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**Mazda brings virtual reality to customers with retail tour and new app**

* Mazda offers immersive VR driving experiences to customers in UK shopping centres.
* VR technology will also be used to train the UK dealer network ahead of vehicle launches.
* The launch of the Drive Together App in dealerships will enhance the customer retail experience.

This summer Mazda is partnering with intu, the owner of the UK’s largest and most popular shopping centres, to bring virtual reality driving experiences to customers at five intu shopping centres across the country. (See dates and locations below).

The retail tour will offer customers the chance to experience a 360 immersive virtual reality test drive of either the Mazda MX-5 or the Mazda CX-5. Using VR goggles whilst seated in each car, participants will be transported behind the wheel to experience a thrilling virtual drive along the winding roads of the Italian Alps (MX-5) or around the famous Longcross test track in Surrey (CX-5). This Mazda Virtual Reality Experience is made possible by using the latest in VR technology.

Shoppers visiting the Mazda stand can also request a new interactive digital brochure sent instantaneously via SMS or email, enquire about test drives, or simply speak to the knowledgeable Brand Ambassadors to find out more about Mazda’s entire range. Complimentary refreshments provided by the unique Mazda Coffee Truck, which is based on a 1960s Mazda Porter Cab mini-truck, will also be provided to shoppers as part of the tour. The campaign is being supported by advertising across intu centres and on its online platforms.

“The innovative use of VR Technology brings Mazda alive to consumers in a way that a traditional static display can’t do”, commented Claire Andrews, Marketing Director Mazda UK. Adding, “with virtual reality our aim is to create a sense of oneness with the car through an immersive experience, you get a test drive impression whilst sat inside a Mazda CX-5 or MX-5 without leaving the building.  This will bring people much closer to the vehicle itself, allowing them to appreciate the quality of both the interior and exterior of the car. We filmed the Mazda MX-5 on location in Italy earlier this year and we can’t wait to see people taking a virtual Alpine drive in the MX-5.”

Mazda will also use this technology to enhance the retail experience through the launch of their Drive Together App. “The aim of this app is to enhance customer enjoyment and engagement with the brand throughout their retail experience. We are enabling customers who like to use digital devices as part of their shopping process, so each dealership will have the VR hardware to showcase the new interactive digital brochures and to offer exciting VR experiences akin to those found on the retail tour”, commented Claire Andrews, Marketing Director Mazda UK.

Roger Binks, customer experience director at intu, said “Mazda is certainly making the most of its presence in some of intu’s highest footfall locations by creating such an immersive experience to draw in crowds of people. Popular shopping destinations like ours provide brands with fantastic opportunities to raise their profile among millions of engaged shoppers.”

The Mazda UK VR shopping centre tour will take place at the following shopping centres:

* 7th – 8th July intu Trafford Centre, Manchester (partnering with RRG Mazda)
* 21st– 22ndJuly intu Victoria Centre, Nottingham (partnering with Sandicliffe Group)
* 28th – 29th July, intu Milton Keynes (partnering with Brayley Milton Keynes)
* 4th-5th August Cabot Circus, Bristol (partnering with Wessex Mazda)\*
* 11th – 12th August, intu Lakeside (partnering with Brayley Grays & Romford Mazda)
* 25th – 26th August, intu Braehead, Glasgow (partnering with Arnold Clark Group)

\*non intu venue.

- Ends -

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