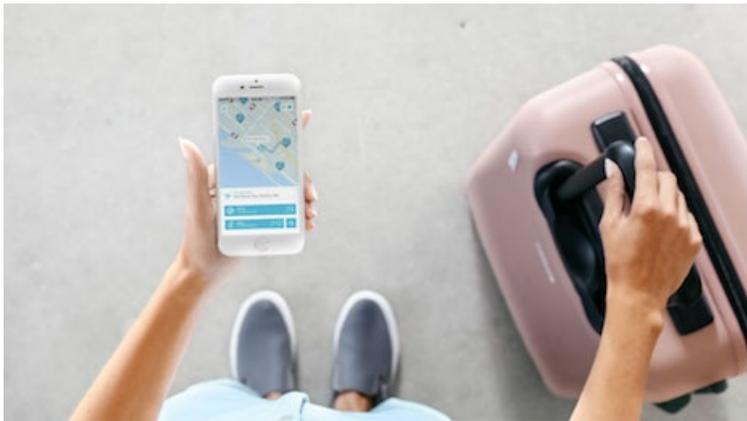


AUTOMOTIVE

## BMW, Daimler invest \$1B in urban mobility alliance

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*ReachNow is BMW's ride sharing app. Image credit: ReachNow*

By STAFF REPORTS

Automakers BMW Group and Daimler AG are teaming up on a joint company centered on creating sustainable mobility services for urban areas.

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The competitors are aligning towards the common goal of innovating transportation with solutions for ridesharing, parking, charging and more. Together, BMW and Daimler are investing more than 1 billion euros, or about \$1.1 billion, into the project.

"Our mobility services have developed a strong customer base and we are now taking the next strategic step," said Dieter Zetsche, chairman of the board of management of Daimler AG and head of Mercedes-Benz Cars, in a statement. "We are pooling the strength and expertise of 14 successful brands and investing more than 1 billion euros to establish a new player in the fast-growing market for urban mobility.

"By creating an intelligent network of joint ventures, we will be able to shape current and future urban mobility and draw maximum benefit from the opportunities opened up by digitalization, shared services and the increasing mobility needs of our customers," he said. "Further cooperations with other providers, including stakes in startups and established players, are also a possible option."

On the move

BMW and Daimler are launching five different joint ventures, with each automaker owning a 50 percent stake. The services combined already have 60 million customers.

Reach Now enables multimodal transport through ReachNow and moovel, while Charge Now will offer electric vehicle charging at 143,000 locations worldwide. Free Now will let consumers hail rides through platforms such as mytaxi, Chauffeur Priv, Clever Taxi and Beat, and Share Now will center on ridesharing with Car2Go and DriveNow, which offer services in 31 cities.

Another service dubbed Park Now will allow consumers to more easily park, allowing them access to cashless payments and the option to reserve spots in parking garages. These solutions, powered by ParkNow and Parkmobile

Group/Parkmobile LLC, are expected to help ease traffic.

This move reflects automakers' changed perspective on their role and value proposition, turning from car producers into mobility providers.

"We are creating a leading global game changer," said Harald Krger, management board chairman of BMW AG, in a statement. "The 60 million customers we already have today will benefit from a seamlessly integrated, sustainable ecosystem of car-sharing, ride-hailing, parking, charging and multimodal transport services.

"We have a clear vision: these five services will merge ever more closely to form a single mobility service portfolio with an all-electric, self-driving fleet of vehicles that charge and park autonomously and interconnect with the other modes of transport," he said. "This service portfolio will be a key cornerstone in our strategy as a mobility provider.

"The cooperation is the perfect way for us to maximize our chances in a growing market, while sharing the investments."



*BMW's Harald Krger with Daimler's Dieter Zetsche. Image courtesy of BMW*

BMW and Daimler's joint venture is subject to approval from regulatory bodies.

Separately, the partners are working to boost their modern mobility.

Daimler's Mercedes-Benz recently equipped its entry-level A-Class with features that enable it to more easily be shared among multiple owners ([see story](#)).

Meanwhile, BMW's iNext vehicle aims to combine future mobility technologies in a road car. The model is poised to put pressure on Tesla with highly automated electric driving ([see story](#)).