Media Information
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30 years, 300 000 vehicles: The BMW M GmbH – on the road to success with high-performance.

Munich. 30 years, 300 000 vehicles and a BMW M3 Coupe – these are the most significant earmarks of a remarkable anniversary. Three decades after commencing with the assembly of their first series production model, the BMW M GmbH has now delivered its 300 000th vehicle. The alpine white BMW M3 Coupe was handed over to a customer in Regensburg. This East Bavarian town is also the location of the BMW plant in which the high-performance sports car is produced.

The anniversary vehicle marks a further milestone in the success story of the BMW M GmbH. The number of customers who choose to purchase a BMW M model still continues to grow. Nevertheless, driving a car boasting the M logo remains an exclusive experience. In the year 2007, BMW M GmbH automobiles accounted for around one percent of the BMW Group's overall turnover worldwide.

The tremendous success of the BMW M GmbH began with a limited production car. In 1978 the company, which was established six years previously as the BMW Motorsport GmbH, presented a mid-engine racing car, featuring a straight six-cylinder power unit that was utilised in the newly founded ProCar series. The car was also produced for reasons of homologation with a 204 kW/277 bhp road version. The two-seater car, which had long become a legend and which, in its anniversary year, was recently abundantly honoured at the Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este 2008 at Lake Como, was the fastest German series production sports car when launched. 445 BMW M1 cars were produced up to 1981, one of them being the Art Car designed by Andy Warhol.

Other models included in the range as from 1984 achieved considerably higher production figures. It was then that the BMW M GmbH corporate philosophy, which is still applicable to this day, was established. The aim was to develop high-performance automobiles,

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which were suitable for everyday road traffic and would fascinate through discrete aesthetics and drive and suspension technology directly inspired by motor racing. This applied unreservedly to the first BMW M5 with a 210 kW/286 bhp straight six-cylinder power unit for example. Thanks to its performance and its understatement factor, the saloon car was extremely popular amongst business travellers.

Two years later, a further M model laid the foundation stone for a new vehicle category. The BMW M3, ancestor of the current fourth model generation, caused a stir both on the road and on the racetrack. It is the most successful touring car ever utilised in motor sports, also becoming a huge commercial success within a very short time. 17,000 first-generation BMW M3 automobiles alone were sold. To this date, the car, which is currently available as the BMW M3 Coupe, the BMW M3 Saloon and the BMW M3 Convertible, accounts for the largest proportion of overall BMW M GmbH vehicle sales.

During the course of the first ten years, around 35,000 BMW M automobiles were put on the road. In 1994, five-digit figures were achieved for the first time within a year. Since then, record sales figures have been consistently achieved, with sales of all BMW M GmbH models continuing to rise further with each new generation. Worldwide purchases of the new BMW M3 alone exceeded 4,000 in the first four months of the current year – even before the market launch of the BMW M3 Convertible and the new M double-clutch transmission with Drivelogic. The USA is the most important market for BMW M automobiles, and on the European continent the high-performance sports cars are much coveted in the UK, Germany and Italy.

The vehicle portfolio of the BMW M GmbH currently comprises nine models, all featuring engines with individual characteristics derived from the high-revving concept. The BMW Z4 M Roadster and the BMW Z4 M Coupe boast a straight six-cylinder with 252 kW/343 bhp, the BMW M5, and the BMW M5 Touring, the BMW M6 Coupe and the BMW M6 Convertible all feature a 373 kW/507 bhp V10 engine. Both power units are series winners of the “International Engine of the Year Awards”, which the new 309 kW/420 bhp V8 engine utilised in the BMW M3 was also able to seize in its category this year.

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