No, you don’t have to get your car off the road because a pack of hybrid cars are approaching. And if you’re into vegetable gardening, we’re not talking about a new variety of hybrid tomatoes. What this article discusses is a completely new breed of entertainment center that we believe is the future for community-based entertainment venues. In America we are seeing declining participation in most forms of location-based entertainment and recreation. The National Golf Foundation reports golf lost an average of about 500,000 regular American players per year over the past decade. Regular participation in bowling, billiards, paintball and roller-skating is down. Per capita attendance at movie theaters is down.

These are all long-term trends that started before the Great Recession. There are a number of factors causing these declines, but the predominant reason is the migration of disposable entertainment spending and leisure time to mobile and at-home digital screens.

This doesn’t bode well for community facilities that features entertainment and recreation activities. However, a nascent breed of new center is seeing great financial success featuring these activities. The hybrids are coming. Unlike the...
tività combinandole in modo nuovo, con l’aggiunta poi di una buona ristorazione e di un ambiente che stimola la socializzazione. E così attraggono clienti, soprattutto i più facoltosi, che oggi costituiscono il mercato primario. Le famiglie con un più alto stato socio-economico hanno un tasso di frequentazione dei locali di intrattenimento e culturali che è circa il doppio della media. In America, il 40% dei nuclei familiari a più alto reddito rappresenta il 70% di questa spesa.

Guardiamo innanzitutto al golf. La società Topgolf sta aprendo dei centri che sposano elementi dei tradizionali campi di pratica del golf e minigolf con biliardi, eventi aziendali, tecnologie come partite informatizzate, piatti e bevande da consumare in compagnia in bar e lounge bar informali e trendy, e spazi di socializzazione che creano un’atmosfera gioviale. Topgolf sa che il suo business non è semplicemente il golf, ma è piuttosto l’esperienza, e un’esperienza molto social.

Allo stesso modo anche il bowling sta cambiando ibridandosi. Ora ci sono delle catene come Pinstripes che abbinano bowling, bocce, bar, ristorazione, aerei per gruppi e musica dal vivo. Punch Bowl Social mette insieme sotto un tetto bowling, biliardo, ping pong, giochi automatici, shuffleboard, karaoke per piccoli gruppi, bar e buon cibo. Pinewood Social ha aggiunto una piscina all’aperto al mix e così farà anche Southside Social quando aprirà tra qualche mese. Altri centri di intrattenimento si fanno esclusivi e social aggiungendo al bowling arene laser, sale single activity centers, such as driving ranges, bowling alleys, billiard centers and traditional movie theaters, many of which are experiencing declining attendance and revenues as the market shrinks, the hybrid centers are grouping a number of activities in new combinations, plus adding great food and beverage and social settings to attract customers, especially the more affluent ones, who are the major market today. Higher socioeconomic households have a participation rate at community entertainment and cultural venues almost twice the average. In America, the top 40% of households by income account for 70% of such spending.

Let’s first look at golf. Topgolf is opening centers that combine elements of traditional driving ranges and miniature golf with billiards, corporate events, technology such as computerized competition and trendy and socially sharable

With 13 locations opened around the world in 14 years serving 2.7 million annual visitors, Topgolf is a fast-growing chain of sports entertainment venues that combine practice golf games with party vibe built around great music, a playful atmosphere and mouth-watering food and drink.

Con 13 centri aperti nel mondo dell’arco di 14 anni che accolgono una media di 2.7 milioni di visitatori ogni anno, Topgolf è una crescente catena di locali di intrattenimento e sport in cui la pratica del golf si sposa con atmosfere da party basate su buona musica e menù che fanno venire l’acquolina in bocca.
dishes and beverages in bars, lounges and social gathering spaces to create an atmosphere of merriment. Topgolf understands that they are not simply in the golf business, but rather in the experience business, and a very social one at that.

Bowling is getting a hybrid makeover as well. We now have chains like Pinstripes that combine bowling, bocce, a bar, destination dining and social group areas and live music. Punch Bowl Social combines bowling, billiards, ping-pong, arcade games, shuffleboard, private karaoke, a bar and gastro dining. Pinewood Social added an outdoor pool to the mix as will Southside Social when it opens in a few months. Other hybrid entertainment centers are going upscale and social, combining bowling with laser tag, game rooms, live performance stages, movie theaters and bars and dining.

Many movie theaters are becoming hybrid entertainment destinations in order to expand their appeal from passive entertainment to a one-stop entertainment, social and dining destination by offering bars, food and beverage both in the theaters as well as in restaurants. Some are also adding bowling, game rooms and other entertainment attractions.

Punch Bowl Social is a new dining, drinking and gaming concept that got start in Denver a few years ago. Punch Bowl Social entertainment venues bring ‘old school’ entertainment (bowling, billiards, darts, video games, ping-pong etc.) culinary refinement and a modern beverage program under one roof in a playful setting featuring Victorian and modern elements.

Punch Bowl Social è un nuovo concetto di ristorazione, bar e centro ricreativo che ha preso il via con un locale a Denver alcuni anni fa. I Punch Bowl Social riuniscono sotto uno stesso tetto divertimenti vecchia maniera (bowling, biliardi, freccette, video-giochi, ping pong ecc.), una cucina raffinata, e una lista moderna di vini, birre e altre bevande. Il tutto in un ambiente spensierato con elementi sia moderni che vittoriani.

Queste ibridazioni hanno tutti dei tratti in comune. Tutte presentano cibi e bevande fortemente moderni e danno all’aspetto sociale dell’esperienza un peso che è pari se non addirittura superiore a quello che hanno le componenti di intrattenimento e ricreazione. Hanno la consapevolezza di essere, nel sentire della clientela, delle destinazioni dove poter socializzare e mangiare al risto-
This page: White Hutchinson Leisure & Learning Group’s latest hybrid center that is scheduled to open in January is Helio Center in Da Nang, Vietnam. The 14,500sq.m center is truly a hybrid center on steroids, as it includes the following components: a bowling alley including VIP lanes and a lounge, a children’s edutainment center, an indoor ice skating rink, 7 rides, soft-contained-play structure, redemption, simulator and video game room, indoor karting track, 19 private karaoke rooms, party rooms, a multi-purpose room, 3 food areas (a food court, a coffee shop and an indoor-outdoor restaurant village).

All these hybrids have a number of things in common. They all feature great contemporary food and drink and focus as much, if not more so, on the social aspect of the experience as on the entertainment and recreation components. They understand that they are a social and dining destination, not just an entertainment or recreation center. What this probably means for the future of community entertainment and recreation venues is that the single attraction center will fast become something of the past, as the new hybrids are so much more appealing, and once someone experiences one of these hybrids, there really is no going back to the old standalone that will then seem so backward and inferior.

Randy White is the CEO of the White Hutchinson Leisure & Learning Group, a multi-disciplinary firm that specializes in feasibility, concept and brand development, design and consulting for entertainment facilities. Over the past 25 years, the company has worked for over 500 clients in 32 countries and won 16 first-place design awards. The company publishes an occasional Leisure eNewsletter and Tweets and Randy has a blog. Randy is also co-founder, co-regent and presenter at Foundations Entertainment University, now in its 12th year. Randy can be reached at +816.931-1040, ext. 100 or via the company’s website at www.whitehutchinson.com.