For Immediate Release

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BMW Group opens SAP Competence Hub in South Africa.

* Competence Hub to deliver SAP-based production IT applications to BMW Group on a global level.
* One of three IT competence centres globally.

**Pretoria** – The BMW Group has officially opened a BMW SAP Competence Hub in South Africa. Together with two other IT hubs, situated in the United States and India, the BMW SAP Competence Hub will be rendering IT services worldwide, concentrating specifically on SAP-based production applications.

"Today, process requirements and process solutions extend beyond all departmental boundaries. Therefore, we require end-to-end considerations of the technical processes and customer interfaces. As a result of the further development, BMW Group IT has taken another decisive step towards customer orientation, standardisation, agility and internationalisation by opening a SAP Competence Hub in South Africa,” explains Karl Probst, CIO for the BMW Group. “In order to meet the growing dependence on IT for all elements of the automotive industry, the choice of this location has been made, first and foremost, according to the availability of IT skills in the region.”

The pooling of specific application-based software at the IT competence centres sharing global responsibility, promotes the further industrialisation of BMW IT and the further development of the IT organisation from a federal IT structure with a central IT function on the one hand, and process-oriented specialized IT centres on the other, to a strengthened, centralized IT organisation spanning all departments and multiple global locations. Thanks to the distribution of the competence centres across the global regions America, EMEA (Europe, Middle East, and Africa) as well as Asia/Pacific, it will be possible for these centres to understand and fulfil the local demands of markets, production locations and, in some cases, customers even better.

According to Bodo Donauer, Managing Director of BMW South Africa, the company has been exporting the BMW 3 Series Sedan to other parts of the world from South Africa since 1992. However it’s a little known fact that cars have not been the country’s only BMW export. For the past six years BMW South Africa has been outsourcing its local IT expertise to other BMW production locations around the world.

Concentrating specifically on configuring and enhancing SAP to cater to the specific requirements of the BMW Group production network, the work of these software engineers has allowed complex just-in-time and just-in-sequence production processes to operate seamlessly in markets such as China, Brazil and India. Additional SAP services ranging from Sales and Marketing, Logistics, HR and Finance solutions have been supplied to Germany, USA and the United Kingdom.

“The decision to establish a dedicated SAP Competence Hub in South Africa reaffirms the BMW Group’s confidence in the quality of the work our local software engineers have delivered to date. I am really pleased that South African ingenuity and skill has resulted in the opening of a local hub,” says Donauer.

Unlike other markets in the world, South African SAP skills are unique in terms of how multi-skilled the resources are. For example, around 60% of all South African SAP configurators are also SAP software developers. This is attributed to the South African market being mainly comprised of medium-sized companies, which forces the consultants to be multi-skilled to enhance their competitiveness. This local skills base provides the BMW Group access to a unique resource pool.

The local competence hub, staffed with approximately 80 SAP software engineers, will concentrate its efforts on delivering world-class IT solutions to the BMW global production network specifically in the areas of BMW Internal Business Processes (production logistics, warehousing and production IT solutions). Each of these applications make it possible to produce highly complex and innovative vehicles just-in-time and just-in-sequence at multiple production locations around the world.

According to Pfungwa Serima, CEO at SAP Africa, the new BMW SAP Competence Hub will be delivering market-changing innovations for BMW subsidiaries across the globe. Based on the SAP real-time platform, these application allow for better-informed decision making and transformative innovation in the global automotive market. “When you can increase quality and manufacture efficiently while delivering excellent sales and service, you can significantly increase profitability and secure a competitive advantage. SAP is thus effectively powering the BMW value chain.”

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**The BMW Group**

The BMW Group is the leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles in the world with its BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce brands. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 28 production and assembly facilities in 13 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2013, the BMW Group sold around 1.963 million cars and 115,215 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2012 was €7.82 billion on revenues amounting to €76.85 billion. As of the 31st December 2012, the BMW Group had a workforce of 105,876 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.

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