

MULTICHANNEL

## BMW tweaks ConnectedDrive to include store feature

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*ConnectedDrive*

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By NANCY BUCKLEY

German automaker BMW is updating its ConnectedDrive technology that was introduced last year as an in-car navigation system with mobile components.

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**Luxury Daily**

The update will allow consumers to shop in the BMW ConnectedDrive store that will allow consumers to plan trips and at home and access it within their BMW. The new feature will intrigue those consumers already familiar with ConnectedDrive and will create a better omnichannel experience for owners.

"BMW's connected drive store will allow customers to have a more seamless experience between their home their smart devices and their vehicle," said Lauren Fix, automotive expert and author of "[Lauren Fix's Guide to Loving Your Car](#)," Lancaster, NY.

Ms. Fix is not affiliated with BMW, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

BMW was unable to comment.

In-car shopping

In April 2014, BMW was fine-tuning its in-car navigation system with mobile enhancements that enable a more seamless experience.

The ConnectedDrive technology transfers data over the air through a mobile SIM card which eliminates the need for license charges, transmission costs and follow-up manual installments. Brands dedicated to innovative technology should not overlook the fundamentals, such as a navigation system, which win over consumers on a day-to-day basis ([see story](#)).

ConnectedDrive Store offers consumers the ability to order connectivity solutions online through ConnectedDrive portal. These services are available through the menu within the car.



### BMW ConnectedDrive store

The store is accessible through the car menu or on BMW's Web site. To use the store, consumers must use the connection through the SIM card that is built into the vehicle.

With a BMW account, the consumer can register their credit card and then subscriptions are available. Drivers can add one-time options, such as real-time traffic for a certain roadtrip or longer subscriptions that will remain on their accounts.

These additions can be done while in the vehicle or at home as the driver is planning their trip. The directions and plans compiled remotely will then be able to sync with the car's ConnectedDrive system. The store is similar to a mobile phone application store like Apple's App Store or Google Play.

"Having a store for the Connected Drive application will allow customers to find what meets their needs best rather than a manufacture telling them what they want," Ms. Fix said. "It's a very smart way to engage your customers. They even offer an app for the GoPro so consumers can record their time on track as well."



## ConnectedDrive store

Some options include music streaming, traffic inquiries and wireless GoPro camera control.

The ConnectedDrive store is already available in Belgium, Luxemburg and Germany and will be available in the United States in spring 2015.

ConnectedDrive's store is being showcased at Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

## Tech updates

In 2014, many luxury automakers released better in-car technology to meld the digital and automobile world for consumers.

For instance, British automaker Jaguar Land Rover is stepping up its efforts to present drivers with the best possible in-car technology system.

The enhanced "InControl Infotainment" system now features a component called justDrive that allows owners to drive without as much distraction. As automakers continue to cram cars with technology, driver safety will become an issue of pressing concern ([see story](#)).

Similarly, Audi of America demonstrated its latest technology advancements at the Connected Car Expo in Los Angeles.

The automaker unveiled the Modular Infotainment Platform that will allow technicians to more quickly introduce superior infotainment and driver-assistant programs on existing infrastructure. Audi also showcased a virtual cockpit, or an entirely digital dashboard, that will be available in select models going forward ([see story](#)).

Keeping up-to-date with in-car technology is critical for automakers to stay competitive among other luxury auto brands.

"Just looking at the CES show you can see that connected cars are an important part of driving these days," Ms. Fix said. "Drivers are seeking ways to create a seamless engagement of their lives and their transportation and part of that is using smart devices and current technology and future technologies to make the ride safer and more engaged."

## Final Take

*Nancy Buckley, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

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