

CDP Venture Capital SGR sole investor alongside Hevolus: the Mixed Reality leads innovation in southern Italy and contributes to the country's competitiveness

*The National Innovation Fund supports the development
of the Molfetta-based company, leader in disruptive technologies and Microsoft international
partner.*

*Goal: increasing the digital transformation opportunities for the country by leveraging smart
solutions, and omnichannel and interactive customer experiences.*

Rome, Sept. 15th 2020 - **CDP Venture Capital SGR signed an agreement for a capital increase of 4 million euros with Hevolus Srl**, an Apulian company leader in disruptive technologies and innovative customer experiences.

The investment was made through the Italia Venture II Fund, which is dedicated to innovative startups and SMEs in southern Italy and is aimed at accelerating their competitiveness and development.

Hevolus is an innovative SME with exponential growth, specialized in solutions, projects and services aimed at the Digital Transformation of business processes and customer journeys for any industrial sector.

It was born in 2000 as a hardware store for artisans. After a few years, the company launched entrepreneurial diversification initiatives, opened new business lines and became a well-known innovation lab with very high digital skills: a new generation software house that studies and develops innovative business models based on disruptive technologies - augmented reality, mixed reality, Artificial Intelligence, IoT, Cloud services, cognitive services - with the ultimate goal of helping sell better by involving the customer more and more.

In 2018 Hevolus became Microsoft Worldwide Partner for Mixed Reality. Right after this partnership, it was chosen by the Redmond giant as the international testimonial of the holographic computer HoloLens2.

Moreover, it is among the partner companies of the new plan, called Ambition Italy #DigitalRestart, with which Microsoft intends to support the growth of the country through investments for 1.5 billion dollars in advanced digital technologies and skills.

In 2020 it won the "Retail Week Awards" in the Game Changer category with the custom project developed for Natuzzi. It also obtained the Microsoft Italy "Best ISV Partner 2020", a prestigious award dedicated to partners who have had a significant impact in the digital transformation of customers with their solutions.

Today Hevolus has customers of international relevance with numerous success stories in the furniture, fashion, telecom, civil and industrial systems sectors.

Since 2015 Hevolus has been a Corporate Open Innovation Partner of the German multinational Würth with the projects Wüdesto (2016), WOE (2017), JIT (2018), Holo Warehouse (2019), Holo Maintenance (2019), HoloLink (2020).

Innovative solutions that are social distancing proof

Hevolus stands out on the global scene for the high level of flexibility and scalability of its platforms and for the highly innovative content of the technologies implemented, with which it guarantees the transformation of the customer experience in an omnichannel and interactive way.

In 2020 the company launched new digital platforms on the market in response to the needs emerged by the health emergency: **Augmented Store At Home and HoloLink**, aimed at allowing business continuity and lead generation with remote services without renouncing eye contact and digital relationship with the customer.

Augmented Store at Home is a web application for innovatively remoting the retail sector: it supports the store virtualization and augmented reality visualization of items on sale through their 3D digital twins by using any desktop or mobile device.

HoloLink, on the other hand, is the smart working for artisans: the solution allows both them and small businesses to provide remote assistance to their customers, leveraging on Cloud Computing and Augmented / Mixed Reality.

Both platforms support Microsoft HoloLens 2 and allow the user to run instant collaboration sessions leveraging the power of the Mixed Reality.

Significant benefits for the production chains: reduction of the required physical store space, omnichannel integration of the online and in-store customer journey, reduced online purchase time, increased conversion rate, increased reach rate, enhancement of customer service initiatives, optimization of the business time and costs, reduction of in-person visits, reduced polluting emissions.

CDP Venture Capital Sgr will support through the **Italia Venture II Fund** and as a single investor the evolutionary path of Hevolus, through a capital increase of **4 million euros**. The investment is meant to help a technological excellence of southern Italy to expand its business internationally, not only in the retail sector but also in the healthcare, industrial, telecom sector etc.

The Apulian company has shown extreme adaptability to the market needs, and with this aspiration it has intensified the implementation of augmented reality services to compensate for the current regulations that limit the smooth conduct of commercial and business activities, promoting the digitization of companies that were significantly penalized by the COVID-19 crisis.

The operation will also allow the possible acquisition of minor companies with deep technological skills (AI and CRM technologies) and the strengthening of the organizational structure through the inclusion of key professional figures in the R&D and commercial area, intended to support the business development phase.

*"The mixed reality market is booming" - said **Enrico Resmini, CEO and General Manager of CDP Venture Capital Sgr** - "we are talking about an estimated global value of 1.8 billion dollars in 2024. Our investment in a highly innovative company in southern Italy with strong technological know-how such as Hevolus will accelerate the development of new business and employment opportunities. This operation will have a positive impact on all those Italian companies that need a boost in digital transformation processes in the retail, oil & gas, construction, healthcare and fashion sectors, in which the new technologies of virtual reality could bring important benefits, both for turnover and optimization of costs."*

*"We are honored to be part of such a solid and prestigious Italian group that will allow us to grow further on a global level, maintaining our Italian spirit and allowing us to fuel our drive on cutting-edge technologies and advanced skills. Over the years, thanks to the synergies with the Microsoft ecosystem and with a vision of innovation, we have developed technological solutions that have guided Italian companies on the digital transformation path and that are now allowing many companies to leverage the Mixed Reality to innovatively overcome the many constraints caused by the health emergency. With this important milestone in our development plans, we will not only be able to expand the application scenarios for the benefit of sectors that are strategic for Italy but also export this model of Italian excellence abroad, contributing to the country's competitiveness, all starting from southern Italy " - said **Antonella La Notte, CEO of Hevolus Innovation**.*

"We are excited about the growth path undertaken by Hevolus, a noteworthy reward for the excellent work done so far. Our partners are the true innovation champions of the country, alongside companies in their digitization projects through skills and vertical solutions. We are proud to work together with an innovative company like Hevolus, with which in the last few months Microsoft has developed some truly innovative projects in a cutting-edge field such as that of Mixed Reality to help companies find new channels of connection with customers, even during the health emergency. Thanks to the participation of CDP Venture Capital it will be able to develop solutions that are more and more advanced, to guide companies in thinking

*about technologies as a lever for innovation, competitiveness and economic growth ”, declared **Barbara Cominelli, Marketing & Operations Director of Microsoft Italy.***

CDP Venture Capital SGR – National Innovation Fund

CDP Venture Capital is an SGR (70% of CDP Equity and 30% of Invitalia) with approximately 1 billion euro of resources under management. It aims to make Venture Capital a cornerstone of the country's economic development and innovation, creating the conditions for the overall and sustainable growth of the Venture Capital ecosystem. It operates with a series of funds that aim to support startups at all their life stages, making both direct and indirect investments.

Hevolus Innovation

Hevolus Innovation is specialized in research and development of innovative business models for a phygital customer experience. It is Microsoft Worldwide partner for Mixed Reality, winner of the SMAU 2019 and 2018 Innovation Awards, Microsoft Italy's Best ISV Partner 2020 and winner of the Retail Week Awards 2020 in the Game Changer category and already appears in the list of the top ten European suppliers of AR / VR platforms - Hevolus Innovation is a leader in the world of disruptive technologies (Mixed Reality, Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality, Artificial Intelligence, Microsoft Dynamics and cognitive services) which are used to innovate the shopping experience and business strategies in the reference markets. It addresses the entire retail industry and deals with Corporate Open Innovation for the multinational Würth, with successful projects for some key sectors of the group, including carpentry, naval sector, the wood industry and the manufacturing industry.

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