

Mobility Plaza®

The future is convenient — and robotic

For years, full service refueling has been the most common choice when consumers visited a gas station, and it is still a great service. But how will that look in the future? Will it be possible and affordable to recruit people for these jobs? Will the demand for convenience grow as the world gets more digital?



The full service concept is still a very common and popular service in the South European countries. With temperatures of up to 40°C in the summer and a well developed tradition of good service, it's clear why full service is still a competitive asset for the South European fuel retail market.

But how will that look in the future — will it be possible to recruit the necessary labor for such jobs? The population has higher education, and the handling of fuels is not particularly a healthy job. How about the demand on the full service refueling, will that decrease or increase? If we look at society in general, are consumers then more willing to do dirty physical tasks and expect less convenience now than they had years back?

Without having a reliable crystal ball, it's most likely a “no” to all the 3 questions above.

It will be difficult to get labor for low educated unhealthy jobs, the full service market will increase as convenience only becomes a stronger competition parameter. And no — consumers are most likely not willing to do more physical work. Instead, the expectation of convenience is growing.

Robotic refueling is a growing business, and according to the british analysis company *"Insight business"* latest report, *"Europe robotic refueling market to 2028"* the market size will grow to about 50 billion dollars by 2028.

Robotic refueling would be a great opportunity to continue and develop the full service refueling business in the South European market, and could solve the issues mentioned above.

The same report states Autofuel as the leading supplier of robotic refueling systems. The statement is based on the fact that Autofuel already has 3 generations of systems, 8 years of experience, and 4 years of field experience with installations on commercial gas stations. Autofuel is also the world's first to ATEX certify a collaborative robotic arm.



Alternatives to fossil fuels are coming, and the business model of having the only product on the fuel retail market is gone. Oil companies are now in competition with other alternatives like electricity, biofuels, hydrogen etc. Convenience will then be an even stronger competitive parameter.

But how will full service and robotic refueling survive in a market with a growing amount of EVs?

There are two scenarios and both could end up in larger demand on full service refueling/charging.

Scenario 1: Charging will stay slow and last for about 30 minutes per super charge

Scenario 2: Charging will develop and be just as fast refueling (about 5 minutes)

For scenario 1: There are two very inconvenient steps, the waiting time for a free charger and the waiting time for the actual charging. Both need to be monitored by the driver, which means the driver could look at 1 hour or more with presence near the car to get on the road again. Furthermore, the driver needs to be ready to move the car, as soon as it's fully charged, to avoid extra charges for blocking the charging stall. With robotic refuel, a mobile robot will handle both the waiting and charging.

With personal full service, a person can be hired to do this task. Would such a service be more or less

valuable, compared to the time saved?



For scenario two: The time spent at the charging station is as low as on a regular gas station, which means the task of connecting the electrical plug, and handling payment, will be a relatively bigger task than in the 30 min charge, from scenario one. Cables will be heavier too, as well as the radiation from them. Here, the full service or robotics will fill in the same role as the service attendee on a forecourt does today. But with radiation and heavy cables, the health aspect is still relevant.

Autofuel robotic refueling is the link between the car and energy source, and is able to connect a car to any kind of energy dispensing unit. Both as a replacement for today's service attendees on full service gas stations, or for tomorrow's alternative fuels and autonomous cars.

Future is difficult to predict, especially in mobility, but from what we have experienced so far, a new pattern is developing: Consumers expect better service, the world is more digital, the increasing importance of convenience as a competitive parameter, and cars are getting more advanced.

The question is — are we still going to refuel them ourselves?

Interested in robotic refueling? We invite you to [get in touch with Autofuel](#).

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