



KUKA canteen robot assembles fresh rice dishes

Augsburg, August 17 2022 – The KUKA canteen robot in the UK is celebrating its first birthday. For just over a year, Semblr – a small robot from KUKA – has been assembling fresh rice dishes for the staff of online grocery retailer Ocado in Hatfield.

"It's like a classic canteen," says Liam Rogers, Marketing and Communications Manager at Karakuri, describing the concept behind Semblr. "The customer comes in and says, 'I'd like a little bit of this, a little bit of that.' The person at the counter puts together the food that's been pre-cooked in the kitchen beforehand and serves it." The semblr takes over these tasks and works side by side, so to speak, with the counter staff who continue to be employed – because the classic company cafeteria still exists. Two Karakuri employees assist him and fill the ingredients into the Semblr's serving chambers. The KR AGILUS robotic arm takes care of mixing and arranging the ingredients.

London start-up has developed the canteen robot

Karakuri – a startup currently with 36 employees in London – is home to the minds that developed Semblr. Karakuri has been developing robot-based solutions for the food industry since 2019. Hatfield is not far away, and Ocado is among the companies that invested in the creation of Karakuri. This is because Ocado also specializes in food, as well as hardware, software and logistics. So it made sense to provide the first canteen service robot to Ocado's headquarters with 4,000 employees.

KUKA

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Reduced risk of infection: Canteen visitors order digitally

The asset in the Semblr is a KR AGILUS. He takes a bowl after the digital order, shortly before the scheduled pickup time. With this, he sequentially heads for those serving chambers that contain the desired ingredients. An intelligent, hygienic dispensing system developed by Karakuri ensures that everything ends up in the bowl in the ordered quantity. In smooth movements, without spilling, the dispensers dispense rice, chicken, beef, tofu and/or vegetables of choice from the top. Sauce is added, and lastly toppings such as herbs or nuts. The finished dish, along with a receipt that clearly assigns the meal to an orderer, is now ready for pickup. "That less interaction with others is an advantage may sound antisocial," admits Liam Rogers, "but the world has simply changed in the last year and a half because of Covid-19." Encountering only one person on the way to the meal – the staff member who monitors the semblr and assists guests where necessary – reduces the risk of infection.

[Read more details about the canteen robot in the UK here.](#)

KUKA

KUKA is a global automation corporation with sales of around 3.3 billion euro and roughly 14,000 employees. The company is headquartered in Augsburg, Germany. As one of the world's leading suppliers of intelligent automation solutions, KUKA offers customers everything they need from a single source: from robots and cells to fully automated systems and their networking in markets such as automotive, electronics, metal & plastic, consumer goods, e-commerce/retail and healthcare. (As at December 31, 2021)