

FOOD & LIFESTYLE

Velocity Esports acquires Newport on the Levee bowling alley Rotolo



By [Andy Brownfield](#)
Senior staff reporter, Cincinnati Business Courier

Jan 23, 2023

Updated Jan 23, 2023, 3:56pm EST

A bowling alley and bocce court at Newport on the Levee has a new owner that plans to create one of the biggest entertainment venues in the region.

Velocity Esports, which opened at Newport on the Levee in March of 2022, has acquired Rotolo Bowling Bocce Eatery from North American Properties, which owns the Northern Kentucky destination. The change in ownership took place on Jan. 1. Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

Velocity Esports bills itself as a playground for adult gamers, targeted towards millennials and Gen Z. It combines games like billiards, shuffleboard and foosball with cutting-edge esports and classic video game arcade machines. It sits in 23,000 square feet on the second floor of Newport on the Levee, directly above Rotolo Bowling Bocce Eatery.

[Josh Rosenbaum](#), chief marketing officer and director of finance for Velocity, told me his company had been managing operations at Rotolo for North American Properties. When the downtown Cincinnati-based real estate company was looking to sell it seemed like a natural fit to combine Rotolo's entertainment offerings with Velocity's.

Velocity, he said, has a location in Las Vegas that incorporates bowling, and the offering does well in that market.

"It's an additional entertainment feature that's popular with team building and corporate events," he said. "It really made sense with our brand to add Rotolo in the mix and take it over."

The bowling venue is now known as Rotolo by Velocity and over the coming months will see some renovation and rebranding. A new stairwell will be constructed that connects the two venues, creating one 50,000-square-foot entertainment complex within Newport on the Levee.

Continued on NEXT PAGE

Velocity Esports acquires Newport on the Levee bowling alley Rotolo



By Andy Brownfield
Senior staff reporter, Cincinnati Business
Courier

Jan 23, 2023

Updated Jan 23, 2023, 3:56pm EST

PAGE 2 of 2

Reztark Design Studio handled architecture on the project. [Tom Heim](#), general manager of Velocity Esports, said construction could start as early as two weeks from now and should be completed within three months.

Heim said the renovations primarily consist of aesthetic upgrades and bringing the Rotolo by Velocity branding in line with Velocity Esports' own. The bathrooms will be remodeled and a new indoor-outdoor bar is being constructed that will allow visitors to Newport on the Levee to walk up to order drinks or slices of pizza.

"When you combine the two spaces, you're not going to have anything as unique as what we're bringing to Newport on the Levee," Heim said. "It will be a one-stop shop, you can spend the whole day with us."

Rotolo by Velocity brings 16 bowling lanes, a full bocce court, billiards, foosball, two full-service bars and an outdoor patio to Velocity Esports' portfolio.

Newport on the Levee General Manager Gabriella Burch said in an email that operating an experiential concept is outside of the core business of North American Properties, especially given the impact of Covid-19 on in-person retail businesses.

"The time has come for us to pass the reins along to a company that specializes in entertainment, and we look forward to expanding upon the already great relationship we've forged with the group," she said. "Rotolo has been a great asset to the property, specifically for families who visit the Levee, and we can't wait to see how it evolves under the Velocity Esports brand."

- END -