



Press kit BMW Museum

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1. The BMW Museum – history up close

The BMW Museum brings more than 90 years of fascination for cars, innovation, dynamic performance and sheer driving pleasure to life. The Museum's exhibitions answer questions about the history of the BMW company, its brands and products. It traces the BMW story from its early beginnings to the present and into the future, providing visitors with a comprehensive picture of the innovative strength of the BMW brand. This concept has been a huge success: the BMW Museum set a new visitor record in 2011, with more than 480,000 visitors – and has established itself as one of Munich's most popular museums.

The BMW Museum is one of Germany's oldest automobile museums. It was built right next door to the heart of the company, the BMW "Four-Cylinder" Building, in 1973. Since then, the company has grown steadily around the globe and continued to expand its brand and product line-up. The Museum was redesigned in response to this in 2008 and expanded in size. Today, it showcases important milestones from the company's more than 90-year history in over 5,000 m² of exhibition space. A wide range of exhibits, including valuable automobiles, motorcycles and engines, take visitors on a journey through the history of the BMW brand. The BMW Museum sees history not as a closed episode of the past, but as a dynamically developing line. It lays a solid foundation – and often shows the visionary direction – for much of what the BMW brand does today. Both the content and the architectural design of the BMW Museum are based on this principle.

1.1 Museum architecture

BMW presents its history in a building shaped by its dynamic, urban setting. The Museum is situated between the BMW "Four-Cylinder" Building, the BMW Welt and the BMW Plant, directly adjacent to the Olympic Park. This is a place where roads and paths converge, bridges

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cross tunnels, and squares and crossroads form a network for people on the move. The BMW Museum has made this urban scenario its theme: “streets and places in urban space”, was how BMW first presented the concept, developed by Viennese architect Karl Schwanzer, to the public in 1973. Since 2008, the architectural concept has been extended to include “bridges and houses” in an area which is now five times the size of the original Museum.

The Museum architecture creates a space for the BMW brand and at the same time gives it a physical presence. It provides a framework in which the themes of the exhibitions can be optimally developed. Modern exterior facades, unusual perspectives inside, asphalt floors and upward-spiralling paths through the exhibition areas create a lively, urban setting. The Museum’s architecture brings the topic of mobility inside and creates an authentic home for the BMW brand.

Inside the Museum, the exhibition concept is characterised by a system of ramps, which wind around the area almost weightlessly. The ramps connect the different levels and join the old and new parts of the Museum building. Following this route leads the visitor through various subject areas and to all exhibitions. The visitor can follow the route suggested by the ramp system or explore the individual exhibition areas independently.

1.2 Exhibition concept

Two separate exhibition areas await visitors to the BMW Museum: the newly added area in the “low building” is home to the Museum’s permanent exhibition, which includes 125 original exhibits from the past 90 years and illustrates the development of the brand and the company in an area measuring 4,000 m². Temporary exhibitions are housed in the 1,000 m² “Museum Bowl”, the original BMW Museum building. A tour through all 25 exhibition areas covers about a kilometre and takes roughly 1.5 to 2 hours to complete.

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1.2.1 Permanent exhibition

The permanent exhibition forms the core of the BMW Museum. On a tour of the permanent exhibition, the visitor discovers a wide range of exhibits displayed in a varied and modern way. Automobiles, motorcycles, racing cars and engines demonstrate the variety of products, continuity and innovative power of the brand. The interactive focus of the exhibition ensures that BMW enters into direct communication with visitors and encourages them to engage more deeply with the brand.

The BMW Museum's permanent exhibition is deliberately not in chronological order. Instead, topics are presented as development lines, which take the visitor from past to future in specific topics. There are seven of these so-called "exhibition houses" in total, spread across two or three levels. The rooms of each house focus on different aspects of a specific topic: "Design", "Technology", "Series", "Company History", "Motor Sport", "Motorcycle History" and "BMW brand". In this way, visitors learn about the brand and the company from a number of different perspectives. Each exhibition house has its own unique look, which highlights the different facets of the BMW brand.

House of Design

The official BMW Museum visitors' tour begins with a glimpse of the future in the Design exhibition house. The space entitled "Inspiration. Ideas in Flux" gives shape to the values of the BMW brand by capturing a few key statements in sculptural form. The heart of this area is the "kinetic sculpture", consisting of more than 700 hanging steel balls, which metaphorically translates the form-finding process into the room. The House of Design follows the entire design process, from initial inspiration to the "Studio. Design Dialogue" area, where the work of the designers begins, through to BMW design icons in the room "Treasure Trove. Heritage as Inspiration" – plunging the visitor deep into the world of BMW design.

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House of the Company

Next stop on the tour is the House of the Company. Exhibits in the room “First steps. How It all Began” highlight the company’s beginnings as a manufacturer of aircraft engines in 1917, the construction of the first motorcycle in 1923 and the purchase of the vehicle factory in Eisenach in 1928, which marked BMW’s entry into automotive construction. The most important stages of the early years are presented in an attractive manner. The room “Aspects. Thought and Action” provides the visitor with insights into the BMW corporate culture. The focus here is clearly on the people who have made the brand what it is today.

House of the Motorcycle

The House of the Motorcycle tells the story of BMW motorcycle construction – which began with production of engines for various manufacturers. BMW Motorrad brought a large number of innovations to product maturity, such as the first cylinder heads made of lightweight metal and the first hydraulically damped telescopic fork. The innovations related to the different exhibits are graphically highlighted so that the visitor immediately recognises the engineering expertise that shaped the history of BMW motorcycle construction.

House of Technology

The House of Technology includes the room “Lightweight Construction. Less is more”. The growing demands of automobile and motorcycle construction have caused vehicle weight to spiral dramatically in recent decades. This area shows how BMW has successfully countered this through lightweight construction, technology and materials. The second room in the House of Technology, “Engines. The Name: an Obligation”, is devoted to BMW’s core expertise of engine construction. The emphasis here is on the innovations and major achievements in development that have made BMW a global leader in this field – with a special focus on BMW’s signature straight-six engine. The room “Aerodynamics. Shaped by the Wind” is

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suggestive of a wind tunnel. It shows visitors how aerodynamics affects a vehicle's efficiency and how important it is for aerodynamics experts and designers to work closely together during vehicle development.

House of Motor Sport

This exhibition house provides a brief outline of BMW's motor-racing history. It showcases the whole range of technical possibilities – from the virtually unchanged series-produced car, to highly-specialised touring cars, to Formula One racing cars with the highest level of technical sophistication. The room "Champions. The Will to Win" tells the success story of the series-produced BMW 328 sports car. Adjacent to it, the "Motorcycle Racing. Success on Two Wheels and Three" area shows how BMW became the most successful sports brand in Europe by the late 1930s. The area "Touring Cars. In the Fast Lane" presents classic production-based touring cars that barely differ from the retail version. Racing car engines are also displayed next door in a gallery featuring aircraft engines and a boat engine.

House of the Series

This exhibition house follows the development of individual model series and currently traces the success story of the BMW 3 Series. As the brand's most widely produced car, the BMW 3 Series was given its own exhibition area in 2011. Seven carefully selected vehicles illustrate the series' attractiveness, dynamic performance and versatility. A level lower, the room with the name "BMW M Models. M: the World's Most Powerful Letter" uses BMW M icons, like the BMW M1, to bring the success story behind today's BMW M GmbH and its high-performance vehicles to life – from 1978 to the present day.

House of the Brand

The first room in the House of the Brand, "Advertising. Reflecting the Times", focuses on the history of BMW customer communications through posters, advertisements and promotional films presenting the evolution of the brand, its

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advertising graphics and its visual language. This exhibition shows how society and, with it, customer demands have changed over time and how the BMW brand has responded to this in its corporate design and messages. The room “Encounters. Adventures and Experiences” highlights customers’ personal experience with BMW cars. A wealth of private photo material documents the special relationship BMW drivers share with their cars. The exhibition “Visions. Ways in the Future” demonstrates BMW’s commitment in the field of sustainability. The room is primarily dedicated to the measures implemented as part of the BMW EfficientDynamics strategy.

1.2.2 Temporary exhibitions

The thematically independent temporary exhibitions staged in the “Museum Bowl” highlight special BMW topics. This is where, in 2011, the BMW Museum displayed the world’s largest collection of BMW Art Cars: 15 of the 17 cars, with artistic design from artists such as Alexander Calder, Roy Lichtenstein, Andy Warhol, David Hockney, Olafur Eliasson and Jeff Koons, were presented together for the first time in Munich.

The current temporary exhibition, entitled “The Line of Beauty” pays tribute to the development of the brand’s large coupés and convertibles. Fourteen exhibits and original drawings from 70 years of automobile design take visitors on a historical journey through the world of elegant sports cars. This exhibition will be on display in the “Museum Bowl” until February 2013. This will be followed, in March 2013, by an exhibition devoted exclusively to the Rolls-Royce brand and its Phantom models.

1.2.3 Special exhibitions

The BMW Museum has steadily expanded its involvement in the cultural field over the past years to provide support for the company’s more than 40-year international cultural commitment at home in Germany. Since reopening in 2008, the BMW Museum has hosted special exhibitions on different topics that, at first glance, appear to have nothing to do with the automotive industry

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– but which, upon closer inspection, fit well into the context of the BMW brand.

The BMW Museum also collaborates with colleges and universities to provide a forum for subjects such as art, fashion and architecture. In 2012, the Art Centre Basel's travelling exhibition, "Museums in the 21st century", was followed by "History up close", a display of cars built by the manufacturer Glas before its acquisition by BMW, and "The best classic motor sport cars" – an exhibition to mark the BMW brand's return to the DTM German Touring Car Masters.

1.2.4 Multimedia presentation at the BMW Museum

A tour of the BMW Museum also involves understanding the technological innovations that have made their way into the automobile industry. With its BMW ConnectedDrive, BMW was the first premium brand to develop technologies to make new media an integral part of the vehicle. The BMW Museum exhibition concept reflects this leadership in its multilayered media design. The new media are both a key element of the exhibition and an effective means of sharing knowledge.

The bright interior lighting in the permanent exhibition area spotlights BMW vehicles, while the light sources themselves are carefully concealed as part of the architecture. The use of the facades for media presentation definitely makes exhibitions more dynamic. The 700 m² facade of the exhibition houses around the central plaza, the heart of the Museum expansion, is illuminated by a staggering 1.765 million LEDs. These provide the main source of lighting for the Museum and ensure that exhibits are presented in the right light. The sections surrounding the Museum's central plaza, BMW Square, can be used for active media presentations.

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The top section of the “Museum Bowl” features an unusual panorama projection along the inside wall. With no supporting columns and a wall area 120 metres long and up to six metres high, high-performance beamers are used to project impressive 360-degree panoramic films around the room. The visual impact of the exhibition is further underscored by a special acoustic concept referred to as an “acousmonium”.

1.3 Events and functions

The BMW Museum has served as a unique location for exclusive events since its reopening in 2008. Surrounded by historical original exhibits and directly adjacent to the BMW Welt, the BMW Museum offers exceptional event venues and spaces. About 100 events are held here each year. The rooms can accommodate anything from small groups to up to 340 people. The exhibition can also be opened for a private tour as part of the event programme.

With an area of 652 m², the top two exhibition areas of the “Museum Bowl” can host events with up to 200 people. The adjacent BMW Square at the heart of the Museum, with its 12-metre-high ceilings, provides an exceptional venue for up to 500 people. The total area of the BMW Square measures 407 m². The interplay between media technology and architecture facilitates new forms of multimedia installations and event choreography.

The Museum Foyer, with a view of the Museum’s exciting interior design and the starting point for the Museum tour, is especially well-suited for receptions, get-togethers and lectures. The total area of 200 m² is designed to host 200 people. The BMW Museum’s M1 Café is also located in the foyer area. The M1 Terrace, with a direct view of the BMW Welt and the neighbouring Olympic Park, can also be booked for events.

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The BMW Museum also provides planning and support for event organisers, offering a wide range of services from catering to service personnel, security and media technicians. The event areas are available outside of regular opening times, from Tuesday to Sunday (and holidays) after 6 p.m. and on Mondays from 8 p.m.

1.4 Artistic and cultural cooperation

In order to offer wider-ranging events and exhibitions, the BMW Museum also hosts, and partners with, cultural events in Munich. As part of its focus on fashion, for instance, it has cooperated with the German Fashion and Design School in Munich since 2008 and last year also, for the first time, with the AMD Fashion and Design Academy. 2011 was the fourth year that the BMW Museum provided a platform for young designers to present selected fashion collections and enter into dialogue with the public. After the event, the BMW Museum also hosted an exhibition of 90 original drawings by renowned fashion illustrator René Gruau.

In 2012, the focus will be on “light”. The exhibitions “Lichtblicke 1” (works by Keith Sonnier) and “Lichtblicke 2” (OLEDs from the company Osram) will set the tone. Since 2008, the BMW Museum has presented cultural topics that go beyond the core BMW product substance, but still have an affinity to BMW through design, aesthetics, mobility, elegance, tradition and innovation.

The “Night of the White Gloves”, which will be held for the fifth time this year, has become a firm favourite with visitors. Guests don a pair of white gloves and are allowed to explore the exhibition and do what is normally forbidden – touch the cars. Last year, the white gloves were supplied by the company Röckl, whose products were also on display at the event. The BMW Museum is also a long-standing partner and participant in the “Long Night of Munich Museums” and organises a special programme for the evening.

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One of the event highlights of 2012 was the cooperation with the Munich group of the social network Xing, which hosted a “Light Night” in the “Museum Bowl” with artists and 600 guests. The BMW Museum also participated with its own events in the first “Munich Creative Business Week”, which included special BMW design tours, a “Design Night” with design icons, such as Konstantin Grcic and Richard Sapper, and the “iF Gold Award Exhibition 2011”.

Every year from spring to autumn, the BMW Museum offers its highly popular city tours in vintage BMW cars. Guests get to see Munich from inside a classic BMW. Many visitors travel from as far away as the United States for this experience.

1.5 The Junior Museum. Active learning in, and with, the BMW Museum

With its own special museum learning concept, the BMW Museum considers itself a place for off-campus learning and cross-disciplinary educational experiences. The main aim of the BMW Museum’s educational programme is direct interaction with the exhibits. A special museum learning concept was developed in conjunction with renowned education experts to achieve this, and interactive tours allow young visitors to explore the exhibits in depth. The Museum invites pupils and teachers alike to try out different approaches and strategies, to ask questions and understand concepts. The tours and subsequent workshops concentrate primarily on promoting visual perception, communications skills, creativity, lateral thinking, historical awareness and aesthetic development – of course, all in a way that is also fun.

From November 2013 on, the Museum will offer a new workshop entitled “Mission Mobility” for seven- to 13-year-olds. Children slip into the role of detective and head off through the Museum in search of clues. The goal is to develop the car of the future together.



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The BMW Museum also offers a two-part “Unusual Perspectives” workshop for school classes and youth groups aged 14 to 18. The young visitors start with a tour of selected museum exhibits, with an emphasis on technology, history and design, but also discussing science and technical issues. This is followed by a guided, creative part, which focuses on detail photography. Armed with a camera and a specific task, they explore the BMW Museum in small groups, looking for unusual perspectives. This develops an eye for unique technical features, architectural details, incidences of light and mirror effects, as well as an appreciation of the bird’s-eye or worm’s-eye view. The workshop also leaves plenty of scope for each person’s own creative ideas and views. After the photographic tour, the participants present their digital images to the group. The programme also promotes cooperation, visual perception, creativity, and communication and presentation skills.

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