

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **STUDY: 31 PERCENT OF RESTAURATEURS USE DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES – A HIGH POTENTIAL**

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- A study by the METRO Chair of Innovation at the Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne (EHL) analyses use of digital solutions in the hospitality industry.
- Currently about one third of the restaurant operators in Germany, France, Italy and Spain use digital technologies to facilitate their business processes.
- The hospitality sector thus offers a high potential for digital solutions. 46 percent of the respondents rate technology as important or very important, 15 percent plan investments.
- METRO AG supports its HoReCa customers in growing their success through digital innovations.

The first study of the METRO Chair of Innovation takes a look behind the scenes of the hospitality sector and offers new insights on the use of technology in the restaurant industry in Germany, France, Italy and Spain. How do restaurants use digital solutions – or why do they refrain from using them, what are their demands? And why is it worth to drive digitization in an industry that is still largely operating in the analogue world? Now we have the answers.

What does a steak on the menu have to do with digitization? Much more than one would expect, i.e. when the restaurant operator can focus on his core business, e.g. on preparing and serving a good steak, while state-of-the-art technologies facilitate or even completely take over other tasks related to his business. But, do restaurant owners in Europe actually want to be assisted by digital solutions? How are restaurateurs using technologies, which barriers need to be overcome and which processes in restaurants can be improved by means of digital solutions?

The new study by METRO AG and the Swiss hotel management school EHL provides useful information. They joined forces under the METRO Chair of Innovation to investigate the digital future of the restaurant industry. “We conducted a quantitative survey in order to analyze the level of digitization in the restaurant industry. Indeed, it is essential to understand the situation before being able to identify solutions. This is why the METRO Chair of Innovation at EHL has undertaken this study which brings concrete recommendations to restaurant owners, with the intent to help them face their three main challenges: attract new customers, meet their clients’ needs and manage their costs”, says Professor Christine Demen Meier, head of the METRO Chair of Innovation.

#### **Great potential for technological support**

In the first study conducted by the METRO Chair of Innovation, 2,746 independent restaurateurs in Germany, France, Italy and Spain were surveyed. The result: 31 percent of the restaurant owners already use technologies at an intermediate and high level. 46 percent – that is almost half of the respondents – are open to the use of digital technologies, 15 percent are even planning concrete investments. The main reasons for the four countries which keep the restaurant operators from investing into digital support are lack of priority, high costs and development strategy.



### **More success for METRO customers from the hospitality industry**

Olaf Koch, Chairman of the Management Board of METRO AG, explains why his company wants to support the European restaurant industry. “Our goal is nothing less than the digitization of the hospitality industry. We are convinced that especially for small and medium-sized businesses, this will create substantial opportunities to become even more successful. We are talking about two million businesses in Europe generating around €400 billion in sales. If we help to digitize ten percent of these companies in the long-term perspective, we can make a substantial contribution to transforming the industry”.

If its customers are successful, this will also benefit METRO AG. “By building up digital competence, we want to further consolidate our position as a strong and trustful partner in the hospitality sector”, says Koch.

### **A wealth of ideas for digital innovations**

A vast number of innovations to enhance productivity, service and competitiveness in the hospitality sector and intensify customer relationships are already available today. METRO AG has taken on the task of supporting the digitization of restaurant businesses, which constitute one of the key customer groups of this B2B company as their partner. To this end, the wholesale and food specialist created a new business unit and launched an accelerator program promoting start-ups for the third consecutive year in 2017.

The business unit HoReCa Digital brings innovative technologies that improve the business processes and customer relations management of small and medium-sized hotels, restaurants and catering businesses to market maturity. The METRO Accelerator for Hospitality supports the matching innovations by leading selected start-ups from all over the world to success.

The new study – and those that will follow – creates the foundation for achieving this goal as fast and purposeful as possible. Going forward will enable European restaurant owners to focus on what is really important to them: their core business.

METRO is a leading international specialist in wholesale and food retail. The company operates in 35 countries and employs more than 150,000 people worldwide. In financial year 2015/16, METRO generated sales of around €37 billion. The company provides custom solutions to meet the regional and international needs of its wholesale and retail customers. With its sales brands METRO/MAKRO Cash & Carry and Real as well as delivery services and digitization initiatives METRO sets the standards for tomorrow: for customer focus, digital solutions and sustainable business models. More information at [www.metroag.de](http://www.metroag.de).

### **About Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne (EHL)**

Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne (EHL) is an ambassador for traditional Swiss hospitality and has been a pioneer in hospitality education since 1893. It has created and inspired a unique professional community of over 25,000 hospitality managers, united by the values and the legacy of EHL.

EHL is a leading university that provides [learning solutions](#) for enthusiastic, talented and ambitious students from 114 different countries. With undergraduate, graduate and certificate programs, EHL offers its students a range of on-campus and online education opportunities at different stages of their professional journey.

EHL is regularly recognized as the best hotel management school in the world with the highest graduate employment rates in the industry. EHL is a member of EHL Holding SA, a Group dedicated to hospitality management education.



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