



Press release
24 May 2012

Feliĉan Naskotagonn! MINI gratulas Esperanto en la 125 datreveno.

The “global language” and MINI share common ground with their long histories and cosmopolitan outlook.

Munich. MINI would like to congratulate Esperanto on its 125th birthday. Known to people around the world, this international language is used in just about every corner of the world. Both the British premium small car – whose ancestor first entered production in 1959 – and Esperanto can look back on a long and eventful history and both enjoy a broad fanbase spread across the most diverse cultural boundaries. The invention and dissemination of the artificially constructed tongue Esperanto can be traced back to ophthalmologist and language expert Ludwik Lejzer Zamenhof. In 1887 he published a document – under the pseudonym Doktoro Esperanto (“Doctor Hopeful”) – in Warsaw in which he formulated the early strands of a language that could be understood internationally and used universally. 125 years later Esperanto is spoken on every continent, setting the seal on an international success story very much in the mould of the MINI brand.

Ludwik Zamenhof was born the son of a language teacher in the Polish city of Bialystok, then part of Russia, in 1859. Driven by his vision of a neutral language that would be easy to learn, have clear and straightforward grammar and promote understanding between peoples, he created Esperanto. The new language brought together elements of Romance, Germanic and Slav languages, and it was not long before the first Esperanto associations had sprung up in various European countries. The political landscape of the 20th century presented one obstacle after another to the spread of the new language. Yet Esperanto was still encountering steadily increasing popularity across the continents as a vehicle of international understanding.

Like the MINI, which today is represented in over 100 markets around the world, Esperanto has also developed into an international

Bayerische
Motoren Werke
Aktiengesellschaft

Postal address
BMW AG
80788 München

Telephone
+49-89-382-23662

Internet
www.bmwgroup.com



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phenomenon, and the invented language is now spoken in more than 100 countries. Radio stations in China, Canada, Korea, Australia and elsewhere regularly broadcast in Esperanto, and it enjoys considerable popularity on the internet too; search engine Google, internet telephone provider Skype, online reference site Wikipedia and the browser Firefox are all now conversant with Esperanto. Over the decades the language has built up an ever-expanding community of fans and users as varied and cosmopolitan as the international MINI Community.

Despite its long history, Esperanto remains forever young and has kept pace with the times. The language continues to develop in response to the growing requirements of globalisation and modern life, and has proved adept at tweaking its expanding vocabulary to fresh circumstances and challenges. In short, Esperanto is a model of both tradition and innovation – just like the MINI.

MINI and Esperanto therefore have much in common. Both are cosmopolitan, and both span continents and generations. Their roots may lie in Europe, but they are very much at home all around the world. And so MINI, in its best Esperanto, would like to wish its linguistic counterpart “Feliĉan Naskotagonn!” (Happy Birthday!) and all the best for the next 125 years!



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For any queries, please contact:

Corporate Communications

Tanja Kirchner, Product Communications MINI
Telefon: +49 89-382-25838, Fax: +49 89-382-20626
E-Mail: tanja.kirchner@mini.com

Andreas Lampka, Head of Communications MINI
Telefon: +49 89-382-23662, Fax: +49 89-382-20626
E-Mail: andreas.lampka@mini.com

Internet: www.press.bmwgroup.com

The BMW Group

The BMW Group is one of the most successful manufacturers of automobiles and motorcycles in the world with its BMW, MINI, Husqvarna Motorcycles and Rolls-Royce brands. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 25 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2011, the BMW Group sold about 1.67 million cars and more than 113,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2011 was euro 7.38 billion on revenues amounting to euro 68.82 billion. At 31 December 2011, the BMW Group had a workforce of approximately 100,000 employees.

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

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