

MOBILE

BMW aims to equip ConnectedDrive service with real-time maps

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BMW's ConnectedDrive

By JOE MCCARTHY

German automaker BMW is fine-tuning its in-car navigation system with mobile enhancements that enable a more seamless experience.

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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.

"Real time traffic and alerts are a response to drivers wanting immediate live information including fuel prices," said Lauren Fix, automotive expert and author of "[Lauren Fix's Guide to Loving Your Car](#)," Lancaster, NY. "Other brands offer this service through XM Live traffic.

"Using new technologies and WiFi allow manufacturers to keep drivers connected to the real world and real-time updates," she said. "BMW Connected offers other content including a concierge service.

"If you want to sell a luxury car these days you have to continually update your interface and offerings to drivers."

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

BMW did not respond by press deadline.

Road sage

A useful new feature of the ConnectedDrive technology is a continuously updated fuel monitor. The device will log and update nearby fuel prices so that drivers can locate the most economical station.



ConnectedDrive technology

Also, the system will better map roads to account for traffic, new roads and other variables that are absent from the majority of GPS devices.

The system will automatically update several times a year when a new map version becomes available.

Route planning through the system will communicate with the onboard network for predictive energy management.

No registration is required for automatic updating and users do not have to log on to a portal. There are no licence costs for customers and no charges for data transfer.

BMW recently added Napster to its ConnectedDrive service, giving drivers access to a library of more than 20 million songs.



Napster for ConnectedDrive

Know where you're going

BMW's commitment to technological innovation is no secret.

The brand announced that it is extending its BMW i Remote Application to the Samsung

Galaxy Gear smartwatch at the International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

BMW's Galaxy Gear synchronizes with an owner's smartphone to display essential functions in a more accessible manner. The Remote App provides drivers with accurate assessments of their BMW i3's status and allows for communication between the two ([see story](#)).

The automaker tends to more tangible details as well.

For instance, BMW is polishing the appeal of its BMW i8 model with an exclusive luggage line crafted by Louis Vuitton.

The luggage set includes two travel bags, a business case and a garment bag and were crafted to mesh with the i8. Since the i series represents both an engineering and philosophical shift for BMW, gaining seals of approval from highly-respected brands helps to usher in the change ([see story](#)).

"BMW is in a highly competitive category and wants to remain in front of its competition in every category," Ms. Fix said.

Final Take

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