

Press release
11.04.2018

New centre of excellence for autonomous driving

BMW officially opens its autonomous driving campus in Unterschleißheim near Munich

Munich. The BMW Group today celebrated the official opening of its autonomous driving campus in Unterschleißheim. Klaus Fröhlich, Member of the Board of Management of BMW AG responsible for Development and Research, and Bavarian state premier Markus Söder were present for the inauguration of a forward-looking development facility that showcases the BMW Group's transformation into a tech company.

The BMW Group's campus for autonomous driving is a state-of-the-art centre of excellence that covers every base when it comes to offering greater capacity for innovation and increased development efficiency – and ultimately securing the company's future sustainability.

15 months ago, the BMW Group took the decision to pool together its development expertise in the fields of vehicle connectivity and highly / fully automated driving at a single location. The campus, which offers 23,000 square metres of office space with room for 1,800 employees, was completed in record time. The site's optimum infrastructure, its proximity to the Research and Innovation Centre, and the nearby link to the motorway network helped to swing the decision in its favour.

The BMW Group is intending to drive forward development of highly automated vehicles with the new campus in Unterschleißheim, and is looking to recruit IT specialists and software developers in the areas of artificial intelligence, machine learning and data analysis.

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New working environments

The autonomous driving campus is opening its doors to “new working environments” – i.e. an open-plan layout, intelligent and flexible use of office space, and a multifaceted and creative workplace. The benefits for the development experts employed here are clear: flexibility, efficiency, a high level of autonomy and short distances. This means, for example, that a software developer working at the new campus can immediately test out freshly written code in a vehicle that is just a short walk away.

New working environments go hand in hand with a new employee and management culture, and managers work in the same open-plan office spaces as their staff. This enhances interaction and facilitates communications, resulting in effective teamwork in the development of highly complex products.

Campus leads the way in agile working methods

The BMW Group is the first company in the automotive industry to apply the agile working model systematically and universally for an entire specialist area – in this case across autonomous driving and driver assistance, from the research phase all the way through to series production development. Agile working models form a crucial basis for efficient, future-proof development.

The open campus structure offers excellent conditions and exceptional support for scrum teams, and therefore lends itself perfectly to the agile software development process. Scrum teams have an interdisciplinary structure, meaning that a variety of skills are brought together. They handle complex sub-processes, working independently with an end-to-end approach. The high degree of flexibility allows the teams to react quickly and effectively to new requirements.

This is a time of disruptive change in the automotive industry, with the arrival of new players making the competitive environment ever more challenging. The pace of innovation is accelerating rapidly and young professionals cite future viability, a modern working environment and flexible, agile workflows as key to an employer’s

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attractiveness. A cutting-edge development facility such as the new campus for autonomous driving therefore represents a crucial asset for the company's long-term sustainability and innovative capability.

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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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