



Success Stories

FastWeb taps BitBand for Video on Demand

Preamble to a saga

"In August 2000, we hand-carried two prototypes of BitBand Vision 190 servers into FastWeb lab, installed them and loaded a few movie trailers onto them. The servers streamed at full capacity for two weeks without a glitch. Right now, hundreds of BitBand Vision 480s and Vision 190s, distributed in 6 cities, serve VOD to FastWeb subscribers. That moment in August 2000, when we walked into the lab at Via Caracciolo 51 in Milan, marked the beginning of an exciting journey, which took FastWeb and BitBand together into the realm of VOD and beyond!"

David Milloh, VP Marketing & North American Business, BitBand



BitBand at FastWeb

The emerging IPTV/TelcoTV industry is looking for solutions that can provide the proper functionality, scale and cost at any stage of the service implementation phase. BitBand provides this unique combination. Through its Vision servers, BitBand offers various scales of building blocks, which can be best suited for the customer's service characteristics, such as initial number of streams and amount of content, and their growth patterns. Scaling the system by clustering allows seamless and virtually unlimited growth, in a pay-as-you-grow scheme. BitBand Vision servers, implemented as true plug & play appliances, are the simplest to install and operate.

Building upon these unique characteristics, which enabled seamless scalability and minimal technological challenge, FastWeb launched its VOD services in 2001, using a cluster of 1U BitBand Vision 190 servers, integrated with FastWeb own iTV application. In a short time, this system grew into large clusters distributed in 4 cities. When BitBand announced its higher end Vision 480, it was only natural for FastWeb to migrate most of its streaming power to it, also adding two more cities.

When ADSL services were recently launched, one of the requirements was to refrain from doubling the server infrastructure, and employ the same content from the same servers for all subscribers, connected by fiber or ADSL alike. Indeed, in August 2003, FastWeb made all its services available to all subscribers.

BitBand also powers VOD over ADSL at HanseNet, a regional telecommunications service provider in Hamburg, which was part of the e.Biscom operation and was recently sold to Telecom Italia.



"The new BitBand Vision 480 servers have been added to our existing clusters of Vision 190 servers, serving six major cities in Italy. No changes in interfaces or operating procedures were required, just plug the new servers into the switches, power up and stream."

Mr. Fabrizio Bosi, manager of the video streaming group at FastWeb, March 2003

"Using BitBand servers, we are seamlessly adding video subscribers connected by ADSL to our existing FTTH customer base growing faster than ever. As with previous BitBand server upgrades, no changes in interfaces or operating procedures were required - these are true Plug & Play devices."

Mr. Fabrizio Bosi, manager of the video streaming group at FastWeb, July 2003





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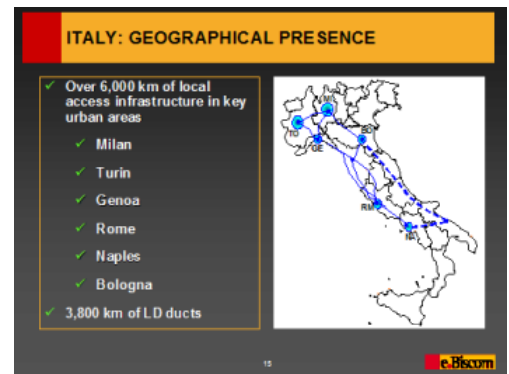
FastWeb today

Today FastWeb, a part of the e.Biscom group, is a world-leading new-generation service provider, with a quarter of a million subscribers in 6 major cities in Italy and more than 20% penetration of IP-TV. It is a fast growing and successful business, attracting subscribers with its compelling offering of triple-play services, based on leading edge technologies.

FastWeb network

FastWeb offers integrated broadband telecommunications services using an IP-based architecture over its own dense fiber-optic network. This network, based on Cisco Systems equipment, allows FastWeb to support much faster access speeds than currently available on the market: up to 10Mbps upstream and downstream for residential subscribers and virtually unlimited speeds for business customers.

The use of the IP protocols allowed the addition of DSL services where the fiber network is still being rolled out, thus speeding deployment to more expectant customers, at 4Mbps upstream and 0.512Mbps upstream.



FastWeb services

FastWeb provides its innovative services to all market segments (large, medium and small sized business, small offices and home offices, residential clients) in the main Italian cities of Milan, Rome, Turin, Genoa, Naples, Bologna and Reggio Emilia.

FastWeb provides voice, broadband Internet connectivity, data transmission and video services in all existing formats: multicast (i.e. traditional free-to-air TV, pay TV and pay-per-view) and unicast (i.e. video-on-demand and full interactive TV).

TV channels offered by FastWeb include: RAI, Mediaset, La 7 and MTV) in digital format, a selection of satellite channels including Bloomberg, BBC World, RAInews24 and RAISAT Sport, as well as Stream and TELE+.

Video-on-Demand (VOD) services offer more than 3,000 online titles on-demand. This is a combination of e.BisMedia provided prime studio content, and the RAI video archive (RAI Click) These services are integrated with an Electronic Program Guide with all the information on current and upcoming programs, and a virtual network video recording system (VideoRec).

