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Rolling Droid Delivers Food and Smiles at MSP Program Enhances Contactless Food Ordering for Travelers



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The mobile food ordering and delivery service at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP) is on a roll thanks to a new ambassador that barely sees eye-to-eye with most kids and doesn't speak a word. Yet, it invites double-takes, smiles and pointed fingers from travelers as it rolls by on its delivery missions.

In partnership with AtYourGate, [MSP ASAP](#) has unleashed a rolling droid, called a gita

(jee-tah), as part of a pilot program that enhances contactless food ordering capabilities in Terminal 1.

“There is convenience and safety for customers to be able to order food from their phones or laptops, and within 15 to 30 minutes, the gita rolls up and opens its cargo doors for the customers to grab their order,” said Eric Johnson, director of commercial management and airline affairs for the Metropolitan Airports Commission, which operates MSP. “It’s fun and whimsical, but there is also a purpose behind the technology for customers to feel more confident in avoiding queue lines and having their order delivered.”

The rolling droid uses visual sensing technology to follow the AtYourGate delivery staff member to reach their customers at their gate or elsewhere in Terminal 1. Order demand and locations factor into when and where the gita is dispatched. It can carry a hefty order of up to 40 pounds in its cargo bin.

"We see gita as the first step towards introducing robotics as an innovative and safe new option for passengers who shop and dine while at MSP," said [AtYourGate](#) Co-founder Chris Hartman. "Plus, the surprise and delight moments created when guests meet gita for the first time provide a terrific opportunity for the AtYourGate team to promote the MSP ASAP experience." MSP is the fourth At Your Gate U.S. airport to launch the delivery droid, which is manufactured by Piaggio Fast Forward.

MSP ASAP launched in November 2020 in partnership with both AtYourGate and Grab. Customers can order delivery from 16 food venues as well as from North Loop Market, which offers packaged food, drinks, electronics and travel accessories. The same program also allows customers to order for pick-up as well, to limit time in queue lines and enhance social distancing.

MSP's award-winning concessions program features 125 restaurants and shops; 80 have opened in just the last five years. The program has received the ACI-NA Richard A. Griesbach Award of Excellence for Overall Concession Program and was honored with Best Overall Airport Offering for the Americas handed out in 2019 by the Moodie Davitt Report FAB Awards. In 2020, MSP was named to the ACI's Director General's Roll of Excellence in Airport Service Quality, after winning Best Airport in North America (in its size category) for four straight years.

[Click here to see video of the MSP Rolling Delivery Droid](#)

The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) owns and operates one of the nation's largest airport systems, including Minneapolis-St Paul International (MSP) and six general aviation airports. The MAC's airports connect the region to the world and showcase Minnesota's extraordinary culture to millions of passengers from around the globe who arrive or depart through MAC airports each year. Though a public corporation of the state of Minnesota, the organization is not funded by income or property taxes. Instead, the MAC's operations are funded by rents and fees generated by users of its airports. For more information, visit www.metroairports.org.