

BMW Group

Corporate and Governmental Affairs

Media Information
21 February 2011

New BMW sub-brand: BMW i

BMW i stands for sustainable vehicles and mobility solutions

Two models available for launch: BMW i3 and BMW i8

Mobility services complement core business

BMW i Ventures holding company founded



Munich. The new BMW sub-brand focused on developing sustainable mobility solutions has been launched. “BMW i represents a new movement in premium mobility. With the introduction of this new sub-brand, the BMW Group reaffirms its leadership as the most innovative and sustainable premium car company. The products and services have been conceived around a revolutionary approach: purpose designed and purpose built for sustainable, premium mobility. It’s a new day in our industry; a new era for individual mobility. This is BMW i – Born Electric,” said Ian Robertson, member of the Board of Management of BMW AG responsible for Sales and Marketing, in Munich on Monday.

In a first move, two models will be launched under the new sub-brand from 2013 – the BMW i3 and BMW i8. The BMW Group will also significantly expand its range of mobility services over the years ahead. To achieve this, a Venture Capital company was founded in New York City, BMW i Ventures, with an investment totalling up to 100 million US dollars.

“BMW i offers visionary cars and services, inspiring design, and an entirely new concept of premium mobility – all with a focus on sustainability,” explained Robertson. The BMW i brand comprises vehicles and services developed since 2007 as part of project i, a BMW Group think tank exploring sustainable mobility solutions. It is the BMW Group’s response to changing customer needs, including increasing demand for alternative drive trains, such as electric drive systems and hybrids. There is a widespread desire in megacities for solutions which intelligently combine the benefits of various mobility concepts in a single package.

Revolutionary vehicle concepts

“With BMW i, we are building on the success and strength of our core brand,” emphasized Robertson. The BMW i3 – previously known as the Megacity Vehicle – will be the BMW Group’s first series-produced car for urban areas to be driven by electric power alone. The BMW i8, meanwhile, is based on the BMW Vision

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EfficientDynamics concept study. Its plug-in hybrid drive blends the sporting ability of a high-performance machine with the fuel consumption and emissions of a small car.

Both models are based on a revolutionary construction concept known as LifeDrive architecture. An aluminium chassis houses the powertrain, and the passenger cell consists of high-strength but extremely lightweight carbon fibre-reinforced plastic (CFRP). “Both cars have been designed specifically for their respective alternative drive systems. We used the innovative architecture and CFRP to cancel out practically all of the extra weight added by the batteries. For our customers this means superior driving dynamics combined with significantly increased range using electric power,” explains Klaus Draeger, BMW Board member responsible for development.

BMW i8 to be built in Leipzig

Like the BMW i3, the BMW i8 will also be manufactured at BMW’s Leipzig plant. Around 400 million euros will be invested in new plant facilities and some 800 jobs will be created by 2013. Development and production synergies will be achieved through both vehicles using the same component sets for the electric motors, power electronics, and high-voltage lithium-ion batteries.

A range of vehicle-independent services

An additional range of mobility services – which can also be used independently of the cars – will be an integral component of BMW i. This will allow the creation of a new, profitable area of business over the long term and attract new customers to the company’s brands.

“Mobility requirements are changing in rapidly expanding megacities,” adds Ian Robertson. “Our commitment to car-enabled mobility services, like BMW ConnectedDrive, will be significantly expanded under BMW i. We’ll also grow our car-related premium mobility services. What’s truly groundbreaking is that we’ll begin offering car-independent premium mobility services. BMW i aims to provide customized mobility solutions across a seamless network of premium products and premium services.” The focus is on solutions which will improve usage of existing parking spaces, as well as intelligent navigation systems with local information, intermodal route planning, and premium car-sharing.



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In addition to services developed in-house, the BMW Group is pursuing collaborations with partner companies and exploring strategic capital investments in providers of mobility services. To this end, the venture capital company BMW i Ventures has the goal to expand the range of products and services offered by BMW i in the long term by taking stakes in highly innovative service providers.

New York-based My City Way is the first company in which BMW i Ventures has taken a stake. Of the partnership, Ian Robertson said, "I am thrilled to announce that we have just signed our first strategic partnership with My City Way. As a mobile app, My City Way provides users with information on public transportation, parking availability, and local entertainment for over 40 cities in the US. Another 40 cities will be part of the global rollout, including Munich, of course."

The BMW Group

The BMW Group is one of the most successful manufacturers of automobiles and motorcycles in the world with its BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce brands. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 24 production facilities in 13 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

The BMW Group achieved a global sales volume of approximately 1.29 million automobiles and over 87,000 motorcycles for the 2009 financial year. Revenues totalled euro 50.68 billion. At 31 December 2009, the company employed a global workforce of approximately 96,000 associates.

The success of the BMW Group has always been built on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy. As a result of its efforts, the BMW Group has been ranked industry leader in the Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes for the last six years.

