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Michelin Auto Professional annual conference explores online opportunities

Potential customers who research tyres online, but purchase offline, represent a major growth opportunity for tyre dealers – and the dealerships of Michelin's Auto Professional advocate network learned how best to target this key demographic at the programme's annual conference.

The event – held this year at Richmond Hill Hotel – saw 35 delegates from across the UK debate the changing nature of the tyre industry, and study an in-depth examination of the market's continued evolution – all as part of Michelin's commitment to supporting the best tyre dealerships in the country.

Mark Meagher, Retail Programme Development Manager at Michelin, says: "The tyre market is evolving, and it's essential that our Michelin Auto Professional advocate dealerships are prepared to keep up with consumers, in terms of the routes today's tyre-buying public use to acquire their new fitments.

"Of particular focus at this year's conference was the rise of e-commerce. Tyres have only recently become widely researched on the Internet, and some seven in 10 UK drivers now start their automotive purchase process online. The largest proportion of this group tends to research tyres online – but buy offline."

"This particular segment is what Michelin wants to help our independent advocate dealerships target," adds Meagher. "Consumers value the opinion of an expert when it comes to purchasing their next set of tyres, and we want Michelin Auto Professional dealerships to demonstrate their pedigree as leaders in the field."

As a special 'thank-you', the delegates were later treated to first-class hospitality at Twickenham Stadium, watching world-class rugby as England defeated long-standing rival South Africa.

Michelin Auto Professional advocate dealerships enjoy advantages including free staff training sessions, and a chance to send selected, high-performing staff on dedicated 'Tyre Academy' training courses held throughout the year.

Advocate dealerships are also provided with bespoke business support by Michelin, to help them further grow their premium tyre market share.

Once part of the Michelin Auto Professional programme, newly ratified advocate dealerships can apply to become a Michelin Certified Centre, and face Michelin's stringent quality audit process.

Only dealerships that successfully complete the audit – which checks everything from telephone manner to workshop cleanliness to tyre stock levels and training provision – earn the right to display the coveted Michelin Certified Centre signage, and mount the Michelin Man's familiar thumbs-up on their wall.

For further information on Michelin Certified Centres and the Michelin Auto Professional programme visit



<http://www.michelinCertifiedCentre.co.uk/>

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Michelin, the leading tyre company, is dedicated to sustainably improving the mobility of goods and people by manufacturing, distributing and marketing tyres for every type of vehicle. It also offers innovative business support services, digital mobility services and publishes travel guides, hotel and restaurant guides, maps and road atlases. Headquartered in Clermont-Ferrand, France, Michelin is present in 170 countries, has 112,300 employees and operates 68 production plants in 17 countries. The Group also has a Technology Centre, responsible for research and development, with operations in Europe, North America and Asia. (www.michelin.com)

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