment process in motion. To trigger prompt payment processing, divine, Inc. created a string of data files to present credit card information to the ERP interface. The ERP payment processing application reads the data off the files and submits the transaction for bank approval and sends the approval.

*“IBM WebSphere software helps Audi foster management efficiencies and powerful customer relationships.”*

*–Thorsten Kuehl, Senior Technical Consultant, divine GmbH*



Audi collection shoppers can purchase items for specific car models or general Audi memorabilia through the company’s WebSphere Commerce-based Web site.

### **Easy-to-use editing tool**

As important as it was to provide a well-running e-commerce experience for the customer, it was equally important for Audi to enable its business managers to edit the site with new product texts and pictures without requiring help from IT personnel. To provide this functionality, divine, Inc. created a text-editing tool that enables non-technical staff to edit the site at will.

Web site editors log on with a password and user ID on a Web-based interface, make whatever changes are needed, preview the changes and publish them to the Web site with a click of the mouse. "The editing tool is simple," Bayer says. "It requires virtually no training and gives the marketing experts a way to keep the site continually refreshed."

### **Integrated Java development environment**

By using WebSphere Studio Application Developer (formerly IBM VisualAge for Java) to create and test Java objects, divine GmbH efficiently customized WebSphere Commerce to meet its needs. "Creating EJB, JavaServer Pages and other Java classes with WebSphere Studio Application Developer makes it possible to create custom tools that are helping Audi accelerate its ROI," says Thorsten Kuehl, senior technical consultant at divine GmbH. "IBM WebSphere software helps Audi foster management efficiencies and powerful customer relationships."

### **For more information**

Please contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner.

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