World first in Italy: LeitPilot® used for first time ever on a gondola lift at the Rosskopf in Sterzing

LEITNER'S smart technology as a major step on the way to automated ropeways

Thanks to the close ties between the Rosskopf skiing area and the ropeway manufacturer LEITNER, another milestone has now been achieved in this traditionally successful collaboration. The GD10 “Rosskopf” will be the first gondola lift to be equipped with the new LeitPilot® technology. This lays the essential groundwork for automated station operation, thus making a major contribution to boosting efficiency and saving resources.

The two Sterzing-based companies LEITNER and Neue Rosskopf GmbH have been steadily increasing their close collaboration in recent years. The most recent example of this was the construction of the new 10-seater gondola lift in 2022. Sterzing's local mountain is now once again the site of a groundbreaking world first: the test run for LEITNER's new LeitPilot® automation technology. For many years now, the ropeway manufacturer has been focusing its research and development efforts on increasing operational efficiency and automation to save energy and resources.

“As a local company, we are proud to work with Neue Rosskopf GmbH to promote innovation and progress through cutting-edge technologies such as the new LeitPilot®. These solutions reflect not only our pursuit of the highest quality and continuous optimisation, but also our joint goal of offering passengers an unforgettable experience,” says Martin Leitner, Member of the Board of LEITNER S.p.A..

Autonomous station operation through real-time monitoring

With LeitPilot®, the company is now laying the essential groundwork for the future “unmanned” operation of ropeway stations. The technology is based on real-time monitoring using advanced LIDAR sensors to monitor the vehicle pit and cameras for the loading and unloading area, as well as the area around the station. In addition, the newly developed safety devices also include safety doors and emergency stop switches. These extensive protective measures will ensure passengers always remain within the designated safe areas of the station. They can also enjoy even smoother embarking and disembarking thanks to LeitPilot®'s optimised cabin guides. These guides ensure the cabins are optimally stabilised in the station turnaround, thus providing a high level of comfort.

If an extraordinary situation arises that makes it necessary to shut down the installation, the central monitoring system, which itself is constantly monitored by a staff member on site, comes into play. This guarantees maximum safety and assistance for passengers and an immediate resumption of operation of the installation.

Smart technology for new and existing systems

In the future, LeitPilot® can be integrated into both new and existing systems to help optimise the deployment of human resources while ensuring safe operation. The system can also be optimally adapted to different station configurations, such as HCL (high-capacity loading) stations. The system is currently being tested at the Rosskopf to support manual monitoring of embarking and disembarking. Once the trial phase has been successfully completed, the plan is to deploy LeitPilot® in autonomous operation.

"LeitPilot® marks a real turning point for our ski area. With this cutting-edge, autonomous technology, we are not only setting new standards in safety and efficiency, but also creating long-term benefits by significantly reducing staff costs. At the same time, LeitPilot® enables us to respond even more flexibly to our passengers' needs and to position Rosskopf as a pioneer in ski area innovation. The close and successful collaboration with our fantastic partner LEITNER is invaluable—together, we are shaping the future of winter sports and setting new standards for the entire industry," enthuses Paul Eisendle, CEO of Neue Rosskopf GmbH.

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