

Why the BMW M Fest in South Africa is the biggest one in the world

 By [Imran Salie](#)

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The BMW M Fest was back for its third instalment on 15-16 October at the Kyalami Grand Prix Circuit in Midrand to celebrate 50 years of BMW's M range. Bizcommunity Automotive was invited to have a sneak peek at the festival set up on 13 October and to witness the premiere of the new generation BMW M2, the XM and M4 CSL. On 14 October, BMW South Africa shuttled media to its IT Hub, where we got a breakdown of what the hub is, its importance, and why it's growing exponentially.



BMW Group South Africa CEO Peter van Binsbergen | Source: [South Africa](#)

After I attended my first M Fest back in 2019, I wondered why the festival was such a big deal. I wasn't sure why the M Fest in South Africa is the biggest one in the world, but as I sat listening and watching Peter van Binsbergen, BMW South Africa CEO, talk about the festival last week, I got an understanding of why it's so popular.

South Africa is where many popular M performance cars were previously manufactured and exported to different parts of the world. This partially explains South Africans' love affair with the M brand, but it doesn't paint the entire picture.

"The BMW brand and the M brand have a special relationship with our customers and fans here in South Africa. I think it has a lot to do with the racing success on South African race tracks of BMW products over the years. It's also certainly got to do with iconic and unique South Africa M cars that have been built here, which include the 530 MLE, the 325iS, and more," said Van Binsbergen.

This certainly explains the attraction to the M Fest here and its roaring success. This year also drew plenty of fans because of the unveiling of the new-generation BMW M2.

So what's new with the M2?

I won't divulge too much about the M2, but I will briefly mention that the updated model has a notably different design from its predecessor. The most distinct changes are the rear, headlights, and the famous kidney grille, which has got surprisingly smaller. The new M2 is heavier than the outgoing model, which is interesting as newer models are usually lighter.





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The BMW IT Hub

On the second day of our media trip, we were escorted to the BMW IT Hub South Africa in Menlyn to get exclusive insight into this new business operation the company has taken up in South Africa. So, what is the BMW IT Hub?

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"The BMW IT Hub South Africa also supports the infrastructure for BMW Group across the world. The BMW Group South Africa has a small IT department that takes care of local requirements; we on the other hand focus our work on our global partners and our European-based customers. It is the biggest global hub in the BMW Group," Lotter explained.

Lotter and Hans Coertze, ZA Hub general manager, made it clear to SA media that this part of the BMW business model in South Africa is growing rapidly - so rapidly that a large part of their time goes into recruitment. The BMW IT Hub South Africa is expected to grow from strength to strength in the coming years and will further position itself as an important business model for BMW South Africa.

ABOUT IMRAN SALIE

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