

Persbericht

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Vision: Future Retail

BMW Group Presents Challenging Thoughts on its Customer and Retail Experiences, and the Dealership of the Future.
Proactively shaping and continually defining the retail offering.

Rijswijk. Leading figures from the fields of automotive, retail and architecture were brought together by the BMW Group at a symposium in Amsterdam today (November 21) to share their visions on the store of the future and how shopping experiences need to evolve to meet rapidly-changing retail customer expectations.

Coinciding with the BMW Group's centenary year, the *Vision: Future Retail* symposium presented some challenging, far-reaching ideas on how changing shopping trends and the growth of online could impact on the retail experience in BMW Group dealerships in the near future, and in the next 100 years.

At a time of great urban pressure, with the soaring cost of space in cities, the symposium invited thought leaders to share their opinions on how the urban store can continue to play a role and be cost-effective as a relevant alternative to online shopping, and how store architecture can influence a customer's retail experience – from both emotional and practical viewpoints.

BMW Group is already forward-oriented in shaping the future of its customers' retail experiences. The visionary *Future Retail Concept* offers BMW customers a state-of-the-art, premium experience. But the BMW Group is not standing still. It aims to proactively shape and continually define its retail offering, adapting to the changing needs and expectations of its customers.

Michele Fuhs, Head of Premium Retail Experience, BMW Group said during the symposium: "In a world where customers no longer go shopping just because they just need to buy something, but instead expect a pleasurable, entertaining experience, being a cool brand with great products may not be enough. "So, the BMW Group is actively exploring whether to set up a new venture for Retail Experience or new retail collaborations and partnerships in areas outside the automotive field with organisations such as the Office of Metropolitan Architecture (OMA), to

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determine how the dealership of the future might look,” he said in a presentation entitled *From Point of Sale to Point of Experience*. “We are exploring some challenging and innovative ideas on how those changing shopping trends could impact on the retail experience in BMW Group stores, and how we can continue to provide the premium experience in the future that our customers enjoy today.”

During the symposium, which was held at BMWs flagship store in Amsterdam, keynote speaker and OMA founder, Rem Koolhaas, addressed the participants on a theme of *Beyond Shopping*. He spoke in his keynote presentation about how recent global events had created a world where differences are becoming more and more intense. He said that those major changes on the world stage were requiring people to have a major rethink. “We should take a look at how we can move away from being too comfortable, too placid and too predictable and move towards choice and alternatives,” he said.

“We are at a distinct moment in history. There’s a lot of disruption going on in the world. That’s an overused word often quoted by those with commercial motives but it may be quite healthy for all of us in requiring us to consider different paths,” he added, “These events demand that we have a rethink.”

Pieter Kool, Creative Director 3D Design at Dutch denim brand G-Star RAW, described how his brand is developing its physical stores to meet its customers’ emotional needs and an increasing demand from them for an ‘experience’. “Part of our future challenge is that nobody has a clue how retail will look in five years; and five years from now, we won’t have a clue about the next five years,” he told the audience, “Trying to figure out what the customer might want in the future is a hopeless exercise. Better to learn to be a brand that can offer relevant expressions of itself as we venture into this wild and uncertain future.”

“But we can say is that in future, retail will be physical and the transactional part of shopping will become invisible, leaving just the experience,” he said, “A purchase in our stores will become an optional souvenir of that experience and the store will become the place where people want to get lost in ways that online can never offer.”

Ippolito Pestellini Laparelli, Partner at OMA, described four of his organisation’s recent retail projects at KaDeWe in Berlin, Repossi and Boulevard Haussmann in Paris and the Fondaco dei

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Tedeschi in Venice - which are not only making strong architectural statements but are also expanding the customers' retail experience into an urban architecture experience.

"We are showing how the architectural experience that the building provides to the visitor can also be important for retail," he said, "It's not just about the retail transaction; retail in these locations happens as part of a customer's wonder in those places."

Symposium moderator and Director of Frame Publishing, Robert Thiemann, told the audience that retail today is in crisis due to consumption becoming digital, access replacing the concept of ownership and consumer attention shifting from products to experiences. He spoke of the ways in which retail is currently innovating to meet changing customer expectations, describing the emergence of a seamless experience between online and offline shopping, the stimulation of customers' senses as retail becomes experiential and the move of global brands to become more local.

"Other innovations today include the trend for retail to become mobile with pop-up stores, to become more social by inviting people to talk and do enjoyable things together while also offering a personal service and custom products," he said.

Looking to the years ahead, Thiemann said: "In future, retail will be independent of time and place. It will be more mobile and flexible, it will add services and experiences to products, it will be inclusive instead of exclusive, it will be empathetic in catering to human needs and it will be even more personal."

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The BMW Group

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

In 2015, the BMW Group sold approximately 2.247 million cars and nearly 137,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2014 was approximately € 8.71 billion on revenues amounting to € 80.40 billion. As of 31 December 2014, the BMW Group had a workforce of 116,324 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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