



Press release
7 January 2019

Premiere in China: Alibaba voice assistant introduced into BMW vehicles.

BMW Group first premium carmaker to bring fully and seamlessly integrated Tmall Genie to market in 2019.

Munich/Las Vegas. The BMW Group is committed to ongoing expansion of intelligent connectivity and is constantly enhancing the digital experience for customers worldwide. To this end, BMW will become the first premium carmaker to launch Tmall Genie onto the market in China in selected BMW models. The intelligent voice assistant from Alibaba A.I. Labs will be fully and seamlessly integrated in BMW vehicles in China. As the two companies announced at the Consumer Electronics Show 2019 (CES) in Las Vegas, the voice assistant will be available in-car to BMW customers in China by the end of 2019. The integration of the intelligent cloud-based voice control service in the Chinese market opens up a variety of in-car entertainment and shopping options for BMW drivers while on the road.

This latest move by the BMW Group follows integration of BMW Connected into Alibaba's Chinese ecosystem. It allows BMW customers who have a Tmall Genie-compatible device at home to operate vehicle functions easily and conveniently, and to call up appointments saved in the BMW Connected mobility agenda. BMW Connected was launched in China in December 2016 and is currently used by 1.5 million customers. Now the integration of Tmall Genie into BMW vehicles enables customers to access functions on the move they are already accustomed to using at home on the move.

BMW customers in China can use Tmall Genie to place online orders, for example, view cinema listings, listen to their favourite playlist or check the weather at their destination. Customers will enjoy the benefits of hundreds of Tmall Genie skills. They can access all information the Tmall Genie has at its fingertips via audio output. This can also be displayed in text and image form on the BMW Display Screen.

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BMW

Corporate Communications

Press release

Date 7 January 2019

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Page 2

The focus is on the customer and their expectations of modern mobility. The digital lifestyle they are used to should continue in their car. “With the integration of Alibabas Tmall Genie in BMW vehicles in China we are adding a digital ecosystem, which will open up new possibilities that customers can access quickly and safely from the car. This development sees BMW reaching a new milestone in China in terms of intelligent connectivity between the customer’s vehicle and their digital touchpoints.” according to Dieter May, Senior Vice President Digital Services and Products at the BMW Group.

Miffy Chen, VP of Alibaba Group, General Manager of Alibaba A.I. Labs: “We launched the ‘AI+Car’ solution last year aiming at providing more intelligent and connected experience for Chinese car users through Tmall Genie’s AI powered voice interaction and service capabilities for cars. Among our collaboration with premium automakers, we are very glad that BMW will be the first premium auto brand to bring selected car models that fully integrate Tmall Genie to the China market. We look forward to working together with BMW to create a personalised mobility experience for its car customers in China.”

A smartphone is not required to use the intelligent voice assistant in-car. All BMW models come with an embedded SIM card, which enables seamless integration and permanent online availability.

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Page 3

The BMW Group

With its four brands BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. The BMW Group production network comprises 30 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2017, the BMW Group sold over 2,463,500 passenger vehicles and more than 164,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2017 was € 10.655 billion on revenues amounting to € 98.678 billion. As of 31 December 2017, the BMW Group had a workforce of 129,932 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based 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.

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