

AUTOMOTIVE

BMW introduces all new iDrive display system

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The BMW iDrive display. Image credit: BMW Group

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

German auto company BMW Group has unveiled its latest technological advancement, iDrive an all-encompassing, intelligent, multi-sensory display personalized to each driver.

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For the past 20 years, BMW has developed the technology and worked up to this new generation of iDrive, which attempts to create a seamless interaction between driver and vehicle. This natural dialogue aims to tailor all functions controlled through iDrive to the driver's needs, preferences and demands.

Future of driving

The clear, minimalist design in both the exterior and interior of the car is reprised by the reduced design of the digital elements of BMW iDrive.

The most distinctive addition to the physical components on board is the curved display, which groups together the information display and control display. The curving screen offers a futuristic interpretation of the traditional driver orientation of BMW models, and is angled towards the driver making the intuitive touch control more straightforward.

Strong graphics, colors and textures, bright light and the interplay of reflections create an immersive visual experience. However, the user interface has been optimized to present an appropriate amount of information at the appropriate time in a comprehensive way.

The new generation of BMW iDrive brings new skills to the vehicle's intelligent personal assistant. The new visualization approach for the assistant features spheres of light in differing sizes and brightness levels, giving it more space and new ways of expressing itself.

This visual image also gives it a "face" with a clearly visible point of focus and identifiable states of activity through gestures.

"Great Entrance Moments" is the name given to the user experience from the point when the driver first approaches the vehicle until the journey commences. Ultra-wideband (UWB) radio technology allows precision location

pinpointing between vehicle and the key or smartphone, meaning that the car knows exactly where the driver is approaching from and how far away they are to within a few centimeters.

BMW introduces iDrive

As soon as the distance drops below three meters, the vehicle starts to wake up and indicates this with a gradually intensifying, dynamic lighting effect using the exterior lights.

The new My Modes feature provides an all-encompassing user experience geared towards the driver's personal preferences, creating unique moments for both the driver and their passengers. My Modes is designed to stimulate multiple senses, from sight to hearing to touch and can be selected by voice command or a dedicated center console button.

BMW's Operating System 8 ensures full integration of Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, while the new BMW iDrive will also enable integration of the Alibaba and Tencent services for customers in China.

Since 2018, BMW has been working to develop the use of smartphones as digital vehicle keys. The automaker has developed a new, convenient and secure way of unlocking and starting the vehicle without the user having to pull out their Apple iPhone.

The upcoming BMW Digital Key Plus version is based on the ultra-wideband (UWB) technology already integrated into the vehicle. The BMW Digital Key Plus will be first introduced for the all-electric BMW iX.

BMW has recently been focused on electric mobility, and hopes to double its sales of fully-electric vehicles in 2021. Production will begin in Germany later this year on two new EVs, the iX and i4.

BMW now has 13 electrified models, including fully-electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles, available in 74 global markets. The automaker plans to offer 25 such models by 2023, with more than half the new additions being fully electric ([see story](#)).