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Vittorio Cimin  
ICT Manager  
Bricofer

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## Bricofer Transforms Customer Service With Hitachi Unified Computing

**Challenge:** Develop new customer services to drive growth and increase revenues.

**Solution:** Unify computing, networking and storage resources in a virtualized environment, enhancing back- and front-office processes.

**Outcome:** Supports business growth with real-time insight into internal and external operations.

### The Challenge: Build on Success

Founded in 1979 as a hardware store, Bricofer has become one of the leading DIY (do-it-yourself) and home improvement retailers in Italy. Headquartered in Rome, the retailer operates 60 points of sale across Italy, including direct and franchised outlets. Working with over 400 suppliers, Bricofer offers its customers over 25,000 products in the store and online.

Innovation is a key component of Bricofer's strategic mission and growth plans. In addition to expanding through the acquisition and opening of new outlets, Bricofer is keen to find new ways to attract and manage customers. In particular, Bricofer wanted to boost customer satisfaction and ensure the highest level of service.

To help achieve this, the company wanted the ability to generate microsites to handle special offers and marketing promotions. It also wanted to establish themed portals to manage customer service and ecommerce services, and create dedicated mobile-friendly sites and applications. The initiatives are designed to deliver a targeted customer relationship management strategy that will enhance sales, principally by tailoring and improving the customer experience.

For Bricofer to target the new sites and services effectively, senior executives wanted detailed insight into customer behavior. However, the company's ability to analyze large volumes of data, growing by 20% annually, was hindered by the decentralization of IT infrastructure, and the IT department struggled to provide executives with the requested information.



### Bricofer

#### INDUSTRY

Retail

#### SOLUTION

Converged, Hitachi Unified Compute Platform

#### HARDWARE

Hitachi Compute Blade 500  
Hitachi Unified Storage 110

#### SOFTWARE

Hitachi TrueCopy  
Hitachi Basic Operating System

### Outcomes

- Enables easy access to real-time business information and supports growth initiatives.
- Ensures Bricofer easily handles 20% annual data growth and keeps operations running smoothly.
- Optimizes internal operations of logistics and inventory, and improves customer services.

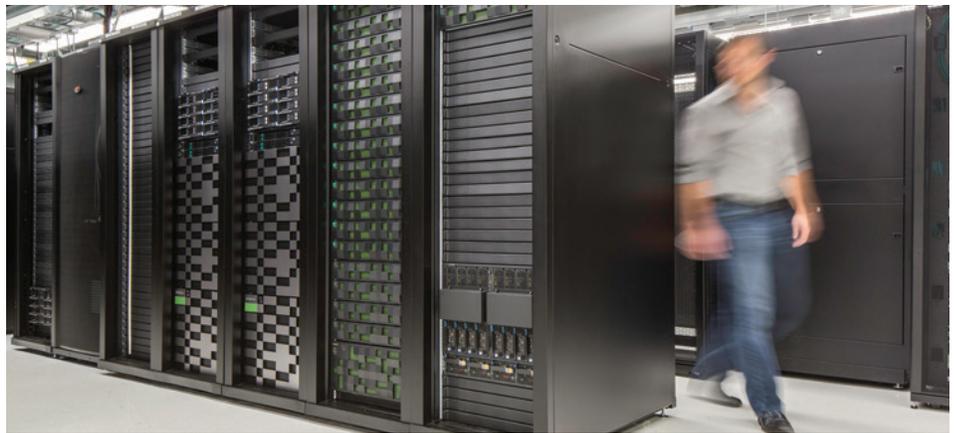
Underlying the analysis challenge, Bricofer recognized that logistics, stock and inventory processes suffered from similar issues, and the company sought to streamline and improve the management and cost-efficiency of internal operations.

"IT infrastructure efficiency is not a goal, it is a starting point. The IT systems are at the service of the company, and we are required to provide responses in real time," explains ICT Manager at Bricofer, Vittorio Cimin. "We were hindered by the lack of integration in our IT infrastructure, which translated to a lack of data availability. We could not properly manage the systems to provide the results that must be guaranteed by IT infrastructure to a company like this one."

### The Solution: One Stop Shop for Virtualization

As a first step, Bricofer chose to virtualize its IT landscape, which would remove the dependency between specific applications and the physical hardware, and selected Microsoft® Hyper-V® virtualization technologies. Switching to an all-virtual environment would enable much greater system flexibility, simplify management and control, and allow Bricofer to select the best possible underlying infrastructure.

Subsequently, Bricofer looked for an integrated computing, networking and storage platform to support its new virtualized environment. After evaluating offerings from several vendors, Bricofer selected HDS and Atinet to design a fully customized solution based on a combination of performance, agility, security and cost-efficiency. Bricofer deployed a fully converged solution based on Hitachi Unified Compute Platform (UCP) for Microsoft® Private Cloud (formerly Hitachi Unified Compute Platform for Microsoft® Hyper-V®), built on Hitachi Compute Blade 500 and Hitachi Unified Storage 110.



"The HDS UCP solution was head and shoulders above the competition," states Vittorio Cimin. "We chose HDS to support our Microsoft virtualization technology because UCP is an end-to-end solution. With UCP we have been able to optimize our Microsoft Hyper-V environment, enhancing flexibility and generating cost savings."

### The Benefits: Up-to-the-Minute Data Access

Currently deploying the solution, Bricofer has already noticed a boost in the agility, accuracy and speed with which it can now access increasingly large volumes of data and manage internal operations, such as logistics and inventory.

"By integrating computing, networking and storage resources, we greatly simplified operations management," says Vittorio Cimin. "For example, we are now able to optimize inventory at different points of sale from all across the country. With reliable, up-to-date insight into what each store actually needs in terms of products, we can easily avoid under- or over-stocking items. As Bricofer operates 24 hours a day, our aim is to always provide immediate responses to the business."

Vittorio Cimin concludes: "HDS and Atinet have supported us each step of the way, making sure we were all on the same page and providing expert training whenever required. On this foundation, we are very confident that the HDS UCP solution will enable us to enhance customer relationship management services, including customer care and retention. The new microsites, portals and apps will be based on reliable, robust data, hugely improving the customer experience and helping drive customer service – and, ultimately, Bricofer's continued growth."

### About HDS

Hitachi Data Systems innovates technology for business and social prosperity. Our IT solutions and services drive strategic management and analysis of the world's data. Ask us how we can help you get started. [HDS.com](http://HDS.com)

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