

Media Information

27 October 2026

One million vehicles moved without drivers: BMW Group successfully scales automated driving in production

- MINI Plant Oxford becomes the fourth site to introduce this innovative technology
- From pilot project to production standard – across plants, models and processes
- Optimised production process, efficiency gains for logistics
- Rollout will continue in 2027 at BMW Group Plant Spartanburg

Munich, Oxford. The BMW Group has reached another milestone on the road to digital and intelligently connected production: One million vehicles have now been moved and guided at BMW Group plants using “Automated Driving In-Plant” (AFW) technology. At MINI Plant Oxford alone, this amounts to more than 53,000 automated vehicle movements in the past year. AFW optimises the production process and delivers significant efficiency gains for logistics. The system rollout will continue, with BMW Group Plant Spartanburg next in line.

From pilot project to globally scalable standard application

MINI Plant Oxford is the fourth BMW Group plant after Dingolfing, Leipzig and Regensburg to use this technology. Since the pilot was launched in Dingolfing in 2022, AFW has progressed from an innovative technology trial to a well-established, scalable standard application that will be rolled out in stages across the BMW Group's global production network. In this way, the BMW Group is underlining its pioneering role in digital and automated production processes. An average of around 3,500 automated vehicle movements currently take place every day across the BMW Group network.

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"One million vehicles moved using automated driving technology and the deployment of this technology at four sites to date demonstrates the innovative strength and scaling capabilities of our production network. We recognised the potential of Automated Driving In-Plant early, tested it in a pilot phase and systematically developed it to series maturity. We are now rolling out this technology worldwide," said Raymond Wittmann, member of the Board of Management of BMW AG responsible for Production. "Automated Driving In-Plant is a prime example of how we are translating the vision of the BMW iFACTORY into industrial practice and driving the efficiency, digitalisation and intelligent connectivity across our production." The network approach is crucial here: AFW is not an individual solution for one plant. The technology can be adapted for different sites, vehicle architectures and production processes. The industrial maturity of the application has been demonstrated by the one million automated vehicle movements already completed.

Using AFW, vehicles can respond dynamically to their surroundings. This not only includes people, but also other vehicles, driverless transport vehicles, logistics traffic and temporary obstacles.

MINI Plant Oxford is the first BMW Group location to connect automated guided vehicles directly with existing control systems. The AFW system precisely positions the vehicle next to a lifting device, where a specific operation is carried out. Automated interaction between vehicle and equipment is enabled by a cloud-based solution. This marks the next logical step in the integration and scaling of automated vehicle movements in the production environment.

Oxford provides a unique setting for this technology. The plant, considered the home of the MINI brand, can look back on more than 100 years of industrial history. Here, state-of-the-art software, sensors and cloud technologies meet a

production environment that has been part of British automotive history for generations.

Technology leadership through intelligent connectivity

AFW moves new vehicles without a driver in defined production and logistics areas. The technology is based on an intelligent combination of external sensors, cloud architecture and advanced motion planning software. Along the route, LiDAR sensors constantly capture the environment, enabling secure vehicle navigation in real time. Artificial intelligence supports the continuous development, simulation and operation of this technology. At its Dingolfing plant, the BMW Group operates the largest LiDAR infrastructure in Europe. This forms the basis for automated driving manoeuvres and, at the same time, provides valuable insights for further deployment within the production network.

With its successful industrialisation of AFW, the BMW Group is not only assuming a leading role within the automotive industry. The technology it has developed is also setting cross-sector standards for automated movement and logistics processes in industrial environments.

Outlook: Further expansion of AFW across the BMW Group network

The BMW Group is continuing the systematic AFW rollout across its production network. Within the next year, the technology will also be introduced at BMW Group Plant Spartanburg. In this way, the global application will continue to expand, laying the foundation for further applications in the production environment.

With AFW, the BMW Group is systematically driving the transformation towards the digital and intelligently connected BMW iFACTORY and demonstrating how innovations can be successfully transitioned from pilot project to large-scale industrial production.

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The Automated Driving In-Plant technology was developed in close collaboration with Swiss company Embotech and further scaled through several development phases. Following a multi-year partnership between Embotech and the BMW Startup Garage, which identifies and supports innovative technologies in the early stages, the company's own venture capital fund, BMW i Ventures, acquired a financial interest in Embotech in December 2024.

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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 services. The BMW Group production network comprises over 30 production sites worldwide; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2025, the BMW Group sold 2.46 million passenger vehicles and more than 202,500 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2025 was € 10.2 billion on revenues amounting to € 133.5 billion. As of 31 December 2025, the BMW Group had a workforce of 154,540 employees.

The economic success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. Sustainability is a key element of the BMW Group's corporate strategy and covers all products – from the supply chain through production to the end of their useful life.

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Embotech

Embotech is a BMW Group technology partner for Automated Driving In-Plant (AFW), supplying the Level 4 driving system that guides driverless vehicles through production and logistics areas. The system is certified in accordance with the Machinery Directive and forms an integral part of daily series production at four of the BMW Group's plants. Founded in 2013 as a spin-off from ETH Zurich, Embotech is the only company worldwide with multiple Level 4 industrial logistics systems certified by TÜV SÜD. These systems are currently in use at car plants, vehicle distribution centres, ports and logistics yards.

www.embotech.ai