

# Efficiency and flexibility thanks to VoIP

The Banco Desio Group chooses the benefits of IP technology

## Sector

Finance

## Objective

Increase efficiency in the management of communications among the bank's various offices, by upgrading the infrastructure.

## Solution

- Managed VoIP service and Broadband access
- IP-PBXs and IP-Phones
- IP VPN and LAN Switching

## Results

- Reduction in costs, simplified network management and optimization
- Outsourced communications services management
- Single centralized network infrastructure
- Upgrade of existing equipment
- Single maintenance contract
- Standardization of services in the various branches

## Project dimensions

- Over 100 branches involved
- POver 2,000 IP-Phones to be managed
- Maintenance of analogical FAX units
- Data/telephone back-up
- Migration completed within 10 months

The demand for, and the spread of, technological innovation in the world of finance are undergoing marked growth. Data and voice communications between the head office and branches of a bank, distributed over the territory, represent considerable costs, both in terms of their use and their management.

The reasons that induced the Banco Desio Group to adopt a solution based on the Telecom Italia Alice Corporate IP-PBX platform, with Cisco technology, thus comprised significant economical considerations, together with the possibility of standardizing the services present in the head office together with those of all the branches throughout Italy, the possibility of upgrading and standardizing the generally obsolete PBX equipment used until then, and the activation or deactivation of "on-demand" services.

The project created by Italtel is based on an innovative technology (IP and VoIP) in which a single infrastructure is used for information transport (data, voice, vertical applications, video streaming etc.), thus centralizing resources and simplifying their management.

## The customer

The bank "Banco di Desio e della Brianza" was created in the early 20th century from the merger of Banco di Desio and Banca della Brianza. The Group now has over 130 branches throughout Italy.

Today, it is one of the top hundred banks in Italy.

One of the Group's fundamental values is that of "seizing all the benefits offered by innovation".



## Project objectives

By means of Italtel's innovative infrastructure, the efficiency of the Group's internal communications can be improved, by outsourcing communications services management, and by upgrading existing equipment. In addition, it is possible to reduce operational and communications costs, by reducing telephony circuits and enabling inter-office calls to be made at zero cost. The new infrastructure for the convergence of voice and data also makes it possible to optimize network resources, reducing the time necessary to open new branches, facilitating the implementation of new applications and value added services, and encouraging the use of new organizational models.

## Existing situation

The initial situation at the Banco Desio Group was characterized by a separation between voice and data access, maintenance contracts for voice PBXs, different services in every branch, and the absence of a common telephone numbering plan.

The large head offices, equipped with traditional PBXs from different suppliers, could not be expanded any further, and so were unable to cope with the Group's continuous growth.

The branches showed no degree of unity in terms of PBXs and services. In addition, it was not possible to centralize the company telephone directory, or share the services between head office and branches. Lastly, the group had a call recording system and a call center.

## Analysis and solution implemented

The Alice Corporate IP-PBX Cisco solution gave the Banco Desio Group a shared access to voice and data traffic, a single maintenance contract for the entire network, a unified telephone numbering system, and a widespread direct-dial system. In addition, it provided the possibility of a unified company telephone directory (with branch directory accessible directly from IP-Phones) and an interface with the existing call recording system.

The existing Call Center was integrated into the solution by Cisco Call Manager, while Fax units were connected to the IP network by means of Voice Gateways. Over a thousand IP-Phones were installed in branches, with ADSL/HDSL data access, and access to base lines to which an emergency telephone and fax could be connected was also provided.

This created a more "linear" network structure, with Cisco Call Managers centralized in the head office, and just IP-Phones installed in each branch. Both IP-PBXs and the various services are now managed remotely, over the web. The project was designed and implemented in order to "overdimension" the sensitive points identified by the Banca Desio Group as being critical, in order to have a disaster recovery system.



In order to supply communications solutions of the highest quality, the leading companies in the world providing industrial communications systems have to work together. Telecom Italia, Cisco and Italtel, linked by a solid partnership agreement, help enterprises to achieve voice and data network convergence, in order to transform communications into a competitive advantage.

Alice Corporate IP-PBX Cisco is a wholly-managed end-to-end solution that guarantees innovation and optimization of company communications systems.

For further details, see the website: [www.alicecorporate.it](http://www.alicecorporate.it)



## Italtel's added value as System Integrator

Italtel was present during all phases of the project, from the feasibility study, to design and implementation, studying the best solutions to reduce problems and services malfunctions together with the partners (Telecom Italia and Cisco Italia) and the Banco Desio Group. Every branch was initially "recreated" in Italtel's laboratories, performing the necessary tests and analyses in order to highlight critical points and identify the best solutions. In this way, a test environment simulating the functioning of a single branch and of the overall network was developed, also enabling so-called "staging" to be performed, in other words the preconfiguration of the equipment before delivering it to the client, reducing the installation time and the risk of inaccurate configuration.

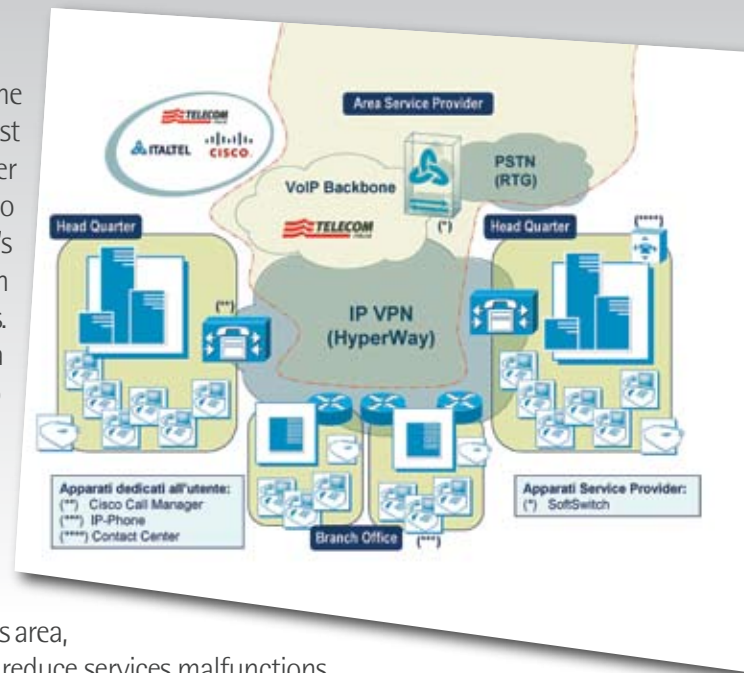
The management of migration is without doubt an important factor, and every detail should be given maximum attention: in this area, Italtel has developed standardized procedures and methods that reduce services malfunctions for the client to the minimum possible.

The main phases in this specific project were as follows:

1. technologies were coexisting: initially the new technology operated alongside existing systems, guaranteeing the coexistence of both. This enabled immediate savings to be made, for example by deactivating lines from the PBX to the PSTN network, but above all, users were able to become familiar with the new telephone equipment. In addition, in this phase it was possible to ask for specific training campaigns on how to use the new communications technology to the best advantage;
2. migration of test branches, and subsequent assessment: in this second phase, usually performed in cooperation with the customer, certain "test" branches, chosen in order to minimize risk, completed the transition to new technology;
3. complete branch migration: once migration and assessment of the first test branches had been successfully completed, the migration of all the branches could be performed, concurrently, to reduce the timescale. In this phase the pre-configuration (staging) work on the equipment, done in the Italtel test plant, played a fundamental role;
4. headquarters migration: the final phase saw the migration of the head offices; in the case of large central offices, it is essential to be able to guarantee the concurrent operation of different communications systems in order to achieve a modulated insertion of the new technology, in accordance with the company's business activities.

By means of the number portability service, it was possible to retain the numbers of individual internal users, while transferring them to VoIP technology.

The average time recorded for the installation of systems in a single branch was about half a day (or a whole day for larger branches), while for migration, the average time was one day per branch.



## Comment

*"The advantage," said Marcello Sala, Chief Information Officer at Banco Desio Group, "consists of the optimization both of connectivity for voice-data convergence, and of costs savings, thanks to the reduction in traditional telephone lines and the zero cost of calls between the branches." In addition, in enterprises such as banking companies, the centralization of ICT services is fundamental from another point of view. "Generally speaking, banks do not possess ICT technical resources in each individual branch," continued Marcello Sala, "and for this reason it is important to have a centralized control system that makes it possible to run tests and diagnostics on the network and optimize the provision of services both for employees and customers."*



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