

MINI at Auto Shanghai 2009. Contents.



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Unless stated otherwise, the vehicles presented in this media kit come with specifications for the Chinese Mainland market in terms of their engines and equipment. Deviations in other markets are possible.

1. MINI at Auto Shanghai 2009. (Short Version)



Offering the most advanced and attractive model range ever presented by the brand, MINI is writing a new chapter of success in the Chinese automobile market in 2009.

Following the MINI and the MINI Clubman, the new MINI Convertible is now set to make its market debut in China. Indeed, this open four-seater is being shown to the Chinese public for the first time at the 13th International Automobile & Manufacturing Technology Exhibition, Auto Shanghai 2009.

With the new MINI Convertible entering the Chinese market, all MINI models now available in China come with the latest generation of MINI's four-cylinder power units. These ultra-modern engines developed with all the competence in engine technology of the BMW Group combine sporting performance with thrilling agility. And at the same time they offer outstandingly low fuel consumption together with the very latest emission management.

Driving excitement, premium quality and the unmistakable style of the brand set the foundation for MINI's ongoing success also in the Chinese market. Accounting for 3,134 units sold, an increase in sales by more than 40 per cent over the previous year, the China Mainland Region remained a particularly dynamic and fast-growing market for MINI cars also in 2008. And now the new MINI Convertible offers substantial input for continuing this story of success in 2009.

The MINI presentation at Auto Shanghai 2009 also shows the brand's future options for further expansion of the model range. Together with the MINI, the MINI Clubman and the MINI Convertible already available or entering the market in the near future, visitors to China's most significant and oldest motor show being held this year from 22 – 28 April 2009 will also be able to admire the MINI Crossover Concept and the MINI E.

Measuring more than four metres in length, with four drive wheels, four doors and four single seats, the MINI Crossover Concept offers a wide range of innovations, but is nevertheless clearly distinguishable from the start as a genuine MINI in every respect. This fascinating concept study being presented in Asia for the first time therefore offers a clear outlook at a very new kind of MINI feeling.

The MINI E which is already beginning to be tested in private everyday traffic in the context of pilot projects in the USA and soon in Germany marks MINI's entry into the world of electric drive cars and offers important insights and know-how for the production of electric vehicles in future. It is driven by a 150 kW/204 hp electric motor and offers driving excitement typical of MINI without the slightest emissions.

Even more fun in everyday traffic: the new MINI Convertible.

The new MINI Convertible is based on the qualities of its predecessor and brings out the characteristic strengths of the open-air MINI even more clearly and convincingly than before. As the only premium convertible in its segment, the new MINI Convertible offers the thrill of new engines and an updated suspension for that unique driving excitement so typical of MINI. It also comes with a new rollover safety system moving up whenever required and a wide range of individual solutions giving the car its unique functions and practical benefits.

The new MINI Convertible is perfectly prepared for all the challenges of everyday traffic and literally begs the genuine enthusiast to enjoy the most thrilling moments in motoring as often as possible. To open the soft roof all the driver has to do is press a button, the roof folding back fully automatically within just 15 seconds and closing again whenever required at the same speed.

The new MINI Convertible is entering the Chinese automobile market in two model variants: The new MINI Cooper Convertible powered by a 1.6-litre 88 kW/120 hp four-cylinder is a truly sporting character in every respect. This engine comes with fully variable valve management based on the BMW Group's unique VALVETRONIC technology for an optimum torque curve, superior power and outstanding efficiency. The new MINI Cooper Convertible accelerates to 100 km/h in 11.1 seconds and reaches a top speed of 191 km/h or 118 mph. Fuel consumption in the EU test cycle is 6.9 litres/100 kilometres and the CO₂ emission rating is 165 per kilometre.

The new MINI Cooper S Convertible is even more dynamic with its 1.6-litre four-cylinder developing maximum output of 128 kW/175 hp thanks to the Twin-Scroll Turbocharger and direct fuel injection. This outstanding model accelerates from a standstill to 100 km/h in 7.7 seconds and reaches a top speed of 217 km/h or 135 mph. Average fuel consumption in the EU test cycle is 7.9 litres/100 km, the CO₂ rating is 189 grams per kilometre.

This kind of power gives both the new MINI Cooper Convertible and the new MINI Cooper S Convertible significantly better performance than their respective predecessors, in each case on much less fuel and with significantly lower emissions.

Over and above the fast-revving and powerful engines, the cars' modern suspension technology gives both models a new dimension of agile handling. The MINI Cooper S Convertible and the MINI Cooper Convertible both come as standard with DSC Dynamic Stability Control.

An even higher standard of safety is ensured, among other things, by the new rollover safety system moving up whenever required with the help of an electromechanical actuator. Normally remaining almost completely out of sight behind the rear seats, the single-piece rollbar moves up instantaneously within fractions of a second as soon as the car's safety electronics register the risk of a rollover.

Through its construction principle, the single-piece rollbar provides the option to integrate an unusually large through-loading between the luggage compartment and the passenger compartment. As a result, maximum loading capacity of the MINI Convertible is up by 55 to 660 litres (23.1 cubic feet).

The customer's options to personalise the new MINI Convertible have likewise been enhanced once again, new paintwork options, three different roof colours and materials, as well as a wide range of upholstery, interior surfaces and trim bars setting the foundation for the customer to personalise his or her very own, personal MINI.

Fascinating outlook: the MINI Crossover Concept.

MINI is the world's only manufacturer of small cars in the premium segment to offer the customer the opportunity to enjoy a unique and unmistakable combination of driving excitement and modern lifestyle. The complete range of safety features and excellent quality of finish are further features characteristic of the brand, helping to make every MINI a most appealing car.

Proceeding from these joint qualities, both the MINI and the MINI Clubman as well as the new MINI Convertible offer their own, unique character. And now the MINI Crossover Concept opens up new potentials for a further interpretation of that typical MINI style. Presented at Auto Shanghai 2009, this concept study of a four-door MINI with a brand-new interpretation of design, all-wheel-drive and an innovative interior concept, clearly bears out not only the potential to expand the MINI model family, but also the innovative power of MINI's designers.

The innovations presented by the MINI Crossover Concept serve to add another new dimension to that characteristic MINI feeling. For the first time the body length of a MINI exceeds the conventional limit of four metres. And with four drive wheels, the MINI Crossover Concept is perfectly suited for giving the MINI an even broader range of applications, reaching new targets and target groups.

Inside, this four-door, four-seater concept study combines enhanced versatility and innovative function in a symbiosis never seen before. Between the seats a universal, multi-functional connecting bar, the MINI Center Rail, extending down the centre console all the way from the dashboard to the rear end of the interior, provides not only unconventional storage space, but also a direct link between the front seats and the rear half of the passenger compartment.

Yet another highlight within the interior is the innovative central instrument in its three-dimensional design, the MINI Center Globe. This combined control and display unit featured worldwide for the first time in a car in its globe-like shape sets new standards for the integrated management of entertainment, communication, navigation and vehicle functions.

Striking out for zero-emission mobility: the MINI E.

Yet another revolutionary highlight at Auto Shanghai 2009 ensures the driving excitement so typical of MINI also in everyday motoring: Immediately after the launch of a very special pilot project in the USA and soon in Germany, the trendsetting MINI E is now being presented to the Chinese public. Within the engine compartment the electric drive motor develops maximum output of

150 kW/204 hp, drawing its energy from a lithium-ion battery fitted at the rear of this two-seater and allowing a range of more than 240 kilometres or 150 miles.

The energy storage battery may be re-charged on every power socket, with users in the USA also having a special wallbox to quickly refresh the battery's power reserves. In the German capital of Berlin suitable infrastructure for the car with publicly accessible charge columns is currently being established.

The MINI E combines emission-free motoring with agility typical of the brand. Acceleration to 100 km/h comes in just 8.5 seconds, top speed is limited electronically to 152 km/h or 95 mph. Use of the MINI E in everyday traffic under realistic conditions provides practical experience over a representative cross-section of all types of drivers. This clearly gives the BMW Group valuable knowledge for the process of developing production cars running entirely on electric power.

Fifty years of MINI, fifty years of driving excitement and individual style.

The year 2009 offers MINI not only magnificent perspectives for the ongoing growth of the brand, but also ample reason to look back at the Company's own fascinating history: The classic Mini was "born" fifty years ago – a car which, through its innovative qualities, was destined to hit the headlines and lead the development of the automobile for decades all over the world, both on the road and in motorsport.

The idea of the Mini's creator, automotive engineer Alec Issigonis, to build an economical and comfortable small car making optimum use of the space available and boasting clear, unmistakable body design, quickly became a unique concept for success as popular and appealing today as ever before.

To this date the MINI remains a class-less automobile as conceived by its creator. And ever since the brand was re-launched in 2001, MINI has again offered the most up-to-date qualities and unique flair appealing to all kinds of target groups and enthusiasts. The MINI thrills connoisseurs everywhere through its agile handling and sporting performance combined with premium quality, safety, function, and outstanding economy.

MINI fans from all over the world will be celebrating this anniversary in the home country of the brand, the international MINI Community meeting in Great Britain from 22 – 24 May 2009. The legendary Formula 1 Race Track in Silverstone will be the venue of the MINI United Festival 2009, the unprecedented MINI fan event marking the 50th birthday of the brand.

2. At a Glance.



- **Chinese motor show debut: the new MINI Convertible.**

The characteristic qualities of a MINI and the unique excitement of driving an open car – the new MINI Convertible offers the best of both worlds. More than ever before, this supreme four-seater literally begs the enthusiast to open up the soft roof and enjoy the sun shining and the wind rushing by while driving. The new MINI Convertible combines superior handling so typical of the brand, powerful and efficient engines with numerous features and highlights in equipment giving the car remarkable function in everyday traffic. Marking the launch of the Convertible in China, the two models now entering the market are the MINI Cooper S Convertible (128 kW/175 hp) and the MINI Cooper Convertible (88 kW/120 hp).

- **Looking into the future: the MINI Crossover Concept.**

The future of the MINI brand offers new potentials and an even wider range of versatility: The MINI Crossover Concept to be admired at Auto Shanghai 2009 for the first time in Asia demonstrates the potentials of the brand in terms of ongoing development and at the same time confirms the many ideas of MINI's designers and engineers. This is the first MINI measuring more than four metres in length, the first MINI with four drive wheels, four doors and four single seats. And the innovative interior philosophy of the MINI Crossover Concept also includes, to mention just one highlight, a multi-functional bar and transport rail, the MINI Center Rail extending all the way from the instrument panel to the rear half of the passenger compartment.

- **Milestone: the MINI E.**

Supreme driving excitement, zero emissions: Introducing the MINI E, the BMW Group is setting a further milestone on the way to free mobility independent of fossil fuels. The new chapter in this story of development is beginning in the USA and Germany, where more than 500 units of the all-electric MINI will be handed over to selected customers in California, New York, and New Jersey as well as in Berlin and Munich. Immediately after the start of this pilot project, the MINI E is now being presented to the public at Auto Shanghai 2009, the zero-emission version of this small premium car being powered by a 150 kW/204 hp electric motor. Energy is supplied by a newly developed lithium-ion battery, a combination giving the MINI E a range of more than 240 kilometres or 150 miles.

- **Anniversary: fifty years of MINI.**

Introducing an economical but comfortable, spacious and unique-looking small car in Great Britain in 1959, Mini set the foundation for a story of success remaining unique in the world of motoring to this day. Indeed, the classic Mini from the start offered qualities still equally significant in our modern world. And ever since the brand was re-launched in 2001, it has been re-interpreted, carefully enhanced and upgraded by modern values in the most appropriate manner. Today MINI is a global phenomenon, with the birthday of the brand being celebrated by a special meeting of the worldwide community at the MINI United Festival 2009 on the legendary Silverstone race track in England.

3. Consistently Open: The New MINI Convertible.



The driving excitement and individual style so typical of the MINI are now being combined once again with all the flair and refreshment of driving in the open air, the new MINI Convertible offering this unique rendition of motoring freedom in particularly intense style.

With its design improved in an evolutionary process and an even wider range of practical functions, with the most advanced and sophisticated suspension technology, even more powerful and, at the same time, economic engines, and with optimised safety technology, the new version of the open-air four-seater MINI consistently raises its strengths and qualities to an even higher level.

At the same time new and highly attractive colour variants as well as equipment features add an additional touch of style and class. And last but certainly not least, supreme quality of materials and finish enhances the unique position of the MINI Convertible as the only open premium car in its segment.

The occupants are safely protected from wind and weather also in the new MINI Convertible by the high-quality soft top with its integrated sliding roof function. Even while driving at a speed of up to 30 km/h or 20 mph, the soft top folds back fully automatically in a smooth, uninterrupted process within just 15 seconds, giving the new MINI Convertible its true purpose and quality: This is a car simply begging for driving in the open air at any time of the year, symbolising this challenge to the driver through the optionally available, absolutely unique Always-Open Timer next to the rev counter.

This unprecedented instrument shows the driver and passengers the time they have spent driving with the roof down – motivating the driver to really enjoy the thrill of open-air motoring as frequently as possible.

The new MINI Convertible offers outstanding everyday driving qualities through the Easy-Load Function, the rear-seat backrest folding down individually on either side, the split rear-seat backrest, as well as the unusually large through-loading between the luggage and passenger compartment, increasing luggage capacity to an astounding 660 litres or 23.10 cu ft.

This variability quite unique in the convertible segment is made possible by the innovative design and construction of the rollbar: The new MINI Convertible comes with a single-piece rollbar behind the rear seats extending across the complete interior width of the car, not obstructing the driver's line of visibility in any way when looking to the rear, and moving up automatically only in the event of an imminent rollover.

The new MINI Convertible is entering the market in two engine variants. The MINI Cooper Convertible offers sporting qualities right from the start with its 1.6-litre four-cylinder power unit featuring fully variable valve management for maximum output of 88 kW/120 hp at 6,000 rpm.

The MINI Cooper S Convertible is even more dynamic and performance-oriented, its 1.6-litre four-cylinder with a twin-scroll turbocharger and direct gasoline injection delivering 128 kW/175 hp at an engine speed of 5,500 rpm and thus providing a particularly refreshing feeling of the wind rushing by.

At the same time both engine variants come as standard with the latest technologies significantly reducing both fuel consumption and emissions versus the former models.

The new MINI Convertible owes its fascinating handling to suspension technology significantly enhanced and upgraded over the former model. Indeed, thanks to sophisticated wheel suspension, extremely precise electromechanical power steering, the powerful brake system and DSC Dynamic Stability Control featured as standard, the open-air MINI combines supreme agility with equally exemplary safety all round.

Design: MINI all the way, open-air motoring without compromises, and unique proportions.

The design of the MINI Convertible is the result of an evolutionary development process. Compared with the former model, the new MINI Convertible is clearly more muscular and more mature at very first sight, the beautifully chiselled body surfaces giving the new MINI Convertible an even more powerful and dynamic look.

The stretched side view exudes an even greater sense of sporting performance, the rollbar almost entirely concealed from sight boasting a silhouette clearly inspired by the classic roadster with the roof down.

A chrome bar extending round the entire body horizontally at shoulder level connects the body of the car as such with the roof and windows. The windscreen standing upright underlines the character of this uncompromising open-air performer not only through its looks, with the driver and front passenger quite literally sitting in the open air whenever the roof is down.

The open-air version of the brand is unmistakably a MINI at very first sight. The proportions of the car with short overhangs front and rear, larger wheel cut-outs, the height of the waistline and numerous design features again characteristic of the brand clearly reveal that this is a genuine MINI in every respect.

The entire front view is likewise MINI all the way, including the specific features distinguishing the MINI Cooper S Convertible from the MINI Cooper Convertible. Both models come with the hexagon radiator grille and large round headlights with integrated direction indicators in typical MINI style, forming one complete, self-contained element. The MINI Cooper S Convertible is nevertheless clearly recognisable by its Powerdome rising up 20 millimetres or almost 0.8", the stylised opening on the engine compartment lid, and the hexagonal grid pattern on the radiator grille as well as the extra-large lower air intake scoop.

On the MINI Cooper Convertible the radiator grille boasts a chrome frame and three horizontal, chrome-plated bars. The edges on the lower air intake scoop flow slightly upwards in particular attractive style.

Like the front-end design, the rear view of the new MINI Convertible offers a clear enhancement of the car's visual presence. The entire rear section is characterised by horizontal lines running parallel to one another, creating the softly flowing "steps" also to be admired on the MINI Hatch in emphasising the width of the car.

The rear lid of the new MINI Convertible opening up to the bottom comes with hinges mounted on the inside, giving the entire rear section a smooth and homogeneous surface again emphasising the powerful look of the rear end.

Standing upright in position, the rear lights are somewhat larger than on the former model. Again as on the MINI Hatch, they are surrounded by chrome frames separated from the lights themselves and therefore emanating a particular touch of class and style.

Optimised all-round visibility ensured by even larger side windows and the retractable rollbar.

The soft roof of the new MINI Convertible stands out in particular through its unique design and very practical functionality. With the roof closed the MINI Convertible comes with the proportions typical of the car, the sporting look being additionally emphasised by the low roofline.

The high-quality, absolutely wind-tight and very hard-wearing textile material rests firmly on the roof bars made of steel and aluminium, thus avoiding virtually any change in shape or bulging effect even at high speeds.

All-round visibility with the roof closed further improved over the former model results, first, from the slightly larger side windows and, second, from the newly conceived, retractable rollbar. This single-piece rollbar moving up and down as required runs across the entire width of the car just below the rear headrests, thus offering the driver unrestricted visibility without any obstruction to the rear.

Soft roof with sliding roof function – also for convenient use while driving.

The soft roof opens and closes completely within just 15 seconds, naturally with fully automatic, electrohydraulic control. After the roof has opened, it folds down snugly into the rear end of the car. And since the outer skin of the open roof faces upwards, there is no need for a tonneau cover providing particular protection.

The opening and closing mechanism is activated by a toggle switch on the front roof frame in typical MINI design. In order to ensure the spontaneous pleasure of open-air motoring or respond quickly to a sudden downpour, the opening and closing process may be initiated at road speeds of up to 30 km/h or 20 mph. A further point is that the driver is able to open the soft top before setting out by means of the remote control integrated in the ignition key.

The window bars and side windows on the MINI Convertible are retracted electrically as soon as the soft roof starts to move back, again in a fully automated process. The closing process then takes place in exactly the opposite order.

Both processes – opening and closing – are performed in a continuous flow, as long as the driver keeps the switch on the roof frame pressed down.

The unique folding roof function on the new MINI Convertible is activated completely by electric power. In this case the front section of the soft top moves back by up to 40 centimetres or approximately 16 inches, again by pressing the switch on the front roof frame. A further benefit is that the driver and occupants are able to enjoy this particular excitement of driving with a sliding roof at speeds of up to 120 km/h or 75 mph.

Guarantee for unique driving excitement: the latest generation of four-cylinder power units.

Muscular, fast-revving and extremely efficient – these are the fortes of the two four-cylinder petrol engines available in the new MINI Convertible upon its entry into the market. Indeed, thanks to these engines the generation change on the open-air MINI comes with an enormous increase in driving excitement and, at the same time, significant progress in all-round economy.

Both power units are made of light alloy and come with a displacement of 1,598 cc, featuring exactly the same distance between cylinders, as well as the same bore and stroke. At the same time they naturally benefit from all the know-how of the BMW Group in engine development and high-tech carried over from motorsport.

The four-cylinder light-alloy power units are built at the BMW Group's Hams Hall Engine Plant in Great Britain. Compared with the former model, both engines are fitted in the engine bay of the MINI Convertible at an angle of 180°, with the exhaust side now facing to the front.

MINI Cooper S Convertible: superior power and performance thanks to twin-scroll turbocharger and direct gasoline injection.

The new MINI Cooper S Convertible offers a more intense and thrilling experience of performance than ever before. As the more powerful of the two new models, the MINI Cooper S Convertible comes with a 1.6-litre four-cylinder delivering no less than 128 kW/175 hp at 5,500 rpm with the help of a twin-scroll turbocharger and direct gasoline injection. In the range between 1,600 and 5,000 rpm, this unique power unit develops maximum torque of no less than 240 Newton-metres or 177 lb-ft, further increased briefly by the Overboost function to 260 Newton-metres or 192 lb-ft whenever necessary. The twin-scroll turbocharger is particularly effective in boosting power and performance on the MINI Cooper S Convertible. The ducts of two cylinders at a time are separated from one another in the exhaust manifold and turbocharger, serving to reduce exhaust gas counterpressure at low engine speeds in order to capitalise on the dynamic effect of the pulsating gas columns in the manifold. This effect enhances turbocharger response and ensures a particularly spontaneous build-up of engine power.

As a result, the MINI Cooper S Convertible is virtually free of the “turbo gap” when accelerating so typical of a conventional turbocharged engine. Acceleration to 100 km/h comes in just 7.7, engine flexibility and response is truly impressive also at high speeds, and the top speed of the car is an equally outstanding 217 km/h or 135 mph.

The turbocharged four-cylinder featured in the MINI Cooper S Convertible benefits from the extra power of direct fuel injection applying the common-rail principle. The stainless-steel common rail linking all cylinders is filled with fuel by a high-pressure pump at the rear end of the intake camshaft. Injection valves positioned at the side of the cylinder head then deliver fuel within fractions of a second and in exact dosage from the common rail directly to the combustion chamber.

With this combination of a twin-scroll turbocharger and direct fuel injection, the new MINI Cooper S Convertible offers remarkable performance in several respects: Specific output of the engine is approximately 110 hp per litre and fuel consumption in the EU test cycle is 7.9 litres/100 kilometres, with a CO₂ rating of 189 grams per kilometre.

MINI Cooper Convertible: fully variable valve management for fresh performance.

Likewise displacing 1.6 litres, the normal-aspiration power unit in the new MINI Cooper Convertible combines fresh and sporting performance with truly outstanding economy all in one. In this case maximum output of 88 kW/120 hp comes at 6,000 rpm, torque peaking at 160 Newton-metres or 118 lb-ft at 4,250 rpm.

The innovative technical features of this four-cylinder include fully variable valve management developed on the basis of the BMW Group's unique VALVETRONIC technology. The particular forte of this valve control concept is that intake valve lift and the valve opening period are adjusted to the driver's respective power and performance requirements within fractions of a second. A further point is that valve timing is varied on both the intake and exhaust side as a function of engine speed.

Interacting with one another, variable valve management and engine speed-related camshaft control serve to optimise both the torque curve and power output. Hence, the engine of the MINI Cooper Convertible delivers superior torque right from the start at low speeds, then developing significantly more power than a conventional engine at high revs.

A further advantage offered by both technologies is the significant reduction of fuel consumption: While the new MINI Cooper Convertible accelerates to 100 km/h in 11.1 seconds and reaches a top speed of 191 km/h or 118, fuel consumption in the EU test

cycle is a mere 6.9 litres/100 kilometres and the engine's CO₂ rating is just 165 grams per kilometre.

Both engines featured in the new MINI Convertible are fitted crosswise at the front and convey their superior power to the front wheels. Composite – instead of cast – camshafts and the crankshaft optimised for weight are part of the lightweight concept boasted by these all-aluminium power units, significant innovations optimising the efficiency of the car and increasing driving excitement at the same time.

Six-speed automatic gearbox featured as standard.

Both the MINI Cooper S Convertible and the MINI Cooper Convertible come as standard with a six-speed automatic gearbox.

The use of six gears in this case naturally enhances the agile and sporting character of the new MINI Convertible.

The automatic transmission featuring electronic management to shift gears with minimum interruption of power likewise allows sporting and dynamic driving manoeuvres, combining spontaneous and precise reactions in the automatic mode with supreme gearshift comfort.

The driver is able to shift gears individually in the manual mode by means of paddles on the steering wheel, as in a Formula 1 racing car.

The new MINI Convertible offers even more dynamic performance with the help of the optionally available Sports Button. Positioned in front of the gearshift or, respectively, gear selector lever on the centre console, the Sports Button serves to mastermind engine management, the steering and, where appropriate, the automatic transmission. Activating the sports mode at the touch of a button, the driver adjusts the gas pedal control map for a far higher standard of agility and even more direct steering response. And on cars featuring automatic transmission, finally, electronic management again helps to make the gearshift even faster.

Suspension technology on the new MINI Convertible: go-kart feeling of the highest standard.

The unique position of the new MINI Convertible in its segment results to a large extent from the car's exceptional driving characteristics. The open-air MINI therefore also offers the go-kart feeling so typical of the brand, now raised to an even higher standard of excellence.

The car's suspension technology converts the superior potential of the new and particularly powerful engines safely and smoothly into enhanced agility, precise handling offering even greater driving excitement in dynamic bends, on winding country roads, and in city traffic.

On the front axle McPherson spring struts ensure excellent wheel guidance at all times. At the rear the multi-arm axle developed with all the know-how of the BMW Group consistently guarantees optimum road contact through its elaborate kinematics, the use of aluminium longitudinal arms helping to reduce weight to a minimum.

Anti-roll bars likewise reduce body sway to a very low level, again contributing to the agile and safe behaviour of the car.

Compared with the MINI Cooper Convertible, the suspension of the MINI Cooper S Convertible is even more sporting and dynamic. And as an option both models are available with sports suspension for an even higher standard of driving excitement.

EPS Electric Power Steering makes a significant contribution to the agility of the MINI Convertible now enhanced to an even higher standard. Power assistance geared to road speed guarantees low steering forces when parking as well as a precise response at high speeds on the Autobahn. At the same time EPS also enhances the efficiency of the car with the electric motor only being activated and consuming energy when power assistance is really required or desired by the driver.

DSC in conjunction with front-wheel drive.

Apart from the sports-tuned suspension and powerful brakes, the new MINI Convertible also comes with the most sophisticated driving stability systems. Technologies featured as standard are ABS anti-lock brakes, EBD Electronic Brake Force Distribution, CBC Cornering Brake Control, as well as DSC Dynamic Stability Control including Hill Start-Off Assistance.

Whenever required, DSC intervenes individually in the car's brakes and reduces engine output to provide extra stability, thus preventing the car from swerving out of control either at the front or at the rear under particularly dynamic conditions and on slippery surfaces.

The Brake Assistant also included in the DSC package recognises emergency application of the brakes and immediately builds up maximum brake power whenever necessary, keeping the car's stopping distance as short as possible.

The MINI Cooper Convertible comes as standard on 16-inch light-alloy wheels with 195/55 R 16 runflat tyres. The MINI Cooper S Convertible runs on 17-inch light-alloy wheels and 205/45 R 17 runflat tyres enabling the driver to continue even after a complete puncture with full loss of pressure.

As an option both models are available, inter alia, with 17-inch rims in Black Star Bullet Design developed exclusively for the MINI Convertible.

Optimised occupant safety ensured by the new rollover safety system, four airbags and central safety electronics.

Sophisticated suspension technology and the most advanced driving stability systems in the new MINI Convertible significantly reduce the risk of an accident. Suitable precautions are also taken for situations the driver is not able to influence, an increase in passenger cell stiffness by ten per cent over the former model, high load-resistant carrier structures and precisely defined deformation zones ensuring appropriate diversion and absorption of impact energy in the event of a head-on, side or rear-end collision.

To meet the specific needs of an open-air car, the newly constructed floorpan as well as A-pillars and side-sills reinforced to an even higher standard than on the closed MINI provide additional strength and stability.

The new MINI Convertible comes as standard with frontal airbags and side head/thorax airbags integrated in the outer flanks of the front seat backrest and protecting both the head, the upper body and the hips of the occupants from injury in the event of a side-on collision. All four seats feature three-point inertia-reel seat belts with additional belt force limiters and optimised belt tensioners on the front seats. All restraint systems are masterminded by the car's central safety electronics and are activated as a function of the type and severity of a collision.

The safety system in the MINI Convertible also comprises a rollover sensor activating the newly developed rollbar as well as the belt latch tensioners and the head/thorax airbags in the event of a rollover. Interacting with the windscreen frame appropriately reinforced on the Convertible, the new rollbar moving up electromechanically within 150 milliseconds whenever required acts as part of the passenger cell ensuring maximum occupant safety and protection.

In its all-round safety concept, the new MINI Convertible is designed to fulfil not only the legal requirements in all international car markets and, but also to achieve outstanding results in all relevant crash tests and consumer safety inspections the world over.

The interior: spacious, variable, sophisticated.

Through its design and construction, the new rollbar enhances not only occupant safety, but also the everyday driving qualities of the new MINI Convertible. Made of one single piece of aluminium, the rollbar extends across the entire width of the interior behind the rear seats. The two ends of the rollbars rest in holders moving up the entire safety unit electromechanically whenever required. In its lowered position, on the other hand, the rollbar is no higher than the rear headrests, thus remaining outside of the driver's area of visibility in looking to the rear.

Designed as a single-piece element, the rollbar furthermore serves to integrate a large through-loading facility between the luggage and the passenger compartment, giving the new MINI Convertible additional variability.

Depending on requirements, the rear-seat backrest split down the middle folds down either in a 50:50 subdivision or completely from right to left. With the roof closed, this increases luggage compartment capacity to 660 litres or 23.10 cubic feet, exceeding the capacity available in the former model by 55 litres or 1.93 cubic feet. Maximum load, in turn, is up by 30 kg (66 lb) to 430 kg (948 lb).

Like its predecessor, the new MINI Convertible again comes with an Easy-Load system. With the rear lid swivelling down conveniently, the entire lid also serves as a storage tray able to carry a load of up to 80 kg or 176 lb.

A further important point is that the rear roof frame swivels up by approximately 35°, creating a generous luggage compartment opening for much easier loading of bulky objects.

With the roof open, in turn, the new MINI Convertible offers luggage capacity of 125 litres or 4.38 cubic feet, exceeding the capacity provided by the former model by 5 litres. As long as the roof is closed, the parcel shelf resting on two guide rails and holding the roof when open swivels up to the top, increasing luggage capacity to 170 litres or 5.95 cubic feet, another 5 litres more than on the former model.

Again, this gives the new MINI Convertible a unique combination of driving excitement and function. And even the influence of the wind rushing by with the roof open may be set to individual requirements, the optionally available wind deflector serving to significantly reduce air swirl within the interior. Fitted in position behind the front seats, the wind deflector moves up quickly and easily in one simple operation.

Premium quality and diverse style within the interior.

Quality and sophisticated flair of an even higher standard, controls and instruments in modern design, as well as high-quality materials give the new MINI Convertible an outstanding position right from the start even in standard trim as the world's only premium convertible in its segment.

The wide range of paintwork and roof colours, interior variants and special equipment simply begs the enthusiast to take a closer look at the car – especially because the new MINI Convertible comes with a complete choice of customisation options so typical of the brand, making each and every car a personally configured one-off showpiece. The body of the new MINI Convertible is available in no less than 12 paintwork colours, including Horizon Blue and Midnight Black metallic featured for the first time as well as Interchange Yellow exclusive to this stunning car. The soft roof comes as standard either in Black or classic Hot Chocolate Brown. As an option there is also the Denim Blue roof colour characterised by a particularly sporting and robust flair of material, a silver effect generated by gloss threads woven into the roof, and Orange-coloured seams in jeans look.

In regular trim the interior of the MINI Cooper Convertible comes with seats in Cosmos cloth and Carbon Black upholstery colour. The MINI Cooper S Convertible, in turn, features sports seats in Checkered cloth and Carbon Black colour as standard. Sports seats are also available on both models with cloth/leather upholstery.

This variant comes in the special combination of Dark Grey in pinstripe design with contrasting seams in Interchange Yellow specific to the MINI Convertible alone. Both the MINI Cooper Convertible and the MINI Cooper S Convertible are furthermore available as an option with four versions of leather: Punch leather in Carbon Black, Gravity Leather in Tuscan Beige, as well as Lounge Leather in either Carbon Black or Hot Chocolate.

The interior surfaces are also finished with specific features on each model, the MINI Cooper Convertible boasting trim surfaces on the dashboard, elliptic door rings and seven trim rings in Fine White Silver, while the MINI Cooper S Convertible comes with Checkered trim at the same points, with the number of trim rings increased to sixteen. As an option the interior trim surfaces are also available in Fluid Silver, Piano Black, Brushed Alloy, and English Oak, as well as Interchange Yellow and Horizon Blue exclusive to the MINI Convertible and corresponding with the body colour.

As yet another styling feature, the optional Colour Line accentuates the lower section of the instrument panel and the armrests on the doors in Dark Grey, Cream White, Rooster Red, Pacific Blue, or – exclusive to the MINI Convertible – Hot Chocolate.

Automatic air conditioning with a Convertible mode.

The new MINI Convertible comes with either air conditioning or automatic climate control. The automatic unit even comprises a special Convertible mode activated automatically as soon as the roof is opened. In the Convertible mode the temperature set by the driver and passengers is consistently maintained even under the influence of the wind rushing by.

Whenever the a/c compressor is not used it is automatically switched off in the interest of enhanced efficiency. And in low outside temperatures the heating in the footwells is automatically intensified to provide a pleasant climate inside the car as quickly as possible.

The Convertible mode is deactivated as soon as the driver closes the roof and the interior temperature required is set automatically through the usual process.

Top-end audio system.

Like the MINI Hatch and the MINI Clubman, the new MINI Convertible may also be upgraded by fitting particularly high-end entertainment. The audio system featured as standard comes with a CD player and six loudspeakers. External music players may be integrated without problems in the audio systems of the new MINI Convertible. Using the AUX port featured as standard, the driver or passengers are able, for example, to play music saved on an MP3 player via the audio system.

Every minute counts: the Always-Open Timer.

The new MINI Convertible is also available as an option with a very special new feature highlighting the thrill of driving in the open air: Positioned to the left of the rev counter, the Always-Open Timer specifies precisely, down to the last minute, how long the driver and passengers have enjoyed their car with the roof down.

This special instrument is activated once the driver starts the engine of the MINI Convertible and the soft top is fully open. An analogue indicator moving on a scale from 0–60 then counts the time spent driving in the open air in minutes. After one hour of such driving excitement, the indicator moves back to its starting point and the first LED light on a six-light scale will come on within the circular instrument.

The period spent driving with the roof open is also determined by the on-board computer, an indicator in the lower section of the rev counter allowing the user to check out both an interim reading and the overall time spent driving in the open air.

The Always-Open Timer is a truly unique instrument clearly expressing the exceptional excitement of driving the MINI Convertible with the roof down also in straightforward facts and figures. Indeed, it prompts the driver and passengers to enjoy the thrilling features of everyday traffic as often as they can. And at the same time it symbolises the invitation by the MINI Convertible to enjoy a particularly appealing driving experience.

With all these qualities and features, this innovative instrument raises the style and character of this open four-seater to yet another charming highlight: The MINI Convertible is the ideal companion for the motorist aware of the thrill of open-air motoring at all times and wishing to enjoy these special moments in particular style.

4. Breakthrough into the Fourth Dimension: The MINI Crossover Concept.



No MINI has ever been the same as this unique model. But still it is obvious at very first sight that this is a MINI, a genuine MINI.

The MINI Crossover Concept stands out through a brand-new interpretation of that unique look so typical of the brand, through its unmistakable design, and through unique quality features so typical of this small premium car with its unique character. Hence, the Concept Car offers a thrilling outlook at a new facet of the brand borne out by a truly innovative body concept, the fourth after the classic two-door, the MINI Convertible, and the MINI Clubman.

The MINI Crossover Concept stands out as a new model variant for the first time measuring more than four metres in length and with four drive wheels, four doors and four single seats. But at the same time the new model maintains the design language so typical of the brand, combining the striking signs of distinction at the front, side and rear with the specific proportions of a MINI and a new roof structure in a particularly robust and sturdy look.

The MINI Crossover Concept is looking at new targets and, at the same time, new target groups. It combines the individual style and aura of the brand with extra space and transport capacities of a standard unknown with MINI so far, plus supreme flexibility within the interior to meet all kinds of demands in everyday life and leisure-time activities through truly innovative solutions.

Boasting features of this kind, the MINI Crossover Concept is ideal for the discerning motorist seeking to combine the individual style of the brand with enhanced versatility within the interior and innovative functionality all round. So more than ever before, the Design Study symbolises MINI's principle of the car transcending the usual classes and barriers and meeting all kinds of mobility requirements in our modern age.

Within the MINI Crossover Concept the characteristic design of the new model is further enhanced by appropriate extension of the many design, colour and material features, as well as the individual arrangement of seats and innovative equipment pointing in an entirely new direction.

The MINI Crossover Concept comes with single seats also at the rear. The MINI Center Rail, in turn, positioned between the seats on the centre console, serves as a universal and highly versatile communication system extending from the dashboard all the way to the rear end and not only offering unconventional storage options, but also providing a direct connection between the front and rear seats.

Yet a further highlight within the interior is the innovative central instrument in three dimensions, the MINI Center Globe. This combined control and display unit featured for the first time ever in an automobile as a distinctive globe sets new standards in the integrated management of entertainment, communication, navigation and vehicle functions.

The MINI Crossover Concept reflects not only the great potential in enlarging the MINI model family, but also the innovative power of MINI's exterior and interior designers. This outlook at an additional MINI vehicle concept is enriched by a wide range of visions for a truly unique driving experience and way of life only a MINI is able to offer.

All innovations featured in the MINI Crossover Concept seek to add a new dimension to that characteristic MINI feeling. The innovative character of the car comprises the body, drivetrain, interior and control concept all together. Indeed, it is through this diversity of outstanding features that the MINI Crossover Concept will conquer new forms of mobility also beyond the urban environment.

All-wheel drive – the foundation for a new MINI feeling.

A new MINI offers more – and it does so in unique style.

The MINI Crossover Concept follows precisely this very special principle, with all-wheel drive serving to give the new model an even wider range of practical use and at the same time enhancing the driver's and passengers' experience also on well-known routes and along the beaten track. In the process the MINI Crossover Concept is not restricted to the status of a conventional all-wheel-drive car. Rather, to ensure a truly intense experience of this extra mobility, the Concept Car offers a wide range of features and equipment making it a genuine all-round talent in everyday life, in enjoying your leisure-time and on travels far and wide.

Four metres in length – more calibre, more options.

As a consistent enhancement of the MINI model family, the MINI Crossover Concept offers new calibre in every respect. First and foremost, this is the first MINI measuring more than four metres in length. And with its width of 1,830 millimetres/72.0" and height of 1,598 millimetres/62.9", the MINI Crossover Concept goes beyond all MINI production models so far also in this respect – as does the car's wheelbase of 2,606 millimetres or 102.6".

These external dimensions of the Concept Car are yet a further symbol of the search for additional options in use and an even greater and more versatile driving experience. The MINI Crossover Concept offers extra space and mobility on the rear seats as well as transport capacity to a standard never seen before in a MINI. And added to this, there is greater flexibility also within the interior reflecting the occupants' individual wishes and requirements.

Combining unique design with outstanding agility not limited to hard tarmac alone, the MINI Crossover Concept ranks supreme within the overall MINI segment. At the same time, appropriate re-interpretation of typical design features clearly reveals that this is a fully-fledged member of the MINI model family. The MINI Crossover Concept therefore symbolises the brand's entry into a new segment, making the brand even more attractive to an even larger target group.

Design features typical of the brand re-interpreted in new style.

In the design of its body, the MINI Crossover Concept leaves no doubt as to the brand it represents. Unmistakable design features are to be admired at very first sight and at the same time the ongoing development of the design spectrum clearly reveals how the design language has been carried over to a new kind of vehicle.

The smooth but taut design of the body, the emphasis on the wide track front and rear, short overhangs at both ends, the high shoulder line and slender body pillars in a dark colour giving the windows around the passenger compartment the look of a band running round the entire car, enhancing the overall style and appearance so typical of the MINI. The particularly wide, dark body frame extending down to the road and also encompassing the wheel arches, finally, underlines the robust flair and appearance of this all-wheel-drive Concept Car.

Added to this there are the characteristic design features at the front, side and rear giving the MINI Crossover Concept a new look. The large round headlights integrated in the side panels, for example, are slanted at an unusual angle, the foglamps are integrated in the hexagon radiator grille particularly large in size and highlighted by three sturdy crossbars.

Viewed from the side: a matter of perspectives.

Seen from the side, the characteristic roof line of the MINI Crossover Concept comes out particularly clearly, merging down gently to the rear, with the upper edge of the side window running parallel to the roof railing.

Starting at the C-pillars, the roof continues to the rear at a lower point, giving the rear window extending round the flanks of the car a particularly low and dynamic look and making the roof look extra-robust especially at this point.

Like the MINI, the MINI Convertible, and the MINI Clubman, the MINI Crossover Concept comes with unique roof graphics immediately revealing that this is a very special car – the MINI Crossover Concept. Indeed, the roof of the MINI Crossover Concept reminiscent of a helmet underlines the unique concept of this four-door through its particularly graphic look.

Again in typical MINI style, a chrome bar extends round the entire body beneath the windows. In addition, the Side Scuttle, as it is called, bearing the side direction indicators, also comes in a new look.

The MINI Crossover Concept is characterised by its particular asymmetry from the side created by the car's special doors: The front passenger's side comes in the classic design of a four-door with two door handles. On the driver's side, on the other hand, you see only one door opener, a special feature giving the left-hand side of the MINI Crossover Concept a particularly coupé-like and sporting touch.

This asymmetric design and the unusual roof concept are additionally emphasised by the car's colour scheme. The body of the MINI Crossover Concept comes in Minimal Grey Metallic, the roof is in Emerald Green. The rear-view mirror on the driver's side is finished in Dark Green also to be admired on the wheel rims, again on the driver's side.

The MINI Crossover Concept comes on 18-inch six-spoke light-alloy rims, in split-spoke design on the right and in lifestar classic on the left. Again, this distinction highlights the versatile character of the Concept Car combining highly functional qualities with a sporting and active look.

The rear end of the MINI Crossover Concept is characterised by the car's basic shape and design growing wider as you move down. The unique kinematics of the rear door, on the other hand, are not visible from outside, the high-rising rear window and the powerfully designed rear door underlining the strong and robust character of the car.

Slender and unusually high rear lights placed far to the outside and surrounded by a broad band of chrome bear clear testimony to the classic Mini models with their similar rear light contours.

Four doors – new diversity through asymmetric arrangement.

With two doors on each side, the MINI Crossover Concept ensures particularly convenient access to the rear, once again enhancing the options already offered by the MINI's existing body concepts.

But that is not all: The MINI Crossover Concept is not a four-door in the classic sense of the word, as the asymmetric configuration of the doors on the Design Study clearly proves. Rather, a conventional arrangement is only to be found on the front passenger's side, with the MINI Crossover Concept featuring a conventional door for the first row of seats and a lift/sliding door at the rear running back at the outside also for loading the car on the driver's side with utmost convenience.

This is a four-joint door patented by MINI and offering particularly long travel front-to-rear through additional force control on the rail.

Dropping the B-pillar on the driver's side, the extra-large opening offers even better loading conditions and easier access.

The lift/sliding door for accessing the rear seats can only be opened once the front door is open. The handle for the sliding door is located on the front door edge, with frameless side windows offering another sign of distinction quite unique on a four-door and emphasising the transparency of the overall concept.

The rear door swivelling in one piece to the side together with its likewise frameless, electrically retractable window again offers even greater practical value and loading options. The rear door is unlocked by the contact switch in the door itself and subsequently swivels to the right around the car. And through its elaborate kinematics, finally, the door offers a particularly large opening angle.

Thanks to this large opening and the low loading sill, sports equipment and other bulky objects fit easily into the luggage compartment, with extra capacity provided inside by lowering the folding rear seats into the door of the car by means of a special parallelogram kinematic mechanism.

To stow small objects in the luggage compartment, in turn, all the driver or passengers have to do is open the rear window instead of the complete door, the window moving down electrically at a touch of a button.

Additional storage capacity is offered by transport boxes fitted on clamping rails specially installed for this purpose outside on the rear door. And last but not least, the roof rail system featured on the MINI Crossover Concept is ideal for carrying ski, snowboard and bicycle racks as well as transport boxes of all sizes.

Flexible roof structure: open for open-air driving excitement and all kinds of transport requirements.

The roof structure of the MINI Crossover Concept offers further options for the enhancement of everyday driving qualities and leisure-time enjoyment. As a folding roof stretching across almost the entire length of the roof area, it opens from both the front and from behind, ensuring an ample supply of fresh air and/or warm sunshine in the car, depending on the driver's and passengers' wishes.

A further advantage is that the opening at the rear end is simply ideal for stowing away extremely long objects ranging from a surfboard to cross-country skis, allowing the driver to take along virtually every kind of cargo in the MINI Crossover Concept.

The folding roof is made of a highly resistant textile also used on convertible roofs. Extra-stable elements made of a special plastic material front and rear ensure a precise fit to the body. The variable opening mechanism is a consistent enhancement of the roof system, allowing the driver and passengers to position the folding roof at any point in the roof opening.

Thanks to this unique option, the roof may be opened up to 40 centimetres or nearly 16 inches at the front for a pleasant supply of fresh air. And at the same time it may be raised at the rear in order to lift bulky objects into the loading space.

The roof of the MINI Crossover Concept also offers passengers at the rear the opportunity to enjoy the sliding roof function, giving the car in this position the unique style and character of a classic open tourer saloon with the rear passengers enjoying the world around them in every respect.

Yet a further point is that the car's designers provide individual customisation options right from the start, one possible option being to fit a glass sliding roof of the usual size or a panorama glass roof with a particularly large opening as an alternative to the folding roof. And even that is not all: A further option might be a so-called yacht roof with contours similar to the deck of a yacht as well as glass openings for extra light and style. Then the roof might also come with two storage boxes accessible from inside the car as well as folding LCD monitors in the roof lining.

Four single seats for maximum comfort inside the MINI.

The MINI Crossover Concept is not just an unconventional four-door, but really a truly exceptional four-seater. The single seats at the rear come with the same contours as the driver's and front passenger's seats and are adjustable fore-and-aft by no less than 13 centimetres (5.1"). So depending on individual requirements, this provides lounge-like legroom or additional storage room at the rear of the passenger compartment.

The backrests on the front seats come with transport nets and elastic lashing straps on the back, serving to conveniently stow away travel utensils such as road maps, CDs, magazines, game consoles or beverage cans and bottles. The headrests may also be fitted with lashing straps or LCD monitors at the back, the latter serving to offer a high-class rear-seat entertainment system.

The MINI Center Globe – the vision of a central instrument of the future.

Featuring their large circular central instrument right in the middle of the dashboard, the current MINI models come with an interior highlight quite unique in its function and unmistakable in its looks. This multifunction display serves to mastermind all major entertainment, telecommunication and navigation functions, with the speedometer extending round the edge from one end to the other.

The MINI Crossover Concept now consistently enhances this display and control concept to an even higher level through the introduction of the MINI Center Globe: For the first time on this Concept Car the central display and control unit are finished as a globe allowing use and operation from all sides.

The three-dimensional design of the MINI Center Globe allows even more consistent integration of functions and the appropriate presentation of information and entertainment options. In addition to conventional displays currently limited to vertical and horizontal presentation, the new instrument also uses the third dimension, the depth of space. Display functions may therefore be stratified on various layers, then being highlighted to a greater or lesser degree, depending on the driver's and front passenger's wishes.

The current speed of the car is presented in typical MINI style on a display round the outside with a red liquid in a tube surrounding the MINI Center Globe moving round in a circle as a function of speed.

This display is combined with the so-called heartbeat function: Depending on the driver's style of motoring, a red light flashes on and off in the lower section of the central instrument in varying frequency. So the faster the MINI is driving and the quicker the speed indicator beats, the higher the heart rate of the car itself and the driver.

Unique the world over: laser projection technology in the car.

The most advanced laser projection technology serves to present all information clearly, flexibly and in perfectly legible style at all times. Thanks to this new technology never featured in an automobile before, the projection globe may be split up into two hemispheres allowing the driver and front passenger to use and enjoy different functions recognisable only from their respective position.

As an example, the front passenger may surf the internet while the driver retains his free vision of all displays and indicators presented the MINI Center Globe. To do this, the hemisphere facing the front passenger is closed off and serves as the projection surface for the functions and features the front passenger would like to enjoy.

With its unique optical qualities, the laser projector is able to present images on various levels at the same time, in all cases in excellent focus and with unusually powerful colours. Indeed, the colour saturation achieved by this technology is far better than that of an LCD display.

Yet a further point is that the laser projector is most suitable for presenting pictures on a curved surface. The central instrument featured in the Concept Car therefore already offers an impression of the navigation, communication and entertainment options the car of the future may well provide through innovative technology.

Versatile control, clear operation.

The MINI Center Globe may be controlled in four different ways: To use the touch-sensitive surface of the globe, all the driver or front passenger have to do is touch the appropriate point on the surface in order to activate a function, overriding a tangible resistance in the process. The second option is for the driver to choose information and specific functions via a trackball on the steering wheel, allowing him to keep both hands on the wheel while driving. The keys and slide controls for functions used particularly often such as the main menu, audio functions, Ambient Light and even a fragrance function are located in the lower section of the MINI Center Globe, enabling the driver and front passenger, simply by pressing a button or pushing a slide, to vary the colour of the Ambient Light or to create various fragrances inside the car, depending on their personal preference. And last but not least, the front passenger has direct access to a number of additional functions via a keyboard moving out of the instrument panel at the touch of a button.

The MINI Center Globe is connected directly to the starter system for the engine. Instead of a conventional key, however, the driver in this case uses a start/stop unit referred to as the Keyball. All he does is insert the Keyball on the MINI Crossover Concept into the opening provided for this purpose along the upper

edge of the MINI Center Globe, the Keyball then rolls along the side facing the driver towards the middle of the central instrument. Now the driver may press the Keyball to start the engine. Pressing it again, he subsequently switches off the engine, the Keyball rolls down into a storage bin from where it may be conveniently removed.

The MINI Center Globe is activated automatically during the starting process, the two hemispheres previously closed at the top opening up to provide a clear view of the MINI Center Globe inside.

The contours of a world map are engraved in the surface of the MINI Center Globe, which therefore resembles a genuine globe of the world – a symbol universally acknowledged for its significance as a universal travel companion and orientation aid. Precisely this is why a line around the “equator” tilts in all directions as a function of the car’s current position, assuming the role of an artificial horizon as on a compass. At the same time a model MINI on the same line shows the movements of the actual car.

As long as the MINI Center Globe remains closed, laser projection in this mode shows the current location of other MINI drivers in contact with the car owner on a world map.

Smaller globes on the right-hand side of the MINI Center Globe help the driver and passengers communicate with the world around them. So depending on whether they have received an e-mail, voice mail or a text message, one of these three globes will light up, the respective message being presented or played back as soon as the user presses the appropriate globe.

Over and above these features, the MINI Center Globe offers new options for customised use of the car. So in addition to their personal profiles already saved in a modern car key on a production model these days, the Keyball may be configured specifically to the driver. Apart from the driver’s preferred seating and steering wheel position, as well as the set-up of the entertainment system, telephone lists, music files or navigation routes may also be saved on the Keyball, offering the driver all the information he needs while travelling.

The MINI Center Rail: the ideal connection between and the front and rear seats.

Instead of a conventional centre console, the MINI Crossover Concept comes with a fastening rail extending all the way from the dashboard to the tailgate and referred to as the MINI Center Rail. This is the connecting element between the front seats and the rear, enhancing the joint driving experience in the MINI.

Holders for entertainment and telecommunication devices, cupholders, storage bins and boxes may be fitted to this rail and then pushed forwards or backwards throughout the entire length of the car.

The MINI Center Rail is equipped with an integrated cable channel for connecting mobile phones or external MP3 players to the rail in any position desired, thus linking up to the car's entertainment system. A special fastening system developed for this very special MINI serves furthermore to fit all kinds of units and items to the Center Rail, such as an external music player and other devices, boxes and storage bins for sunglasses, gloves, tickets for a car park, coins, writing utensils or a travel guide as well as all kinds of holders. Yet a further option is to fit an armrest with an integrated storage box both front and rear. And last but not least, the Center Rail may take up cupholders and transport boxes of various size, laptop holders, additional sources of light for interior illumination, or even a cooling box.

These innovative fastening options offered by the MINI Center Rail allow the user to fasten all kinds of holders and boxes firmly in position. At the same time the Center Rail also provides the possibility, through its rail structure, to use individual items alternately at the front or rear, simply by pushing such items to and fro. Clearly, this facilitates the common use of an external music player, just as it allows the front and rear occupants to exchange food and drinks conveniently while driving.

In the MINI Crossover Concept this joint experience on wheels is enhanced to the maximum by a special series of porcelain dishes and cups created specifically for the Concept Car. Fitting conveniently on the MINI Center Rail, this special porcelain may then be pushed up and down through the entire car along the rail.

These sophisticated dishes and cups may also be stored conveniently on top of one another for use outside the car, for example on a picnic while travelling. Through their classic quality, these individual items of porcelain made elaborately by hand and designed specifically for the MINI Crossover Concept offer genuine French lifestyle of the highest standard. And at the same time they provide an attractive contrast of traditional and modern values within the interior of this visionary Design Study.

Four sophisticated materials for an exclusive ambience.

Use of the finest porcelain clearly accentuates the exclusive lifestyle character offered by the MINI Crossover Concept also through three other particularly exclusive materials featured within the interior: Genuine wood trim across the entire width of the car adds a particular touch of elegance to the dashboard. The armrests on the doors and the inlays in the footwells are likewise made of solid lime wood, and both the door linings as well as the air vent surrounds come with inlays made of specially hardened glass shimmering in Lagoon Blue.

Like the door closing handles on the front passenger's side, the MINI Center Rail is made of massive, matt-polished aluminium. The choice of colours in the interior, in turn, places the emphasis on natural, authentic shades, the leather on the driver's seat in Dark Green standing out clearly from the Coffee Brown leather on the other seats.

To emphasize the car's clear focus on the driver, the door closing handle on the driver's side, the gearshift lever knob, the spokes on the steering wheel and the exterior mirror on the driver's side all come in Emerald Green.

The remaining cloth surfaces are finished in Light Grey and Brown, with soft rubber covers incorporating wood inlays in the footwells.

The surfaces within the car gain additional appeal through the intentional contrast of matt and glossy surfaces on interior units positioned directly next to one another. The use of colours and materials also featured on the exterior of the MINI Crossover Concept serves in addition to create a visual link between the outside and the inside of the car. As an example, the surface structure on the back of the seats resembles the texture of the folding roof, while the paintwork on the roof is the same as the colour on the equipment and interior elements facing the driver. And last but not least, the lower part of the instrument panel comes in Minimal Grey, the same colour as the body of the car.

The MINI Crossover Concept: visions for mobility of the future.

Introducing the MINI Crossover Concept, MINI is presenting not only a fascinating option extending the brand family by an innovative new philosophy, but also a progressive vision of mobility of the future. The concept study takes up the great potential of the MINI brand in catering for all kinds of target groups, a standard of diversity already confirmed clearly by the success of the three existing models, the MINI, the MINI Convertible, and MINI Clubman. And now this new rendition of the MINI with its typical features comes in authentic style, naturally maintaining the core values, driving excitement, lifestyle and premium quality so typical of the brand.

The MINI Crossover Concept is the answer to the changing demands made by a modern target group oriented to a modern way of life. It comes with outstanding innovations in technology, features and equipment never seen before even beyond the MINI segment. In particular, however, the MINI Crossover Concept stimulates our fantasy and offers a taste of the MINI driving experience in store for the future.

5. Driving Excitement without Emissions: The MINI E.



The BMW Group is the world's first manufacturer of premium automobiles to deploy a fleet of over 500 all-electric vehicles for private use in daily traffic. The MINI E is powered by a 150 kW (204 hp) electric motor fed by a high-performance rechargeable lithium-ion battery, transferring its power to the front wheels via a single-stage helical gearbox nearly without a sound and entirely free of emissions.

Specially engineered for automobile use, the battery technology will have a range of more than 250 kilometres or 155 miles. The MINI E will initially be made available to select private and corporate customers as part of a pilot project in the US states of California, New York and New Jersey.

Starting in early summer 2009 fifty MINI Es will also be entering everyday use on the roads in Berlin and a further 15 MINIEs in Munich, Germany. In a joint project bringing together the BMW Group and energy suppliers Vattenfall Europe and E.ON Energie, these cars will be supplied with electric power generated from renewable energy, making not only the actual use of the MINI E absolutely clean, with zero emissions, but also the supply of energy to the car.

The MINI E's electric drive train produces peak torque of 220 Newton meters or 162 lb-ft, delivering seamless acceleration to 100 km/h (62 mph) in 8.5 seconds. Top speed is electronically limited to 152 km/h (95 mph). Featuring a suspension system tuned to match its weight distribution, the MINI E sports the brand's hallmark agility and outstanding handling.

By introducing the MINI E, the BMW Group is underscoring the resolve with which it works towards reducing energy consumption and emissions in road traffic. The BMW Group is drawing on its unique technological expertise in the field of drive systems to develop a vehicle concept enabling zero emissions without renouncing the joy of driving. Putting more than 500 cars on the road under real daily traffic conditions will make it possible to gain widely applicable hands-on experience. Evaluating these findings will generate valuable know-how, which will be factored into the engineering of mass-produced vehicles. The BMW Group aims to start series production of all-electric

vehicles over the medium term as part of its Number ONE strategy. The development of innovative concepts for mobility in big-city conurbations within the scope of “project i” has a similar thrust, as its objective also includes making use of an all-electric powertrain.

The energy storage unit: cutting-edge lithium-ion technology engineered specifically for use in the MINI.

Based on the “regular” MINI, the MINI E will initially be available as a two-seater. The space taken up by rear-seat passengers in the series model has been reserved for the lithium-ion battery. When in use in the zero-emission MINI, the battery unit combines high output with ample storage capacity and a small footprint with power ratios unrivalled in this field of application so far. The lithium-ion storage unit will have a maximum capacity of 35 kilowatt hours (kWh) and transmit energy to the electric motor as direct current at a nominal 380 volts. The rechargeable battery is made up of 5,088 cells grouped into 48 modules. These modules are packaged into three battery elements compactly arranged inside the MINI E.

The energy storage unit's basic components are based on the technological principle that has proven itself in practice in power supplies for mobile phones and portable computers. The MINI E's lithium-ion battery can be plugged into all standard power outlets. Its charge time is strongly dependent on the voltage and amperage of the electricity flowing through the grid. In the USA users can recharge a battery that has been completely drained within a very short period of time using a wallbox that will be shipped with every MINI E. The wallbox will be installed in the customer's garage, enable higher amperage, and thus provide for extremely short charging times. Wallboxes fully recharge batteries after a mere two-and-a-half hours.

Apart from the use of the MINI E in Berlin in everyday traffic by private drivers, the joint project also involves the establishment of public infrastructure for supplying energy to the electric car. Gained from renewable energy, electric current may be fed to the cars at charging stations spread out over the city.

Driven by electricity: reliably, affordably, and free of emissions.

A full recharge draws a maximum of 28 kilowatt hours of electricity from the grid. Based on the car's range, a kilowatt hour translates into 5.4 miles. Besides the benefit of zero-emission driving, the MINI E thus also offers significant economic advantages over a vehicle powered by a conventional internal combustion engine. The heavy-duty battery delivers its power to an electric motor, which transforms this muscle into thrilling agility. Mounted transversely beneath the MINI E's bonnet, the drivetrain unleashes its full thrust from a dead standstill, providing for the car's fascinating launch capability.

The MINI E's intense driving experience is augmented by its dynamic deceleration potential also directly coupled to the accelerator pedal. As soon as the driver releases the gas pedal, the electric motor acts as a generator. This results in braking force, and the power recovered from the kinetic energy is fed back to the battery.

This interaction ensures extremely comfortable drives – especially at medium speed with constant, but marginal, variation. In city traffic some 75 percent of all deceleration can be done without the brakes. Making substantial use of this energy recuperation function extends the car's range by up to 20 percent.

That typical MINI agility in new guise.

Weighing in at 1,465 kilograms (3,230 lb), the MINI E ensures even weight distribution front to rear, with minor modifications to the suspension allowing safe handling at all times. The car's DSC Dynamic Stability Control has been adapted to the specific wheel loads.

The MINI E's brake system comes with a newly developed electric underpressure pump. Its Electrical Power Assisted Steering (EPS) is the same as the one used in the "regular" mass-produced MINIs. Both brake and steering assistance react to driving conditions and are thus extremely efficient. Even the air conditioning's electrical compressor only operates if desired or necessary.

Design: unmistakably MINI, undoubtedly new.

Even at very first glance, the MINI E is obviously an iteration of the brand. But its design, which is the blueprint for the zero-emission two-seater, has been complemented by a number of visual cues that point to its revolutionary drive concept. All of the units produced for the pilot project will have the same paintwork and bear a serial number next to their direction indicator lights.

The MINI E's coachwork sports an exclusive combination of metallic Dark Silver on all panels but the roof, which is clad in Pure Silver. What distinguishes the zero-emission MINI is a specially designed logo in Interchange Yellow, depicting a stylised power plug in the shape of an "E" set against the silver backdrop. This logo has been applied to the roof, in smaller dimensions to the front and back, to the charger port lid, the dashboard trim, and – combined with the MINI logo – to the door jamb, in slightly modified form. The colour of the roof edges, mirror housings, interior style cues and seat seams will also match the logo's yellow tone.

Moreover, the central gauge and the battery level indicator behind the wheel of the MINI E, which replaces the MINI's rev counter, feature yellow lettering against a dark grey background. The battery level is displayed in percentage figures. The central

gauge includes an LED display indicating power consumption in red and power recuperation in green.

MINI E customers will be part of a pioneering mission.

A limited-production MINI E series of more than 500 units will be manufactured up to the end of 2008, giving the project an order of magnitude clearly exceeding the size of currently comparable test series. Putting the MINI E on the road on a daily basis will be a pioneering feat to which both the drivers and engineers of the first zero-emission MINI will contribute as a team.

MINI E customers will join forces with BMW Group experts to assist in the project's scientific evaluation. MINI E engineers give great significance to staying in touch with the drivers on a regular basis, as this will help them analyse driver behaviour as well as vehicle characteristics in order to gain the most accurate and realistic picture of the demands placed on a vehicle with purely electrical drive in the areas of usage involved.

Special charging station and full service for every MINI E.

The cars based in the USA will change hands on a one-year lease with an extension option, the cars in Germany will be provided for a six-month period of use. Monthly lease installments will cover any technical service required, including all necessary maintenance and the replacement of wearing parts. At the end of the lease, all of the automobiles in the project will be returned to the BMW Group's engineering fleet where they will be subjected to comparative tests.

In the USA the MINI E's lithium-ion battery can be charged from a wallbox provided to MINI customers. Only lockable garages or similar buildings will qualify in the United States as homebases and power stations for the MINI E.

Maintenance by qualified specialists.

The electric drive's high-voltage technology requires that maintenance work be done by qualified personnel using special tools not included in MINI service partners' standard toolboxes. In the light of this particular situation, a service base will be established on both coasts, staffed by service engineers specially trained to perform maintenance and repair work on the MINI E's electrical components. In the event of drive malfunction, these experts will provide professional support at the customer's local MINI dealership or at the service base's specially equipped workshop. Technical inspections will take place after 3,000 miles (just under 5,000 kilometres) and at least after six months.

In Berlin a complete service package is also part of the offer made to users of the MINI E.

Production in Oxford and Munich.

The MINI E has already gone through the major phases of product development for mass-produced vehicles and has passed numerous crash tests on the way. Aspects investigated over and above passenger protection were the impact of collision forces on the lithium-ion battery and finding a non-hazardous location for the battery in the car. The MINI E's energy storage unit emerged completely unscathed from all of the crash tests mandated by US standards, which are especially high.

Production of the 500-plus cars will take place at the company's Oxford and Munich plants and is scheduled for completion before the end of 2008. MINI's UK plant will be responsible for manufacturing the entire vehicle with the exception of the drive components and the lithium-ion battery, with the brand's series models rolling off its assembly lines at the same time. The electric cars will then be transferred to a specially equipped manufacturing complex on BMW plant premises where the electric motor, battery units, performance electronics and transmission will be integrated.

6. 1959 – 2009: Fifty Years of MINI.



Five decades full of driving excitement and individual style – this, in a nutshell, is the history of MINI. But in its significance to the automobile world, MINI goes far beyond these achievements – no matter how outstanding they may be – alone. Indeed, only very few cars have characterised the development of the automobile in such an outstanding manner.

MINI has been the epitome of economical and, at the same time, desirable individual mobility for fifty years. And the characteristics of the classic Mini presented to the public for the first time in 1959 are interpreted by the current MINI in modern style. As before, of course, the philosophy is to combine compact dimensions with outstanding flair, superior fuel economy with genuine functionality.

Precisely these all-round qualities have made the MINI a truly timeless car over the years. But the fact remains that half a century of MINI history is now coming to an end. And MINI will be celebrating this great birthday in an appropriate manner, with a major fan event for the worldwide MINI Community being held in the home country of MINI.

The international meeting at the MINI United Festival 2009 not least symbolises the status of MINI as a global success. The unmistakable style of the brand, superior fuel economy and emission management, agile handling, a high standard of safety and premium quality – these are features appreciated the world over. And the historical roots of MINI also offer a level of fascination nobody can escape. The anniversary of the brand is therefore the ideal time to take a look back into the exciting history of a truly exceptional car.

Alec Issigonis: a genuine visionary and the father of the classic Mini.

Alexander Arnold Constantine (Alec) Issigonis was the father of the classic Mini. Towards the end of 1956 he was requested by Leonard Lord, at the time the Chairman of British Motor Corporation (BMC), to build a “real small car” as quickly as possible.

Needless to say, Issigonis was thrilled by the idea, since the construction of a perfect small car had always been one of his favourite challenges. And now the time had come to develop his ideas on the drawing board and turn them into reality together with his team. His vision was to build a small four-seater making optimum use of the space available and offering superior comfort, a car completely different in technical and visual terms from anything else on the road at the time, and a car everybody was able to afford.

The Suez crisis tipped the scales.

The actual initiative for the project came from a man who actually had nothing to do with cars: On 26 July 1956 Gamal Abd el-Nasser, the President of Egypt, nationalised the Suez Canal Company just one month after the British troops had withdrawal from the Suez Canal Zone, and closed down the Canal. Even though the British and French, formerly the majority owners of the Company, immediately sent in paratroopers to protect the Canal, the waterway nevertheless remained closed for a number of months. As a result, the prices of oil and gasoline simply rocketed up and the British government even considered rationing gasoline to ten gallons a month. So it really looked as if in the long term only very economical cars would have a chance in the market at all.

Big plans with a small budget.

The objective was therefore clear: to develop a fuel-efficient small car taking up the great tradition of the pre-war Austin Seven and the legendary Morris Minor. Since at the time BMC's funds were very limited (as was also the case with many other car makers), Lord made sure that the cost of development was kept low and the development period short.

One of the prerequisites in building the future small car was therefore to use an existing engine from current production. British Motor Corporation (BMC) had been established in 1952 by the merger for important economic reasons of various British car makers, its brands including great names such as Austin, Morris, Riley, and Wolseley.

Compact and progressive: front-wheel drive, engine fitted crosswise.

Issigonis opted for a front-wheel-drive concept with the engine fitted crosswise in the car. The only engine to meet these requirements was the BMC's Series A power unit displacing 948 cc and developing 37 hp in the Morris Minor. And that was certainly more than enough, with the first test car reaching a speed of 150 km/h or 94 mph, which would certainly have demanded too much of such a small vehicle, since neither the suspension nor the brakes were designed for that kind of performance.

Engine output was therefore reduced to 34 hp and engine capacity was cut back to 848 cc, still enough for a remarkable top speed of 120 km/h or 75 mph.

A striking – and, as was to be seen later, a characteristic – feature of the classic Mini was the metal joints between the wings and the body of the car facing to the outside. The reason for this rather unconventional design feature was quite simply an economic consideration, with welding seams facing to the outside being much easier in production and, as a result, less expensive. The second result of cost-oriented production also clearly recognisable at very first sight was the door hinges positioned outside of the doors themselves.

It almost goes without saying that the interior also followed this minimalist philosophy, with the driver and passengers opening and closing the doors by means of a simple cord and with a small storage tray taking the place of a regular dashboard in front of the driver and front passenger. In the middle of the storage tray was a central instrument comprising the speedometer, mileage counter and fuel gauge. Further down there were two toggle switches for the screenwipers and the lights, with heating available only at extra cost.

Even the De-Luxe model embellished by chrome trim came in standard trim without a heater, but did boast carpets, leather appliqués on the seats and an ashtray.

Light in weight but with lots of space.

With its engine fitted crosswise, front-wheel drive, steep tailgate and the principle of fitting “one wheel at each corner”, the classic Mini stood out clearly from all other cars then on the road in Europe. Weight of the classic MINI in standard trim was about 600 kg or 1,325 lb. At the same time the car offered adequate space for four, even allowing the passengers to take along a bit of luggage. And if the 195-litre (6.8 cu ft) luggage compartment was not sufficient, all you had to do was leave the tailgate open. In fact, with the lid to the luggage compartment pivoting at the bottom, the driver and passengers were able to place bulky objects on the lid and fasten them more or less safely in position. This was indeed by no means just a special idea for the enthusiast, but was rather presented in bright colours in the car's sales brochures showing the customer how to enlarge his luggage capacity!

Making its debut on 26 August 1959.

The big day came on 26 August 1959 with the classic Mini making its debut at exactly the same time in all countries in which BMC was represented. The car initially entered the market in two variants, as the Morris Mini Minor and the Austin Seven, which differed only through their radiator grille, body colours and wheel caps.

However, they did come from different production plants, with the Austin being built in Birmingham, the Morris in Oxford, although later BMC built both versions at both plants. Back home in Great Britain the classic Mini retailed at £ 496, making it the second-lowest-priced car in the market.

The “Incredible Austin Seven” – with the “v” turned by 90° on the first advertising photo – entered the market against competitors which, while being more expensive, had already proven their qualities in Europe: the Volkswagen, the Renault Dauphine, or the Fiat 600.

“The Autocar”, Britain’s legendary motor magazine, gave the new car very good coverage right from the start: “While fashion often leads to big blunders also in the car market, the results achieved by clever and knowledgeable engineers concentrating on a specific challenge may by all means be very good.”

Although the newcomer from Britain was able to hold its own against the competition also in international motor magazines, sales started rather slowly in a sluggish process. Young purchasers felt that the Mini was still too expensive despite its low price, customers with more money regarded the car as too spartanic. And the German car magazine “Motor Revue” expressed a clear view on the Austin Seven in 1960 in a comparative test: “By far the most interesting of all contenders (leaving aside the price). But precisely this is why this miracle car (rubber springs, four-cylinder engine mounted crosswise, engine and transmission in one common oil sump, cheap 10-inch tyres, unusually large interior, small footprint on the road) is hardly to be seen in our country. Actually the Mini would deserve more recognition, since customers here often spend more money on less perfect cars – but purchasers in our country lack that clear vision.”

Back then the classic Mini retailed in Germany at DM 5,780.-, while a Volkswagen came for DM 4,600.- and the brand-new BMW 700 Sport was in the market at a price of DM 5,650.-.

Sales support straight from the Queen.

Even the fact that about 3 1/2 metres of parking space was quite sufficient for the classic Mini measuring only 3.05 metres or 120.1” in length did not have the anticipated impact. But then the big stars of London’s society discovered this nimble little athlete, in particular Lord Snowdon, Princess Margaret’s husband. And when Margaret’s sister, the Queen herself, enjoyed a test drive in the classic Mini with nobody else but Alec Issigonis at the wheel, the Mini once and for all acquired the image it needed as a cult car.

Customers in the USA also showed increasing interest in that “tiny car from Europe”, giving it a warm reception on the other side of the Atlantic. In 1960, therefore, a leading US car journal expressed a clear view of the new model: “It is fair to say that the Austin is the smallest fully-fledged automobile in the world. We must admit that even with four passengers you don't have any space problems inside the car – in fact, you sit more comfortably than in one of our big domestic models. And although the Mini is great fun to drive, it is still a very real car, well built and with great options.”

New variants from the first year of production.

With 19,749 units of the Austin Seven and the Morris Mini Minor coming off the production lines in 1959, production rocketed up to 116,677 units just a year later. And with growing success, the demands made by customers of the classic Mini increased accordingly. In 1960 BMC responded by introducing two new variants, the Van and the Estate. As particular highlights, both the closed Van and the Estate with glass windows all round came with two rear doors.

But it was not until 1961 that the classic Mini really showed all its qualities: This started at the beginning of the year with the introduction of the smallest transporter ever seen, the Mini Pick-Up. A bit more than half a year later two more prestigious models were introduced, the Wolseley Hornet and the Riley Elf with majestically upright radiator grilles and swallow-tail wings at the rear. And in the second half of the year a very special variant entered the market, destined to shape the legend of the classic Mini more than any other model: the Mini Cooper.

The athlete: the Mini Cooper.

Long before Alec Issigonis completed his legendary drawings of the classic Mini, he was already a good friend of John Cooper, the equally legendary designer and builder of racing cars. With BMC's Chief Engineer appreciating the competent opinion of his colleague, Cooper was indeed party to the development of the classic Mini right from the start. And the more the project started to become reality, the more Cooper was convinced that this new model entering the market would offer a very special asset he had been seeking to introduce for a long time, providing the foundation for a sports car able to compete with the Lotus Elite so popular back then. So once he got his hands on a classic Mini, he immediately started tuning the car. Cooper contacted Issigonis right away, suggesting the development of a small GT based on the classic Mini. George Harriman, the new Chairman of BMC, was convinced by Cooper's idea and agreed to build a small series of 1,000 Mini Coopers to test public response.

Since the engine was not to displace more than one litre, Cooper set off the increase in stroke from 68.3 to 81.3 millimetres (2.69 to 3.20”) by a reduction in bore from 62.9 to 62.4 millimetres (2.48 to 2.46”), with engine capacity in the four cylinders thus

amounting to exactly 997 cc. Compression was increased from 8.3 to 9.0, larger intake valves and dual carburettors also making their contribution.

Further modifications were the extra bore on the exhaust manifold and reinforcement of the crankcase reflecting the extra power of the engine.

Cooper also changed the individual gear ratios in the transmission in order to increase the car's top speed in each gear. With engine output now reaching 55 hp, top speed was approximately 136 km/h or 85 mph. And to provide the right kind of stopping power reflecting this extra engine power, Cooper fitted seven-inch Lockheed disc brakes on the front wheels.

Top performer: the Mini Cooper S.

With the response to this new model launched in September 1961 being quite euphoric, the only wish that still remained was to enjoy even more power. So Issigonis and Cooper increased the capacity of the 848-cc power unit to 1,071 cc, with output now reaching 70 hp.

Clearly, this extra power also meant higher speed, with the car now achieving a top speed of 160 km/h or 99 mph. John Cooper naturally also worked on the brakes as a result of this extra power, increasing disc diameter to 7 ½", with the brake power of the Mini Cooper S making its debut in 1963 being boosted by a servo unit.

Final proof: the Monte Carlo Rally.

With the classic Mini being simply perfect for rally racing right from the start, six works cars set out for the 1960 Monte Carlo Rally just six months after the Mini had made its debut. But it took three years of learning until these small athletes were really able to compete. In 1963 Rauno Aaltonen scored Mini's first class victory, before the great day came in 1964: Taking on an armada of much more powerful competitors, Paddy Hopkirk brought home overall victory in Europe's most significant rally at the wheel of his red Mini Cooper S. To round off this outstanding triumph of Mini Cooper, his team-mates Timo Mäkinen finished fourth and Rauno Aaltonen seventh.

This outstanding victory marked the starting point in the unparalleled career of the classic Mini as the world's first grass roots sports car after the war, the small British racer beating many international stars both in rallies and on the track. Clearly, this gave the Mini an incredible image boost.

Bitter disappointment and triumphant return.

In 1965 Mäkinen and his co-pilot Paul Easter continued the successful story of the Mini Cooper, winning the Monte Carlo Rally hands down. Indeed, Mäkinen was the only driver in the entire race to cover the thousands of kilometres without one single penalty point.

A year later, therefore, the Mini squadron was once again seen as the big favourites in the Monte event. But things came differently: While Mäkinen, Aaltonen, and Hopkirk finished first, second and third in the Rally, the winning car still had to go through an eight-hour technical approval by the commissioners. And ultimately they claimed that the four additional headlights on the front grille of the Mini Cooper were not exactly in line with French homologation requirements. This meant disqualification, one of the most contested and dubious decisions ever taken in the history of the Monte Carlo Rally.

The Mini Cooper returned to Monte Carlo once again in 1967, despite this bitter disappointment. This time the three musketeers Aaltonen, Hopkirk and Mäkinen were supported by Simo Lampinen and Tony Fall. And Rauno Aaltonen, the “Fyling Finn” boasting starter number 177, was the fastest driver at the finish line. All other Mini Coopers also saw the chequered flag, with Hopkirk finishing sixth, Fall coming in tenth, Lampinen scoring fifteenth place, and Mäkinen No 41.

1965: one million classic Minis.

In August 1964 BMC introduced yet another version of the classic Mini originally conceived for military use: the Moke, a unique four-seater open all round.

With the Mini Moke remaining in the pricelist for four years, Issigonis soon introduced the car's Hydrolastic suspension on the upmarket saloon models built in much larger numbers. In this semi-hydraulic suspension system the spring/damper units on the front and rear axles were connected with one another at the sides to provide extra motoring comfort.

The classic Mini remained an outstanding success, with annual production increasing to 244,359 units, a new record. A year later the classic Mini then broke the magic mark of one million units built, and in the same year Alec Issigonis and his team completed their automatic transmission included in the list of features.

This made the classic Mini one of very few small cars with such an upmarket option, especially because the automatic transmission requiring hardly any more place than a manual gearbox came with four forward gears, while even luxury cars back then generally had only three gears in automatic.

1967: model update.

In 1967 the classic Mini was ready for a thorough update. This meant a more powerful engine displacing 998 cc and, in particular, an increase in torque from 44 to 52 Newton-metres (up from 32.4 to 38.3 lb-ft). At the same time engine output was increased to 38 hp.

Two years later the modified Mini was joined by a second, slightly larger body variant with a different front end: the Mini Clubman. This special model was joined at the same time by the Mini Clubman Estate replacing the Morris Mini Traveller and the Austin Seven Countryman introduced back in 1960 and offering more space than before. Measuring 3,165 millimetres or 124.6" in length, the Mini Clubman was 11 centimetres longer than the classic Mini, while the Mini Clubman Estate measured 3,400 millimetres or 133.9" and came with even more flexible loading and transport options. Width, height and wheelbase, on the other hand, remained unchanged.

The Mini Clubman came as standard with a 38-hp 1.0-litre power unit, while the Mini Cooper was removed from the range and replaced by the top Clubman model, a 1.3-litre developing 59 hp and referred to as the Mini 1275 GT.

A number of other details also changed in 1969, with the front sliding windows featured by the classic Mini ever since the beginning being replaced on all models by wind-down windows, with the door hinges being moved to the inside, and with a special Mini logo on the engine lid.

1972: sales of the classic Mini reach three million units.

1972 was the most successful year of the classic Mini: Thirteen years after the car had made its debut, demand literally exploded once, again reaching a production volume of 306,937 units, among them the three-millionth model of this small performer now acknowledged as a genuine classic.

Small model updates introduced almost every year maintained the great appeal of the classic Mini, with Denovo wheels introduced for the Mini 1275 GT in 1974 as an early type of runflat tyres from Dunlop remaining on the wheel rims even without any tyre pressure. And in the same year purchasers of the basic model were able to enjoy the introduction of a genuine heater system now featured as standard.

Model specifications of the classic Mini moved in new directions once again in 1976, with special models featuring all kinds of highlights – from sporting to fashionable, from distinguished to youthful – finding purchasers everywhere.

The model range was then streamlined from 1980 – 1983, the Clubman, the Estate and the Van being phased out of production. The only model still remaining, therefore, was the 1.0-litre classic Mini now developing 40 hp. And customers remained faithful to this great performer, with the five-millionth classic Mini coming off the lines at Plant Longbridge in 1986.

1990: return of the Mini Cooper.

Even after the Cooper models had officially reached the end of their days, John Cooper continued to develop and sell performance kits for the classic Mini. In 1990 the Rover Group now responsible for the classic Mini recognised the opportunities which presented themselves through this concept and decided to bring back the Mini Cooper.

Facing growing demands in terms of emission control, production of the 1.0-litre carburettor version ended in 1992, all models now featuring the 1,275-cc power unit with fuel injection.

An official convertible version developed in Germany and already sold in the German market was introduced in 1993.

Production of the classic Mini finally ended in the year 2000. By then more than 5.3 million units of this world-famous small car from Great Britain had come off the production lines in all kinds of versions, including some 600,000 units built at Plant Oxford between 1959 and 1968.

But even after 41 years there was still a great future, with the MINI One and the MINI Cooper opening up a new chapter in the history of the British brand in 2001.

MINI United 2009: anniversary party in the MINI's home country.

With the brand being re-launched under the roof of the BMW Group, the successful story of this unique small car from Britain started once again.

Introduction of the MINI into the market defined a new market segment – the segment of the small premium car with worldwide presence and a wide range of customisation features. Like the classic Mini decades before, market forecasts were outperformed almost overnight, with sales of the MINI amounting to a million units within just six years after the car's launch into the market.

Today MINI enjoys growing popularity among customers in some 80 markets the world over and for a long time has been the fastest-growing premium brand in the global car market.

Production capacities at the substantially modernised Oxford MINI Plant have been enlarged several times in order to meet the increase in demand from one year to the next. In 2008 alone, for example, global sales of the Mini amounted to more than 232,000 units.

The Mini brand is celebrating its 50th birthday in absolute top form – reason enough to go to a race track for this great event: The legendary Formula 1 track in Silverstone is certainly the ideal place for the Third MINI United Festival celebrating fifty years of MINI, with the international Mini Community meeting there from 22 – 24 May 2009. MINI fans from all over the world, many of whom will be coming in their own car, will enjoy a unique combination in Silverstone of lifestyle parties, show programmes, music festival and motorsport action.

On the occasion the third and fourth races in the current MINI CHALLENGE season will be battled out on the race track. Indeed, the races in this popular Clubsport Series were already part of the MINI United Festival in former years. And as a further highlight classic Minis will also be on the starters' grid in Silverstone, the Mini Seven Racing Club sending some 50 classic Mini racing cars out on to the track. And last but certainly not least, Mini fans will be guided through the exciting history of the brand in a special exhibition held on the occasion.