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THE AUTOGRILL GROUP CELEBRATES ITS 40TH ANNIVERSARY AT THE "THE NEW YORKER TECHFEST", AN EVENT DEDICATED TO THE FUTURE OF TECHNOLOGY, MOBILITY AND FOOD

A journey through gastronomic innovation, regional flavor and sustainability with a view to the future of digitalization and artificial intelligence

Gilberto Benetton receives the GEI AWARD 2017 presented during a gala dinner organized by the *Gruppo Esponenti Italiani* in New York

New York, 6 October 2017 – Autogrill Group celebrates its **40th anniversary by participating in TechFest, a yearly festival presented by *The New Yorker* dedicated to the technologies of the future** and how they will change the world. Autogrill Group will be part of a panel discussion dedicated to the "**The future of food**". Together with acclaimed personalities including **Dan Barber**, chef and co-owner of Blue Hill of Stone Barns and **Susan Ungaro**, Chairman of the James Beard Foundation, **Gianmario Tondato Da Ruos**, Chief Executive Officer of Autogrill Group, and **Steve Johnson**, President and Chief Executive Officer of HMSHost will discuss how the world of food is changing. They will explore the new perception of food; the way it is cultivated and consumed, and how it unites tradition, technological innovation, and sustainability.

Autogrill Group, the world's leading provider of food & beverage services for people on the move, is celebrating 40 years since its historical merger of the Company Pavesi, Motta and Alemagna in 1977 which led to the birth of Autogrill, with a look at the future of important topics like mobility, technological innovation, and the future of food with experts, entrepreneurs, and leaders of the business community right in the **USA** – a market which has become strategic over the years and which today accounts for **more than 50% of the Group's total sales through its subsidiary HMSHost.**

The day, directed by *The New Yorker's* editor David Remnick, will be full of meetings and discussions about important current issues with a specific focus on the trends and changes that are impacting and guiding our future: from climate change to technological innovation to access to information and mobility.



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*“Life is a journey. Ours, which has lasted for 40 years, is not over yet: we are planning tomorrow’s company today, a global Group capable of uniting sustainability, tradition and innovation with food-on-the-move - comments **Gianmario Tondato Da Ruos, the Autogrill Group’s Chief Executive Officer**– It’s vital to succeed in combining the opportunities provided by technological innovation and its challenges with a clear vision of new demographic trends and changes in customers’ behavior in order to conceive, create and offer products and services in line with the needs of an increasingly well informed, “digital” consumer”, he added.*

In the last four decades the Group has grown and evolved to become the **world’s leading provider of food & beverage services for people on the move. Active in 31 countries with over 57,000 employees, it has around 4,000 points of sale, a portfolio of more than 300 brands, and serves 1 billion customers every year.**

AUTOGRILL’S VISION AND THE FUTURE OF FOOD

In an environment of great technological innovation and evolving automation processes, the **Autogrill Group** – in accordance with its mission and values - is positioning itself as the driver of **innovation for the entire sector** and some time ago undertook a digitalization path with a view to providing adequate and personalized services based on the needs of today’s and tomorrow’s travelers.

With leading technology partners, the Group is working introducing sophisticated digital tools, combining connectivity with APPs, and dedicated services.

An example is HMSHost’s **“Host2Coast”**, the first mobile app of its kind that provides travelers with information on hundreds of food and dining locations in airports across the United States, as well as the ability to view menus and pre-order and pay for your meal directly with your digital device ready for pickup at the restaurant of your choice at restaurants in Charlotte Douglas International Airport, Chicago O’Hare International Airport, Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, George Bush Intercontinental Airport, Los Angeles International Airport, Miami International Airport, Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, and Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, and will continue to be rolled out at a growing number of participating restaurants, along with the introduction of new functions.



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The Group recently presented another innovation at the Oakland International Airport (in California) where HMSHost, in collaboration with SoftBank Robotics America, launched a new pilot **program with Pepper the humanoid robot**, who is **capable of understanding emotions and interacting with airport passengers**. Utilizing dedicated applications built specifically for HMSHost, Pepper will invite airport passengers to download the Host2Coast app, provides travelers with guidance on food and drink selections based on their personal taste preferences, and helps them with general information about the airport, as well as gate locations.

At the same time, the Group is investing in the evolution of its business, planning and developing new concepts, products and services, as part of a process of continuous experimentation.

"In a world in which interest in quality food, regional flavor, sustainability and wellbeing is growing, we are making our contribution by, for example, redefining terms like "healthy" which means eating well and following a well-rounded and balanced diet. For this reason the Group is exploring the use of innovative ingredients and new formats, renewing its offer in order to improve the traveler's whole food experience", states **Gianmario Tondato Da Ruos, the Autogrill Group's Chief Executive Officer**.

Experimentation, gastronomic exploration, and regional flavor are, therefore, key to Autogrill's approach, which makes it possible to maintain a sustainable, long term advantage in each of the countries where Autogrill is present.

Bistrot is a great example of this. The concept, developed in collaboration with the University of Gastronomic Sciences at Pollenzo, reflects the change in attitudes toward food and strives to enhance local Italian flavors, as well as sustain the creativity and authenticity of food artisans. Today there are already 22 Bistrot restaurants in Europe and North America.

To share a "taste" of all this, the Group has created a special food area for the guests of the TechFest who at lunchtime will be able to choose from three different corners: one dedicated to **Bistrot**, one to **Wicker Park Seafood & Sushi** – a prize winning sushi bar found inside Chicago O'Hare International Airport that delivers a gourmet experience built on carefully selected ingredients – and a corner dedicated exclusively to "**Food of the Future**", with an original, healthy menu featuring new ingredients like gluten free carbohydrates and low glycemic high protein foods, rich in fiber.



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For Autogrill, innovation is imagining, and creating, a sustainable future. For this reason the Group is constantly identifying solutions which match business with **environmental** needs: reducing energy and water consumption and building sustainable concepts through interior designs and decoration that use natural and eco-compatible materials. The international best practices for sustainable innovation are expressed at **Villoresi Est** and **Delaware Welcome Center**, both LEED certified, which act as permanent “laboratories” for solutions that can be used by the entire network worldwide. Another example is HMSHost’s **Urban Garden in Chicago O’Hare International Airport**, a collaboration between HMSHost and the Chicago Department of Aviation, the Urban Garden is a **pioneering experiment in the field of environmental sustainability**; an aeroponic garden comprised of 26 towers on which more than 44 different vegetables and herbs are grown and then used by the HMSHost restaurants found inside the airport.

GILBERTO BENETTON RECEIVES THE GEI AWARD 2017

Yesterday, 5 October, during a gala held by the *Gruppo Esponenti Italiani* at the JW Marriott Essex House, Gilberto Benetton, Chairman of the Autogrill Group, received the prestigious “GEI AWARD 2017” in recognition and appreciation for all the activities he has carried out in favor of the Italian industry and for his great contribution to the improvement of the image of Italy throughout the world.

Gilberto Benetton led the diversification of the Benetton Group in the retail, infrastructure and real estate sectors that took place over the last 20 years after having created in 1965, with his brothers and sisters Giuliana, Luciano and Carlo, the Benetton Group, a leading fashion company. Benetton is Deputy Chairman of Edizione Srl, the Benetton family’s holding company, Chairman of Edizione Property, Chairman of Autogrill and director of the Atlantia Group. He is also a director of Mediobanca, as well as a member of the Supervisory Board since 2007.

Photos link:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B8zKg6eYB7iKZWNauUGZOMUQ1V2c>

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