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**MINI E Drivers Delighted with Electric Vehicle Experience**

**UCDavis study shows participants enjoy driving MINI E. Feedback sets stage for next phase of BMW Group Mega-City Vehicle initiative**

**Woodcliff Lake, NJ – January 26, 2010 12:55pm EST…** The BMW Group today announced at the Washington Auto Show the first results from a comprehensive study conducted in cooperation with the University of California (UC Davis) and consumers leasing MINI E electic vehicles as part of a year-long program to acquire real world use patterns. The MINI E program is the first large population field test of current generation electric vehicles and therefore sheds a realistic light on both the opportunities and challenges from this innovative new form of mobility.

The UC Davis study results of 57 drivers, combined with updates continually provided from the log books of all 450 users show the following:

* The range of about 100 miles is sufficient for most daily needs
* Charging at home provides enough energy for most daily driving
* Demand for additional charging is centered on the place of work, or where sufficient time is spent during the day (shopping centers, stadiums, etc.)
* Driving the MINI E is a delightful experience and there is no sacrifice of “real car” values
* Unmet demands focus on having enough space for four passengers and more cargo to stimulate even more use of an electric vehicle

“There’s been a lot of conjecture about electric vehicle user demands and being the first to the market with obtaining ‘real world use’ patterns, we’re now able to shed some accurate light on this subject,” said Rich Steinberg, Manager – EV Operations and Strategy for BMW of North America. “What they shared with us is that, for the most part, the MINI E suits their daily driving needs and that they really enjoy driving it. This makes us optimistic that electric vehicles have a role in the future of mobility in America by being a part of the overall vehicle mix.”

More than 1,800 people and organizations applied to be part of this ground-breaking field trial of 450 MINI Es now on the road in the US. From that, 450 were selected based on specific criteria that included the amount and type of use in which they would engage, home suitability to installation of a fast charging system and desire to be engaged in a field trial that requires continual feedback.

MINI E drivers provide ongoing feedback that has already proven invaluable to the development work being done by the BMW Group’s Project i on what is called a Mega-City Vehicle – the company’s innovative program to develop a volume transportation solution to the demands of the world’s biggest cities in the 21st century. This vehicle is scheduled to be introduced just before the mid-point of this decade.

The self-selected group of 57 that agreed to participate in the UC Davis survey is part of a more extensive research project. Feedback from this program shows that the range of the MINI E enables drivers to use it for most daily driving needs. Reported range under normal circumstances varies between 70 – 100 miles with 45 percent reporting a typical range of 100 miles. MINI E drivers reported an average trip length of approximately 30 miles. Other studies have found that driver’s in the US average about 40 miles per day[[1]](#footnote-1). This makes the range of the MINI E suitable for most daily driving needs.

Many households in the study have replaced the primary vehicle of one driver with the MINI E. One-third of the participants have reported driving the MINI E even more than the household vehicle it replaced. The lack of a back seat and a usable trunk, rather than range, is most often the reason the MINI E is not chosen for a particular outing.

Drivers have also reported that driving the MINI E is fun. Most adapted quickly to the characteristics of the Brake Energy Regeneration function and like the feeling of control it gives them in being able to proactively extend the range of their MINI E by how they drive. Brake Energy Regeneration captures energy ordinarily lost on deceleration and coverts it into electrical energy to recharge the batteries. All drivers in the US study said they enjoy using one pedal to accelerate and decelerate. Many reported that once they became acustomed to the BER function, they enjoyed driving their conventional vehicles less.

The study found that keeping the MINI E charged did not pose a problem. Recharging in the US requires four – five hours and, while it wasn’t always necessary based on their driving needs, about half of the drivers in the study report recharging daily as a matter of routine. Additional recharging away from their home charging station by-and-large proved unnecessary.

This first field-trial has provided Project i with invaluable insight as it prepares for its second field trial with the BMW ActiveE. The electric drivetrain developed for the BMW ActiveE will be used in the BMW Group’s first Mega-City Vehicle. The newly developed and more compact lithium-ion battery pack in the BMW ActiveE vehicle features liquid heating and cooling in order to provide a more consistent and predicatable driving range. Smartphone apps will enable the user to remotely check the available range of the BMW ActiveE’s battery. The apps will also enable the driver to begin heating or cooling the interior of the BMW ActiveE and thus the battery while still connected to the grid. This will allow the battery to function at its optimal operating temperature without affecting the range of the car.

The field trial for the BMW ActiveE will begin in 2011. As announced at the North American International Auto Show earlier this month, lease extensions will be offered to a number of MINI E drivers who wish to continue their electric driving experience until the BMW ActiveE becomes available.

## BMW Group In America

BMW of North America, LLC has been present in the United States since 1975. Rolls-Royce Motor Cars NA, LLC began distributing vehicles in 2003. The BMW Group in the United States has grown to include marketing, sales, and financial service organizations for the BMW brand of motor vehicles, including motorcycles, the MINI brand, and the Rolls-Royce brand of Motor Cars; DesignworksUSA, a strategic design consultancy in California; a technology office in Silicon Valley and various other operations throughout the country. BMW Manufacturing Co., LLC in South Carolina is part of BMW Group’s global manufacturing network and is the exclusive manufacturing plant for all X5 Sports Activity Vehicles and X6 Sports Activity Coupes. The BMW Group sales organization is represented in the U.S. through networks of 338 BMW passenger car centers, 335 BMW Sports Activity Vehicle centers, 142 BMW motorcycle retailers, 90 MINI passenger car dealers, and 31 Rolls-Royce Motor Car dealers. BMW (US) Holding Corp., the BMW Group’s sales headquarters for North America, is located in Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey.

**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 24 production facilities in 13 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

The BMW Group achieved a global sales volume of more than 1.43 million automobiles and over 101,000 motorcycles for the 2008 financial year. Revenues for 2008 totaled EUR 53.2 billion, with earnings before interest and taxes (EBIT) of EUR 921 million. The company employed a global workforce of approximately 98,000 associates as of September 30, 2009.

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 five years.

Information about BMW Group products is available to consumers via the Internet at:

[www.bmwgroupna.com](http://www.bmwgroupna.com)

www.bmwusanews.com

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**Journalist note:** Information about the BMW Group and its products is available to journalists on-line at the BMW Group PressClub at the following address: [www.press.bmwna.com](http://www.press.bmwna.com). Additional information, images and video may be found at [www.bmwgroupusanews.com](http://www.bmwgroupusanews.com). Broadcast quality video footage is available via The NewsMarket at [www.thenewsmarket.com](http://www.thenewsmarket.com).

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1. Source: Virginia Tech, School of Public and International Affairs, 2008 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)