

## Driving up the brand customer experience

**Author :** Dale Buss

**Date :** May 22, 2016



Next month, **Cadillac** will be [opening](#) the public part of its year-old global headquarters in New York: **Cadillac House**, a 12,000-square-foot, highly curated “**design** house” for coffee, art, fashion—and an occasional automobile—on the ground floor of its HQ at 330 Hudson Street in west **SoHo**. Aiming beyond retail or the traditional car dealership and showroom, it’s a platform to communicate the heart, art and soul of the GM-owned **brand**.

By moving its HQ from Detroit to Manhattan last year, its pivot to positioning as a lifestyle luxury **brand** and its “[Dare Greatly](#)” [marketingcampaign](#) focused on achievers in **design** and other high-level pursuits who are “driving the world forward,” **Cadillac** has been trying to persuade premium auto consumers that it has broken with its stodgy traditions and become a marque worthy of its products.

This has laid the groundwork for its most important product launches in many years: the all-new, flagship [CT6 sedan](#), which is trickling into **Cadillac** dealerships right now, and the upcoming [XT5](#), a mid-size[crossover](#) that replaces the SRX and comes along at a time when this segment is dominating sales across the auto market.



Signaling its intentions for its NYC home, the automaker previewed the **Cadillac** House space mid-construction last year to host the invitation-only spring 2016 runway show for the NYC menswear label Public School as part of the [inaugural](#) New York Fashion Week for menswear, a milestone event that **Cadillac** [sponsored](#) for the [CFDA](#).

It's wooing more **designers** to come and play in the space, hosting a kickoff event with CFDA chair Diane von Furstenberg as an [invite](#) to participate in the Retail Lab pop-up shop taking place in July: "Introducing #RetailLab — a custom retail shop in the heart of **Cadillac's** headquarters dedicated to mentoring and inspiring daring members of the fashion community. Brought to you by @CFDA x #**Cadillac**"



With **Cadillac** House opening its doors to the public on June 2, the goal is to underscore, in an understated but impactful way, the new attitude and **brand** positioning championed by the automaker's brain trust as its playbook for reviving a venerable **brand** for a modern era.

"Context still matters," **Cadillac** CMO [Uwe Ellinghaus](#) told **brandchannel**. "If we can find a way to use the fact that we're in this very cool location in **SoHo** and become one of the many 'in' places to be for the curious and the creative, the innovators and the creators, we have achieved something. And I think that this great location and the creative vibe that surrounds 330 Hudson is the perfect place to get to the creative class and crowd—but only if you offer the proper program."





At **Cadillac** House, the order of the day will be creative collaborations and programming, with a menu that includes a quarterly exhibit curated by [Visionaire](#), the **design**-focused magazine and agency, with the first art show featuring [Geoffrey Lillemont](#), also a [creative director](#) on the Miley Cyrus Bangerz tour; a pop-up shop operated by New York-based fashion **brand** [Timo Weiland](#); and, wafting in the air, a signature “**Cadillac**” fragrance created for the space by the olfactory **branding** firm [12.29](#), which has produced scents for Rodarte and **Lady Gaga**. And because no New York experience is complete without the scent and taste of fine java, NYC’s own [Joe](#) **brand** is providing the coffee.



Yes, **Cadillac** will populate the spot with vintage car models and its new CT6 and XT5 models, but visitors can't purchase, or even order, a car. That's besides the point for this soft-sell lounge. "The people we will have there will be **brand** ambassadors, not sales executives," Ellinghaus noted. "If people want to buy cars they will have to go to local dealers."

*All images & videos copyright Gensler.*

//