

Media Information
21 March 2013

The BMW Group is boosting its research expertise in Asia.

The BMW Group Technology Office China opens for business.

Shanghai. The BMW Group is extending its international research and development network with the opening of a new powerhouse for ideas in China. Alongside the main development centres in Beijing and Shenyang, the location Shanghai is now also being expanded. Since March 2011 it has already been home to the ConnectedDrive Lab and since April 2012 also to the BMW Group subsidiary DesignworksUSA. The BMW Group Technology Office China is now the third pillar in Shanghai, and will be responsible for dealing with the specifics of the Chinese market in close cooperation with all development departments.

The BMW Group Technology Office China – tracking trends in China.

There's no shortage of ideas. The big challenge facing the eight employees in the BMW Group Technology Office China is to research, evaluate and implement them. Doing so involves working in close collaboration with the other Technology Offices and with their colleagues in Munich.

“The central objective of our team is to check new trends and technologies in China – from the automotive as well as non-automotive sectors – for their practicability in BMW products, and where appropriate make them available in the vehicle as fast as possible,” explains Carsten Isert, Head of the BMW Group Technology Office China. In view of the current megatrends of “urbanisation” and “megacities”, researching revolutionary forms of mobility and services constitutes a key part of the team's work.

Short communications channels, quick decision-making processes and an intuition for the innovations in this rising Asian giant are what make this small, dynamic team tick. In concrete terms, this means identifying trends and testing them out in prototypes. If the innovation is viable, the prototype is transferred to the product development process for pre-production or production development.

The unique setting in the heart of the pulsating megacity of Shanghai with its cutting-edge companies and outstanding universities provides all the right ingredients for the BMW Group Technology Office China. Intensive networking with external partners throughout China is of vital importance for the day-to-day research work, if the innovation trends in China are to be detected and factored in at a very early stage.

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Inspirational start-up mentality as driving force – the BMW Group's Technology Offices.

The Technology Offices USA (Mountain View, California) and Japan (Tokyo) have for years been key cogs in the BMW Group's internationally based R&D network. To a large extent, they are responsible for shaping the face of personal and sustainable premium mobility and services.

Since as long ago as 1998, the BMW Group Technology Office USA has been a firmly established address in Silicon Valley – the very source of so many of tomorrow's trends. This facility's principal task is to identify the latest technologies and trends that are relevant to BMW early on and transfer them to customers' cars as quickly as possible. The researchers are helped in their task by the location in Silicon Valley, which continues to be a unique hotbed of creativity. Where else could you find the market leaders from all manner of different industries, top-class universities, innovative start-up firms, venture capitalists and business analysts all in such close proximity to one another? Currently, the team is focusing its research efforts on the following five areas: Trendscouting and Technology Partnerships, Sustainable Mobility, The Networked Vehicle, Driver Assistance Systems, and User Experience.

The BMW Group Technology Office Japan has been operating in the heart of Tokyo, the world's largest megacity, since 2002. The office's four employees are tasked with scrutinising the latest trends and technologies within a network of globally operating suppliers and renowned Japanese universities, recognising their potential and making them accessible to the BMW Group. With Japan now one of the world's most important motoring nations, the market here plays a significant role. The size of Tokyo and its population density meant that Japan was forced to systematically adopt intelligent traffic management systems and eco-friendly drive systems back in the 1990s. Today, the country is a world leader in the development of fuel cells and hybrid and electric drives, as well as in the field of intelligent traffic management systems. Japan also sets the benchmark for consumer electronics, robotics, materials sciences and production engineering.

BMW Group in China: fascinating blend of tradition and innovation.

Over half the world's population lives in Asia, meaning this region will have a strong influence over the global markets of the future. China is at present the world's largest emerging market and one of the biggest individual markets globally for the BMW Group. Since 2003, the BMW Group has been manufacturing BMW 3 Series and 5 Series models in its Chinese plant in Shenyang with its joint venture partner Brilliance. In 2012, a second production facility was inaugurated in Tiexi in the Shenyang region. In addition to a large development centre in the capital of Beijing, the joint venture is currently in the process of setting up its own development department, too.



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The BMW Group

The BMW Group is one of the most successful manufacturers of automobiles and motorcycles in the world with its BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce brands. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 29 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2012, the BMW Group sold about 1.85 million cars and more than 117,000 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 eight years.

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