

AUTOMOTIVE

## BMW to be first automaker to use iPhone as fully digital car key

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*The BMW Digital Key with the Apple iPhone is yet another step toward integration of mobile services with automotive technology. Image courtesy of BMW*

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By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

Germany's BMW will become the first carmaker to let its customers use the iPhone as a fully digital car key in yet another sign of the integration of mobile technology into vehicles.

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The Munich-based automaker was the first to integrate the iPod into its vehicles and the first to offer wireless CarPlay. Now, it is the first to introduce support for the BMW Digital Key stored in the Apple Wallet for iPhone, with the ability to lock, unlock, drive and share keys with family and friends.

"The BMW Group was quick to recognize the potential of smartphones as digital keys if done right," the company said in a statement.

"Standardizing the Digital Key contributes to user experience, security and availability in smartphone models, all of which were key to the BMW Group strategy for the Digital Key right from the start."

The announcement was made at the Apple Worldwide Developer Conference in Cupertino, CA. It is another step into integrating Apple mobility services into the automotive business, going head to head with Google.



*The BMW Digital Key will work on new models of BMW cars, iPhones and Apple Watches. Image courtesy of BMW*

### Driving digital future

The soon-to-debut **BMW Digital Key** for the iPhone will let customers tap to unlock and get going by placing the iPhone in the smartphone tray and pushing the start button.

Setup of the Digital Key can be done through the BMW Smartphone app.

The BMW car owner can also share access with up to five friends, including a configurable car access option for young drivers to restrict top speed, horse power and maximum radio volume.

Management of access can be done from inside the car as well as through Apple Wallet.

Other features of the new Digital Key include storage in the Secure Element of the iPhone and access through Apple Wallet and power reserve for iPhone where car keys will still function for up to five hours if the device turns off due to low battery.

There is also the ability to share access with up to five friends via iMessage and Apple Watch compatibility.



*The addition of an iPhone digital key in BMW will expand Apple's market reach and product stickiness, raising the costs to switch for consumers. Image courtesy of BMW*

Apple and BMW are working closely with the Car Connectivity Consortium (CCC) to establish global standards.

The Digital Key specification 2.0 for NFC was released in May, while the next generation of Digital Key using Ultra Wideband technology is already well underway.

BMW's Digital Key for iPhone will be available in 45 countries for 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, X5, X6, X7, X5M, X6M and Z4 series models if made after July 1, 2020.

Compatible iPhone models for the BMW Digital Key will be the iPhone XR, iPhone XS or newer phones, as well as the Apple Watch Series 5 or newer.

MEANWHILE, BMW and Apple also debuted a new feature that will make it easier for CarPlay users to take BMW electric vehicles on longer journeys by automatically taking into account when and where to charge.

Drivers can plan their trip in advance on their iPhone or simply enter their destination through Apple CarPlay when they get into the car, BMW said.

Either way, Apple Maps will pick the optimal route based on electric range and the locations of charging stations along the way.

This feature will first be available for BMW in the fully electric BMW i4 launching next year.

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