

BMW takes full control of car-sharing platform DriveNow

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A merger may be lurking behind the next bend

German high-end carmaker BMW said Monday it had bought partner Sixt's share in car-sharing platform DriveNow, stoking speculation a merger with a competing service from Daimler may lie ahead.

The Munich-based group will pay Sixt some 209 million euros (\$259 million) for its 50-percent stake in DriveNow.

Regulators are expected to approve or reject the deal by June.

"With DriveNow as a wholly-owned subsidiary, we have all options for continued strategic development of our services," BMW board member Peter Schwarzenbauer said in a statement.

Sixt's stake in the [service](#) had long been seen as the main hurdle to merging it with Mercedes-Benz maker Daimler's rival Car2Go platform.

Launched in 2011, DriveNow offers a fleet of around 6,000 BMW and Mini vehicles in 13 European cities, with more than one million customers on its books.

Meanwhile, Car2Go's 14,000-strong fleet—mostly made up of Daimler's ultra-compact Smart cars—serves 2.6 million users in 25 cities spread across three continents.

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