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China auto logistics continues to accelerate toward national domestic auto website coverage

2009-2-24

Continuing its brisk expansion aimed at achieving national coverage with its www.1365car.com website designed to attract and serve the needs of domestic car buyers and dealers, China Auto Logistics Inc. (the "Company") announced today it has added Nanjing and Qingdao as the ninth and tenth cities in the Company's website network.

Mr. Tong Shiping, CEO and President of the Company, one of China's leading automobile importers, as well as a top provider of one-stop automobile logistics and dealer financing, and the originator of two leading automobile websites, stated: "While a number of factors are driving our vision to become the leading national website for buyers and dealers of domestic Chinese automobiles, there is one fact that stands out. Namely, as confirmed again in the most recent statistics, while China expects this year to surpass the U.S. in auto sales, its population continues to rank significantly below the rest of the world in auto ownership per capita. With less than 40 autos per thousand people, China's consumers compare with an average automobile ownership per thousand of 139 internationally and 600 per thousand in the U.S."

"Further," Mr. Shiping said, "while growth in China continues to outpace the rest of the world, to ensure continued expansion, the Chinese government is providing significant incentives to consumers to expand their automobile purchases. The growth opportunity for our Company in this environment really is quite large."

Mushrooming Auto Buying in Nanjing

The well-known city of Nanjing, capital of the southern province of Jiangsu, and the second largest commercial center in eastern China after Shanghai, reflects particularly strongly the buoyancy of auto sales in China despite the economic storm that is mainly affecting other parts of the world. The Company said that in this ninth city linked to its domestic automobile website, it is currently projected approximately 220,000 autos will be purchased in 2009 in a city of more than 7.2 million people, reflecting year over year growth in sales of about 20%.

Terming this market "promising and exciting," the Company said it is also quite competitive. Right now it has 102 4S shops (car dealerships) among which are the dealerships of such well-known brands as Volkswagen, Toyota, Honda, Nissan and Ford. Additionally, Infiniti, Bentley, Porsche and Ferrari, among others, have dealerships in Nanjing selling their high-end cars.

"What we bring to this environment is an ability to deliver the messages of these dealerships to their prospective customers on a 24/7 basis. We have spent a lot of time analyzing their customers and their preferences and also spend lots of time with each dealer. The information we provide, in turn, is highly reliable and in real-time with respect to pricing, promotions and comparable features that are presented very appealingly on vividly designed webpages, with interactive features such as Q & As," Mr. Shiping said.

According to the Company, interest in

To be continued

the Nanjing site was quite strong from the start, quickly jumping to more than 12,000 hits per day as well as generating paid dealer subscriptions. As such, the Company expects to see revenue contributions from the site beginning to develop meaningfully in the second and third quarters this year.

Qingdao -- Home of a Famous Beer and 14.6% GDP Growth in 2008

A beautiful seaside city with a population of 9 million in the southeast part of Shandong Province, and home of the well-known Tsingtao brewery, Qingdao increasingly has become an economically powerful city. In 2008, its per capita GDP was nearly \$7,000, up 14.6% from the prior year, ranking it among China's top dozen cities. Further, it is a city with a strong interest in automobiles, home to the third largest international auto show in China which last year drew more than 80,000 attendees on its opening day.

Given the relative wealth and sophistication of its population, car consumers in Qingdao tend to look beyond price as their motivation for buying automobiles. To

attract this audience, the Company has added to the features on its website several different services which have led to the site achieving more than 9000 hits per day.

Among the services designed to attract and capture local would-be buyers, the Company has coordinated with China Merchants Bank to provide bank customers the opportunity to test-drive many of the latest model automobiles. Another specifically designed service, and one that perhaps generates the most attention, is called "Personal Buyer." The Company said potential buyers utilizing this service can either call or email their personal auto preferences to a staffer who will then choose models and dealers most closely matching the consumer's preferences with respect to price range, type of car, and features.

Bringing this type of creativity and customization to the needs of the consumers in this city, the Company said it anticipates developing meaningful revenue contributions from its presence in Qingdao by the second or third quarter this year.

Source: CNNMoney.com

Qingdao sees US\$3.5 bln in rubber transactions



2009-2-17

The Qingdao International Rubber Exchange Market has realized over US\$3.5 billion in transaction volume since its establishment in March 2006, the Shanghai Securities News reported.

Spot trading of rubber and trading of rubber

futures contributed to the total transaction volume. Currently there are over 600 members in the Qingdao International Rubber Exchange Market, including over 80 foreign members.

The rubber trade supports development in related industries. In July 2007, Lanxess AG, a leading chemicals group, invested US\$16 million to set up a rubber R&D center in Qingdao. This month, Lanxess signed a cooperative agreement with Qingdao University of Science & Technology to extend its R&D network in China and to train quality employees.

Source: China Knowledge.com

To be continued 

Spots of promising light shine on mainland Chinese auto-parts makers

2009-2-25

While the Big Three American automakers juggle with their official bailouts, allowing them a few months till March 2009 to improve viability, and when so many reports of declining new car sales in Taiwan, Mexico and the U.S. as well as production cutbacks by Toyota further darken the economic outlook, many suppliers relying on the auto industry neglect to consider that depressed spending power due to the credit crunch actually shines a promising light on the auto parts sector.

A timeless fact remains: slower new car sales inevitably force car owners to keep existing vehicles longer, resulting in rising auto parts purchases to keep cars running properly. Such phenomenon would be especially true for commercial vehicles and in physically-larger nations where cars are driven for longer distances, such as North America, Russia and Europe—for example a Los Angeles resident could easily log 30K miles a year merely commuting to work.

And scattered reports out of China bear out the above trend. Some mainland Chinese auto-parts makers have been surprised to see surging orders from overseas, which have encouragingly enabled many to keep production lines humming even in the fourth quarter of 2008, an off-season traditionally.

The president of an export-oriented auto-mold maker in Qingdao city, in southeastern Shandong Province, for instance, reports of receiving escalating export orders, mainly from the U.S., Russia, France, and Holland, from the second half of 2008, and to fill sizable aftermarket demands in those countries.

The executives of Guangzhou Saibao International Accessories Co., Ltd. are also heartened by the steady influx of orders, including many from new markets, despite the gloomy overall business climate. The company produces various electronic auto parts, including parking sensor, power window, car alarm, central door lock, and car alarm.

While China is one of the biggest nations in area where car purchasing has been rocketing in recent years, the ownership-duration is apparently also increasing due to compromised power of consumption. Accordingly, Chinese auto-parts makers also report increased demands from local garages, which is only part of the good news considering that lowering copper and iron prices enable such suppliers to cut production costs, and hence enjoy better profit margins.

Source: news.cens.com

Starwood plans to double its footprint in China by 2011 with 50 hotels

2009-2-23

Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc., the largest international upscale hotel operator in China with 47 existing properties, announces the addition of five new hotels to its growing portfolio. The new signings include the first St. Regis resort in Sanya; the first St. Regis hotel in Chengdu, Sichuan; the first Sheraton hotels in Jiangyin and Dalian; and a second Sheraton resort in Huizhou, Guangdong.

Focused on opening the right properties in the right places with the right partners, Starwood remains on track with plans to double its footprint in China by 2011 with 50 hotels in the pipeline. In 2009, the company will open more than 10 high caliber, best-in-class hotels throughout China, including Le Meridien Xiamen, The Westin Nanjing, Sheraton Qingdao and Four Points by Sheraton Guangzhou.

To be continued 

“Starwood’s long term growth opportunity in China is perhaps unsurpassed anywhere in the world. China is home to the largest number of our hotels outside of North America, and more importantly, it comprises the largest portion of our pipeline outside of the United States,” said Frits Van Paasschen, President and Chief Executive Officer of Starwood. “As a point of perspective, within two years we expect to have a presence in Shanghai that rivals our existing footprint in New York City, where we have a strong representation of more than a dozen hotels and growing.”



In 2008, Starwood opened eight new hotels in the China region including its first W Hotel in China; the first Aloft Hotel in Asia; Four Points by Sheraton Hangzhou, Binjiang; Four Points by Sheraton Changshu; Sheraton Huizhou Resort; The Westin Beijing Chaoyang; Four Points by Sheraton Beijing, Haidian; and Le Meridien Shimei Bay Beach Resort & Spa.

Starwood to bring two new St. Regis and three new Sheraton hotels to China

1. The St. Regis Sanya Yalong Bay Resort

2. The St. Regis Chengdu

3. Sheraton Jiangyin Hotel

4. Sheraton Dalian Xinghai Hotel

5. Sheraton Bailuhu Resort, Huizhou

Source: traveldailynews.com

Trade promotion body to open four new offices in China

2009-2-16

The semi-official Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA) announced Monday that it will open four new offices in China this year to help Taiwan companies explore the Chinese market in response to growing business demand. Offices in Nanjing and Wuhan in the central Chinese provinces of Jiangsu and Hubei, Guangzhou in southern China's Guangdong Province and Dalian in Liaoning Province in northeastern China will be opened this year, TAITRA Secretary-General Chao Yung-chuan said.

TAITRA already maintains offices in Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu, Qingdao and Xiamen.

To help China-based Taiwanese businesses tap into the mainland market, TAITRA will send delegations to China from Feb. 17 to March 6 to hold a series of briefing sessions in about 10 cities, including Qingdao, Dongguan, Xiamen, Shenzhen, Quanzhou, Chengdu, Shanghai, Nanjing and Beijing, said Wu Lee-min, director of TAITRA's information technology center.

Most Taiwan companies operating in China



TAITRA

are export oriented businesses, which have been hit hard by the economic downturn.

From mid-February to late August, TAITRA experts will also hold a series of seminars for Taiwan businessmen in southern, central and northern China to inform them of the importance of branding and to help them gain footholds in the Chinese domestic market.

Exploring the Chinese market is a key aspect of the New Zheng He Project of the Taiwan government, which is designed to help Taiwanese enterprises boost global exports in response to the economic recession.

Zheng was an official of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) and the most famous Chinese navigator. He was a contemporary of Columbus.

Zheng sailed from China to the South Pacific, Indian Ocean, Taiwan, the Persian Gulf and Africa in seven epic voyages from 1405 to 1433, some 80 years before Columbus' voyages.

Source: The China Post