BMW Group  
Corporate Communications

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- Please check against delivery -

Ladies and Gentlemen—

Bonjour! Welcome to MINI!

I’m always thrilled to see how many people come to join us at MINI.   
But that’s what this brand is all about. MINI is simply appealing!  
  
I’d like to talk to you about three topics today.

First: Business at MINI

Second: MINIMALISM

And third, the world premiere of the MINI Countryman  
  
MINI celebrated its 50th birthday last year and it proved that it is, without a doubt, the most exciting small car brand in the world.  
  
Right from the very beginning, Mini was designed to be the perfect small car. It conquered hearts all over the world, and over the years, Mini became an icon. An icon: which no other brand can parallel. MINI was – and always will be – MINI. It is the original. It is unique.  
  
Nearly ten years ago, the BMW Group created the premium small car segment with the new MINI – because we believed that this icon had everything it takes to be a true premium brand.  
The success MINI has enjoyed in the premium segment is testimony to this. Nothing can touch the emotional appeal of the MINI in this segment. We are proud to say that we don’t just have customers at MINI, we have fans.

We recently created a new global brand claim, “BE MINI”, which marks the eighth year of the brand re-launch. “BE MINI” represents a global approach to all products in the range.

And it underscores that even though the MINI portfolio is expanding, all MINIS share the same   
core attributes:

* Unique design
* Signature Go-Kart driving fun
* Clever use of space
* And of course, endless options for customization.

So how is business at MINI?  
If we take a quick look at last year, MINI did an excellent job and held its own in challenging times. All in all, sales were down only slightly and MINI increased its market share.

This year has started off very well, with a substantial increase in sales. There’s been strong growth in just about all of the markets. China, Korea, Australia, Russia and Belgium saw an all-time high in January sales. Overall worldwide, over 20 percent more vehicles were delivered in January compared to the previous year. And February has continued that upward trend with sales in the double digits.

The US is the largest single market for MINI and we are preparing for even further growth there. This year, MINI USA will expand from 90 to 100 exclusive stores by summer time and will continue to grow thereafter.  
  
There’s no doubt that MINI has an exciting future.  
Another reason I say this is because MINI also stands for MINIMALISM when it comes to fuel efficiency. MINIMALISM simply means less consumption and emissions, with the same driving fun.   
  
This year we have taken MINIMALISM one step further with our petrol engines. Yesterday we launched the new MINI One Convertible and the MINI One MINIMALIST. The MINI One Convertible means you can enjoy open-air driving fun with even more fresh air. And the MINI One MINIMALIST will be the most environmentally-friendly petrol MINI yet.

We have combined various fuel-saving technologies for this model to cut CO2 emissions and   
fuel consumption by a further six percent.The MINI product family will double over the next years from three to six models.   
  
And today I am very proud to present the world premiere of the fourth member of the MINI family!   
  
The MINI Countryman is our answer to the needs of customers who were looking for a bit more MINI and a MINI which goes far beyond urban boundaries. It’s a totally new concept for the small-car premium segment and a first for MINI. It’s the first MINI which has four doors, four-wheel-drive, four individual seats and measures over four metres long.  
  
Hats off to the MINI Countryman!

Ladies and Gentlemen,  
  
As a Crossover, the MINI Countryman bridges the gap between the classic MINI concept and a Sports Activity Vehicle. It’s a true all-rounder! The MINI Countryman is a completely new car, unprecedented in the history of the Mini. But its likeness to the rest of its family is immediately apparent. And true to MINI’s motto – it’s MINI on the outside, Maxi on the inside.   
  
There are four individual seats, but you can exchange the two rear seats for a three-seat option. The luggage compartment is very spacious. With the two rear seats folded down, there is over one thousand litres of space available. And the tailgate opens up wide which is great for loading bulky items such as bikes, kite-surfing equipment or even your St. Bernhard dog!  
The slightly elevated seating in the MINI Countryman makes it easy to enter and exit the vehicle and it also allows for improved road vision.  
  
One feature that is unique to this model is the innovative MINI Centre Rail. This aluminium track stretches from the front to the rear of the interior. It offers storage for personal items, as well as  
integrated electrical and USB connections for seamless integration of smartphones, such as the iPhone, and other devices.  
  
I’m sure that MINI fans will also love the brand new in-car entertainment system, MINI Connected. This innovative system will be available as an option with the MINI Countryman.   
Just to name one feature – it has the first in-car web radio, which means the cosmopolitan MINI driver can listen to radio stations from all over the world.  
  
As I mentioned, the MINI Countryman is the first MINI which offers all-wheel-drive. The MINI Cooper S and MINI Cooper D will be available with the optional permanent all-wheel-drive system, which we call MINI ALL4.  
  
Finally, let’s talk about power: At market launch in Europe on 18th September the Countryman will offer a choice of three petrol and two diesel engines. Performance ranges from 90hp in the MINI One D Countryman to 184hp in the MINI Cooper S Countryman.

But thanks to a range of MINIMALISM features, it is the leader in its class, in terms of eco-friendliness.  
  
Above all, the MINI Countryman it underscores the MINI brand’s character: ever so unique, ever so progressive, and ever so MINI.  
  
Thank you for being with us today.