

AUTOMOTIVE

BMW shares plans for future mobility at CES

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BMW 5 Series Connected Mobility in Las Vegas

By SARAH JONES

German automaker BMW is looking to make the driving experience more personal and emotional as it designs further connectivity between owner and car.

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For its fourth appearance at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, BMW released its idea of the future of mobility, showcasing both new integrations for its BMW Connected platform and its ideas for an automated vehicle. While fully autonomous driving from BMW is not planned to launch until 2021, the brand is enlightening CES attendees on what its vehicle may look like.

"There are going to be many changes in mobility in the near future and some of its here and functional," said **Lauren Fix**, automotive expert, Lancaster, NY. "Mobility, safety and connective mobility is in the near future.

"Autonomous cars are driven by computers, micro chips and technology," she said. "CES is the perfect place to launch this technology."

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

Connected car

Today, BMW models offer semi-automated features such as lane change assist.

At CES, BMW will be providing a firsthand look at what connected mobility looks like with demonstration drives in a prototype modeled after its 5 Series sedan.



Inside the BMW 5 Series Connected Mobility vehicle

When driving this vehicle on certain routes, drivers will be able to let the car take over for certain tasks, such as acceleration, braking and steering, giving a taste of autonomous driving. Making the point of its existing achievements, this delegation is made possible with more refined versions of technology currently available in BMW cars.

During the show in 2016, BMW first introduced BMW Connected and the Open Mobility Cloud. In a year, what was then a concept has become a product available in the United States, Europe and China.

BMW Connected takes features such as infotainment and communication beyond the car, allowing owners to access these activities on other devices.

Also unveiled at CES last year, Remote 3D View will be available in the production model of the BMW 5 Series sedan from February. This feature combines the car's Surround View with BMW Connected, enabling an owner to see a real-time image of their car on their phone, keeping tabs on parked vehicles regardless of where they are.

Taking BMW Connected further, BMW is revealing Augmented Gesture Control. While driving, passengers can point at visible buildings to access information.

Also unveiled at CES is intelligent voice control, in which a personal assistant a driver is already using on another device assists them. As an example, BMW has installed an application of Microsoft's Cortana assistant.

Looking ahead, BMW sees the possibility of incorporating these assistants' functionalities found on desktop or mobile device into the vehicle, for instance Cortana's ability to recommend restaurants and make a reservation.

BMW's Open Mobility Cloud is also revealing a new integration with Amazon Prime Now, allowing riders to order items and have them delivered while they are en-route.



Amazon on BMW Connected

With autonomous driving, BMW is also freeing riders up for entertainment. The automaker envisions giving drivers the option to switch to passenger mode and stream Amazon Prime Video.

This connected car would automatically adjust to passengers' needs, for example dimming lights and closing curtains when a rider is watching a movie.

BMW is also taking its Connected Drive a step further with the Connected Window. This would operate on the cloud

onto a number of touchpoints including a large screen in the user's home, pulling in data to help the owner plan their mobility.



BMW's Connected Mobility Window

Aside from technical upgrades, BMW has envisioned a new look for the car interior. On display for the first time at CES, the BMW i Inside Future sculpture focuses on the passenger experience.

One of the features is HoloActive Touch, a display control that allows a rider to interact with the vehicle via a virtual interface. Rather than making contact with the projected panel, the driver moves their fingers to make selections, with ultrasound providing a tactile response to their actions.



BMW i Inside Future

This is similar to BMW's Air Touch system unveiled within its i Vision Future Interaction concept last year at CES.

"While all these innovations will make the driving experience more enjoyable and safer, we know that the holy grail of fully autonomous driving will not be easy to reach," said Klaus Frhlich, member of the board of management of BMW AG, development, during a press conference at CES.

"How to we replace the human brain, the recognition, and decision making with an intelligent system?" he said. "Many innovators and some marketing pros are trying to perfect this. I will say most of them will fail. But we at BMW will have a different approach that makes me confident we will succeed."

Function meets fun

As digitization becomes an increasingly natural part of consumers' daily lives, BMW is responding.

BMW is enabling owners to operate functions of their vehicles from inside their homes by integrating Amazon's Alexa voice service.

An extension of the BMW Connected application launched earlier this year that allows for remote control of functions and journey management, this latest development adds voice commands. BMW is the first automaker to announce Alexa compatibility within the United Kingdom and Germany, with this new integration available as early as late September ([see story](#)).

The automaker also expanded its ConnectedDrive Online Entertainment with the introduction of audio and music streaming service Deezer.

Deezer joins Napster, giving consumers access to an on-demand library of 35 million tracks and 100 million playlists, allowing consumers to enjoy music in their vehicles without needing an accompanying mobile device. Boosting its ConnectedDrive service, BMW is also rolling out solutions to remotely control everything from parking to the car owner's house ([see story](#)).

"Consumer comfort of use and continuity will create a higher usage and more buyers," Ms. Fix said. "The connectivity of all parts of our lives is the future."

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