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roll with the changes

富豪迅速增加的中國是勞斯萊斯最新車型的新目標市場

China is the new focus for Rolls-Royce, where an upsurge in millionaires should prove a fertile marketplace for its new models

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▶ 去年在北京發生一件令勞斯萊斯總裁Torsten Müller-Ötvös十分興奮的事。一位客人神氣地穿過人群，走到他們的櫃位，放下一個塞滿鈔票的公事包後說：「這裡有幾百萬人民幣。」Müller-Ötvös驚呼說：「他是用現金買一輛幻影！」似乎他還無法相信有客人會為擁有一輛勞斯萊斯而無所不用其極。

繼北京之後，這位總裁認為2011年的上海汽車展已進一步證明名貴房車製造商的未來就在中國。最新數據亦顯示中國的名車銷售額增長驚人，說明這個世界人口最多的國家的財富正飛速增長。據《福布斯》2011年的統計，中國目前有115位億萬富翁，僅次於美國。

勞斯萊斯去年在中國的銷量增長達600%，已超越英國，成為該公司僅次於美國的第二大市場。Müller-Ötvös預期2011年公



Torsten Müller-Ötvös

▶ **ONE OF THE OUTSTANDING MOMENTS** of Rolls-Royce boss Torsten Müller-Ötvös' career came last year in Beijing when a lone customer sauntered through the crowd to the car manufacturer's stand and coolly laid down his suitcase. "Millions of renminbi," the customer declared, beckoning to the hard currency stacked high inside the bag. "Amazing! He just bought a Phantom!" Müller-Ötvös exclaims, as if even he still hasn't fully come to terms with the lengths to which some customers will go to get behind the wheel of that prized marque.

After a healthy reception in Beijing, the Rolls-Royce CEO claims that 2011's Shanghai exhibition provided further proof for luxury car makers that their future is in China. And figures just in would appear to back up this view; sales of luxury cars have skyrocketed, reflecting the explosion of wealth in the world's most populous country, which is

now home to 115 billionaires according to *Forbes* magazine's 2011 list — second only to the United States.

Rolls-Royce saw its China sales rise by 600% last year, and Müller-Ötvös said he expects to see solid double-digit growth in 2011. China passed Britain last year as the company's second biggest market after the United States. China's luxury-car sales are expected to rise to more than 909,900 units this year, up from about 727,200 last year, according to forecasts by IHS Automotive. But that figure could rise to 1.6 million in 2015.

The manufacturer has come a long way since financial difficulties forced the brand's 1998 sale to BMW — along with the "Spirit of Ecstasy" emblem that adorns the hoods of Rolls-Royce cars — for a paltry US\$65 million. Infused with German fortitude, the spirit of this beloved British icon has risen again, newly appreciated by rock stars, royalty and *nouveaux riches* the world over who lust after its famous hand-tooled leather and walnut.

The 50-year old Müller-Ötvös, who joined the company as chief executive in January last year, defines his main challenge at Rolls-Royce thus: "Regaining the quality standards that had slipped in the 1980s, and restoring customer confidence in the brand." But he points out that Rolls-Royce occupies an unusual position in the marketplace, whereby the main competition for his cars is just as likely to be another major acquisition — a business jet, helicopter, jewellery or a villa in the South of France — as it is a rival car manufacturer. "It is very much about spending your money to reward yourself for what you have achieved in life. It is a symbol of success," he emphasises.

When Müller-Ötvös revealed the new Ghost, the stage was swamped by Rolls-Royce aficionados. Using connections to enter the show on the media preview day — the first time the firm has premiered a new model in Asia — punters put down cash in advance for two Rolls-Royce Phantoms, which start at CNY9m (US\$1.3m) and four of the new Ghosts, starting at CNY5.1m (US\$785,500).

The price tags included China's punitive 145% tax on imported luxury cars. "Normally, this does not happen. Not on the first press day," Müller-Ötvös adds. However, for enthusiasts it was a rare opportunity, as Rolls is only building the long-wheelbase Ghost to order and production hasn't even started yet; the first units are expected to leave the production line, at the earliest, at the end of 2011.

Shanghai's success is testament to the growing pool



司將取得雙位數的穩健增長。汽車市場研究機構IHS Automotive估計，今年中國的豪華汽車銷量會從去年的727,200輛上升至909,900輛。到了2015年更可能增至160萬輛。

勞斯萊斯終於擺脫了財政危急。1998年勞斯萊斯被迫將公司及商標Spirit of Ecstasy以區區US\$6,500萬賣給BMW。這個深受擁護的英國品牌結合了德國人的堅毅特質後，重現生機，其著名手工皮革及胡桃木內飾板備受全世界搖滾巨星、皇室及新富精英的熱烈追捧。

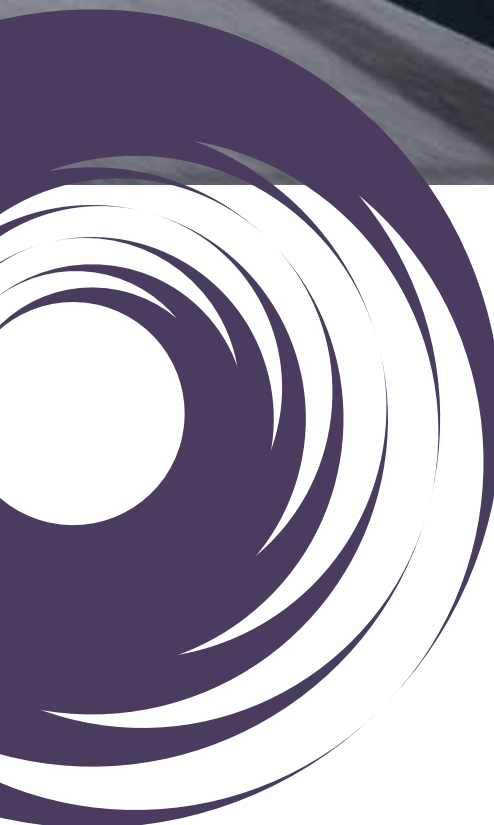
50歲的Müller-Ötvös於去年1月出任總裁，他認為他面對的最大挑戰，是要「重振1980年代所失去的質素保證及重拾客人的信心。」但他指出，勞斯萊斯在市場上佔有一個獨特地位，主要競爭對手極可能是另一種豪華品牌，如公務飛機、直昇機、名貴首飾或位於法國南部的一座別墅。他說：「擁有此豪華品牌是對自己的獎勵，是一種成功的象徵。」

Müller-Ötvös在亞洲首發新車媒體預覽會上為Ghost新車型揭開面紗時，現場幾乎被一眾勞斯萊斯車迷擠爆。他們透過各種關係進入會場，當天就有人以現金預購2輛勞斯萊斯幻影，每輛最低售價為RMB900萬（US\$130萬），及4輛Ghost車型，每輛最低售價



勞斯萊斯去年
在中國的銷量
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Rolls-Royce saw its
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為RMB510萬（US\$785,500）。售價還要包含中國對入口豪華汽車徵收高達145%的稅款。

「這種情況很少在媒體預覽會首日發生。」Müller-Ötvös說道。但對於車迷而言，此乃千載難逢的機會，因為Ghost車型仍未正式生產，勞斯萊斯在接獲訂單之後才會投入製造。新車最快要到今年年底才會交車。

上海的繁榮帶動亞洲白手興家的富豪人數不斷攀升，而這批新富人士鍾愛高級品牌，花錢絕不手軟。據上海財富雜誌《胡潤百富》的統計，去年身家達RMB1千萬（US\$150萬）以上的中國富豪人數有96萬人，上升了9.7%。勞斯萊斯總裁相信這個趨勢將會持續。Müller-Ötvös笑著說：「潛能很大，新富豪還會不斷湧現。」

雖然勞斯萊斯品牌響亮，但Müller-Ötvös認為單靠汽車本身的



of self-made millionaires in Asia who are on a mission to splash out their newfound wealth on high-status purchases. The number of individuals in China worth at least CNY10m (US\$1.5m) rose by 9.7% in the past year to 960,000, according to a report published last week by Shanghai-based wealth-tracking magazine *Hurun Report*, and Rolls believes this trend is likely to continue. “There’s still a lot of growth potential,” Müller-Ötvös smiles. “There are still a lot of new millionaires to come into the market.”

Despite Rolls-Royce’s strong image, however, the German does not believe that the car sells itself. “You always

條件，客人未必會上門。「高級產品亦需要營銷策略，你一定要採取主動，吸引客人上門。指導客人如何選擇汽車配置，這樣才能贏得客人的歡心。」他說道。「勞斯萊斯有超過4萬種顏色，內部設計也有大量選擇，有各種皮革、香檳槽及雪櫃等，所以你需要一位非常出色的銷售員為你提供最好的意見或建議，確保你能買到專屬於你，並且完全合你心意名車。」

近期的銷售數字顯示中國客人視勞斯萊斯為至尊品牌，特別版的百年幻影車型亦多銷往內地。勞斯萊斯於中國的經銷商數目將增至11個，北京及上海經銷商的銷售額更是全球最高。

至於由英國古德伍德總部研發的電動概念車——102EX幻影實驗電動車，Müller-Ötvös說：「我必須確信為未來產品選定的其他傳動系統，能夠體現真正獨一無二的勞斯萊斯駕乘體驗。」

雖然公司目前仍未有正式生產電動車的計劃，但是Müller-Ötvös希望藉此了解世界各地的用家、領域專家、愛好者及公眾的反應或意見。「電動系統和豪華的勞斯萊斯，會是一種完美配搭，還是一種妥協？」他問道。「這正是我們必須找尋的答案，我們必須延續傳承勞斯萊斯至尊無上的駕乘體驗。」■



need to sell even precious high-end goods. Because selling is not pushing cars; rather, you invite customers. You give them guidance on how to 'spec' a car, and that is the sales business in its true sense," he says. "With a Rolls-Royce, you can select from a range of 40,000 colours, and trims in the interior — whatever leather you would like to have, drinks cabinets, refrigerators. For that reason you need an excellent sales person who can advise you, [so that] in the end the car you specify is your personal car that you are absolutely happy with."

Recent sales figures suggest that Chinese customers rate Rolls-Royce as a prestigious brand, in any case, as more Centenary Collection special-edition cars were shifted there than in any other market in the world. Its dealers in Beijing and Shanghai topped global showroom sales.

As for Rolls-Royce's electricity-powered concept car, built at the company's British HQ in Goodwood, West Sussex and dubbed the 102EX Phantom Experimental Electric, Müller-Ötvös says he "must be convinced that any alternative drivetrain we choose for the future delivers an authentic Rolls-Royce experience".

There are no official plans to build an electric vehicle, but Müller-Ötvös says he wants to gather the reactions and opinions of owners, thought leaders, enthusiasts and members of the public to see what the world thinks of an electric Phantom. "Is it something that fits, or is it a compromise — electric and Rolls-Royce, or electric and luxury?" he speculates. "That is exactly what we must find out. We need to continue to deliver the true R-R experience in terms of comfort and driving." ■

一定要主動贏得
客人的歡心

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