

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Urban Science Opens Beijing Office to Help Automakers Optimize Dealership Networks in China

DETROIT, April 19, 2005 -- Global retail-efficiency consultant Urban Science has announced the opening of Urban Science Applications, Inc. (USAI) in Beijing, China on April 8, 2005. USAI will serve the need for improved management of dealer networks within the region's fast-growing and diverse automotive market.

Urban Science works with automotive OEMs to optimize the size and growth of their dealer networks, and improve operations at the dealership level, via data analytics, software tools, and experience-based insight.

"In terms of the establishment of dealerships in China, it's been like the Wild West, with varying amounts of planning or controls up until now," says John Frith, Urban Science Vice President of Emerging Markets. "We will be working with the Chinese auto manufacturing companies, the joint ventures, and the 'foreign' OEMs (US and European-based companies) to help establish and monitor standards for dealerships."

Urban Science collects and evaluates both quantitative and qualitative data, identifies strengths and weaknesses within a network, then in conjunction with the OEM, produces an action plan for needed expansion, contraction or re-configuration. Chinese language versions of analytic software tools developed by Urban Science, such as their Ni2 platform, will be put to work in the Beijing office to solve their clients' logistical and operational problems.

The task of structuring car registration data and transforming it into useful marketing information -- an important need in China -- is also well suited to Urban Science's expertise. Proprietary methodology and software lets network planners fill in the gaps within incomplete vehicle registration data, for instance.

To improve the productivity of dealerships within a network, the company routinely applies a process that serves to define standards, assess their impact, and monitor compliance. Urban Science works for major automakers worldwide and currently operates eleven offices in North and South America, Europe, and Asia.

USAI in Beijing will be managed by Li Yong, Chief Representative Officer, and Dr. Wu Gang, Analytical Services Manager. Although sales growth slowed in the first few months of 2005, China's automobile manufacturing output is estimated to reach 5.6 million units this year, a 12 percent increase over 2004 (according to the China Automobile Association).

Beginning April 1, 2005, new government regulations require automotive dealerships to be authorized by the OEM or be a licensed general distributor -- rules that will place new demands on both automotive manufacturers and their dealer networks.

About Urban Science

Urban Science is a global consulting firm that builds end-to-end sales channel solutions for retail industries, using sophisticated data analytics, experience-based strategic insight and advanced scenario planning tools. Program objectives center on increasing the efficiency of retail networks, improving the performance of retail locations, and targeting customers more effectively.

The firm was founded in 1977 and is headquartered in downtown Detroit, Michigan. For further information, including case histories and perspective papers, go to <http://www.urbanscience.com> , or contact Michelle Reinhardt, Global Marketing Manager, at 313 568-8975, (mlreinhardt@urbanscience.com), or David Schmidt at 248 352-3333 (david@smith-winchester.com).