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A Successful Company

We all want Telecom Italia to be a successful company.

Success is about more than just earnings and creating value for shareholders. We want Telecom Italia to be acknowledged by its customers for innovation, quality and the value of the services it provides. To achieve this, we must listen to and respect our customers, engineer our services, master technology, and have a healthy obsession with simplicity and quality. For our company to be successful, it is vital that we retain the faith of banks, financial institutions and bondholders. To warrant such faith, especially in the current market climate, we need to pursue strict financial discipline, vigorous cost containment, and a selective investment policy.

Telecom Italia must continue to be a beacon for Italy's economic system. We have seen significant expressions of faith from the institutions in recent months. We must be proud of and leverage this as we accompany individuals, households, companies, communities and government departments on the path to digital innovation.

Our company's success is our personal success. It is vital that we personally identify with the company mission, as we have done in the past; with the role it plays in Italy and in the countries where we operate. To achieve this, we must look to our core values of transparency, ethics, commitment, and a desire to do what we do well.

■
Oscar Cicchetti

The Q Pact

Quality of service is a business driver that enhances responsibility company-wide, guiding conduct and leveraging customer relations as a competitive advantage. We hear from Paolo D'Andrea, Head of Quality of Service.

"Profit in business comes from repeat customers – customers who boast about your product or service, and who bring friends with them." The quote is from W. Edwards Deming, one of the founding fathers of quality, and it could not be more topical. The approach companies adopt to manage "quality" is evolving; it is changing to adapt to a changing market and changing customer needs. Where does our Group stand in relation to all this? We spoke to Paolo D'Andrea – Head of Quality of Service since July – to find out.

▼Telecom Italia growth is being achieved in part through excellence in the customer experience. What exactly does that mean? ▲Market trends are making us focus on what customers experience when they come into contact with our company. For Telecom Italia, seeking excellence in the customer experience is potentially a distinguishing characteristic. It is very complex indeed for a telecommunications company to build a structural competitive advantage solely by focusing on innovation. And yet when ability to innovate is combined with supplying an excellent standard of service, it becomes very hard for others to replicate the value of such offerings. It is at this point that the customer experience becomes a competitive driver that justifies a premium price over the competition.

▼Why is the customer experience so fundamental?

▲Because looking after customer experience enhances customer loyalty. It sets off a "viral" effect, enhancing a brand's profile, improving perception of quality of service, and exceeding customer expectations.

▼How far is Telecom Italia along this path?

▲Telecom Italia is rolling out a transformational programme to trigger a virtual cycle that ranges from customer experience to customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. In July 2008, the Quality of Service unit was transferred to operate directly under Domestic Market Operations. Our basic premise is that in order to offer a service that achieves standards of excellence, not only do we need to keep a close eye on the quality of the products and services we

offer, we need to re-engineer the entire customer experience by ensuring that marketing, offerings, sales channels and customer services are all pulling in the same direction. The programme focuses on how we manage quality at the company, with the focus on our customers' actual perceptions. We will be investing strongly in training and internal communication. One important thing it does is restore the role played "on the ground", notably, listening to customers, planning, and assessing the success of initiatives undertaken in order to make subsequent improvements. The only way to really understand the customer experience is to "capture" and assess what the customer thinks, how the customer perceives the company at the moment of interaction.

▼Who is working on this at the company?

▲Quality of service cuts right across every department. Every month, senior management and business unit leaders meet up to assess progress and improvements. Just the other day we ran a workgroup – ourselves, External Relations, Human Resources and Strategy – to work on the key customer perception elements regarding the services we offer, the brand, marketing, and an assessment of more aspirational elements. All of this helps define the "customer promise" that will guide us through planning points of contact and customer relations.

▼What concrete actions have been rolled out?

▲We are working on a mix of different activities. As I mentioned earlier, we have in the pipeline a training and communications programme that will span the entire enterprise. We have inserted a new phase to new services preparation with the introduction of "final quality testing" at the end of the innovation process, prior to launching services onto the market. We hope to be extending this to products as well. We have also identified actions to intervene in the most critical areas for each customer segment. The "fix-the-basics" concept means making sure that the very basis of customer relationship is sound through offer simplification and transparency, brand strengthening, targeted offerings, easy-to-understand billing, differentiated levels of service, improved broadband performance, and a reduction in malfunctions.

▼Quality gurus like to say "Quality is something you build rather than control." What is Telecom Italia's position on this?

▲What I'd say is that we're moving from a highly "technological" view of quality to a tight focus on elements that impact customer perception. It takes effort at the planning stage to engineer excellence into every stage of the customer experience. It's achievable if the service we supply is some-

thing that the customer finds consistent and recognizable at all points of contact. It's going to take a new approach to data management to achieve this. We are setting up a new database to collect and interpret results afresh. We want this approach to start with the customer. Our aim is to move from "process quality" to "end-to-end quality" on the customer journey.

▼How long do you expect this process to take?

▲Right now, we have a three-year plan. A number of operations, such as, for example, the fix the basics project and internal communication, are already underway.

▼What role do employees play in this process?

▲Two words: "fundamental" and "active". We're planning to launch a training initiative, incentives, and roll out Web 2.0 tools to enable employees to make suggestions and submit new ideas for products and services. Our goal is to involve everybody who works for the company, and in future everybody who has a relationship with our customers on behalf of Telecom Italia, either in sales, customer services or technical help. ■

The Quality Gurus

Philip B. Crosby (1926–2001), defined by *Time Magazine* as "the leading evangelist of quality", was a great communicator and motivator, and a legend in the quality world.

William Edwards Deming (1900–1993) is considered by many to be the founding father of the quality movement, as well as a leading statistician.

Kaoru Ishikawa (1916–1989), a member of JUSE, is the Japanese father of quality, who became famous for creating the famous fishbone cause and effect diagram. He also came up with the name for seven quality tools, in 1962 set up Quality Circles, and simplified quality-control statistical techniques.

Joseph M. Juran (1904 – 2008), who was born in Rumania before immigrating to the United States, was a Total Quality pioneer. In a career spanning over 70 years, he has every right to be considered one of the "founding fathers" of quality.

A. Parasuraman helped to create the SERVQUAL model, a system for improving quality of service based on measuring seven gaps in customer perception/expectations that separate companies and customers. The model is based on five key dimensions: tangible aspects, reliability, promise, assurance, and empathy. These dimensions offer a complete and concise overview of the key criteria that customers use to judge the quality of a given service. ■

The Centrality of the Network

We come to the final instalment of our long-distance debate on the first ten years of telecommunications liberalization. This time it's Filippo Satta's turn.

Ten years on from the start of telecommunications market liberalization, people are still debating the technical complexities of internet access, developments ushered in by the evolution of advanced technologies, broadband, and guarantees that all telecommunications carriers benefit from the same network access conditions. That so-called internal/external equal treatment is fundamental for developing a fully competitive telecommunications market is self-evident. Indeed, it is practically a precondition, and was implicit in the law that set up Italy's Communications Regulatory Authority. From the very beginning, the Authority (through its many regulatory resolutions) has kept a wary eye on equal treatment of operators. In its report on its first year of operations, the Communications Regulatory Authority clearly defined the spirit of liberalization and the benefits liberalization was likely to bring: "The countries that lead the pack in optimizing and expanding activities for the generation and dissemination of knowledge stand to gain an essential advantage on the world economic competitive stage."

For the telecommunications industry, optimizing and expanding the dissemination of knowledge means understanding that technological advancement generates benefits to each operator in direct proportion to how much they share the results they achieve with all of their competitors. More simply, telecommunications is an industry in which competitors augment their profits if and only if they share the fruits of their network investments.

Equal conditions among operators and network development

The key point in all of this is that these two issues – equal conditions among operators and network development – are not mutually exclusive. It all comes down to method. Any network owner can be persuaded to invest in broadband if the investment is remunerative. However, such investments will only be remunerative if the network is optimally exploited. The role played by other operators (other than the network proprietor) becomes key. As such investments are in infrastructure that will make it possible to enormously increase capacity and transport speeds, use of this network by third parties

is the only way to reach the tipping point and make the investment remunerative, especially over the long-term.

The converse, however, is also true: only by using new-generation networks can operators improve the sales and performance of their current telecommunications services. In other words, Telecom Italia and alternative operators are being brought together by a real convergence of interests. Only by turning this convergence into a concrete reality can a virtuous cycle of ongoing network development be assured.

Another way of looking at the issue is as competition between entrepreneurs who offer services over hard-to-replicate infrastructure. As is so often the case in competition, the whole issue boils down to one question: the nature of this convergence must not be asymmetric; that is to say, it must not just involve some operators and not others. This is the underlying logic behind the initiative launched by the Authority. In order to work, it requires the right instruments to foster appropriate conditions. The commitments incumbent upon the network proprietor run from ensuring internal/external parity to avoiding points of contact between Telecom Italia internal departments and network management, and planning and sharing network development. All of these are essential to triggering the virtuous cycle we mentioned earlier.

The second area of interest regards guarantees... and this is where everything becomes more complicated: not only is it easy to dispense with a simple guarantee through improper interference in management, the very act of controlling this process can become a sterile exercise in censure, generating inefficiencies and actually preventing this virtuous cycle from ever beginning or continuing. These issues lie at the heart of the wide-ranging discussions that have taken place in recent months regarding commitments sought from Telecom Italia to guarantee equal and non-discriminatory conditions of access. The Authority is currently assessing how Italy's incumbent has tackled these guarantees in the proposal it submitted on October 31. It is on this terrain that discussions will take place regarding agreements between Telecom Italia, other operators and the Authority. ■

Journey to the Centre

We embark on the next stage of our journey through Telecom Italia's traditions and innovation.

Our journey moves on to its next phase. We find ourselves in central Italy – the centre for Telecom Italia, though not all of its regions are, geographically-speaking, in central Italy (Abruzzo, Molise, Latium, Sardinia, Marches, Umbria, and Tuscany). The drive along the motorway to Pescara is peppered with places full of history and tradition that are often neglected by day-tripping tourists. At the Pescara exit, we snake up to a diminutive, little-known village to stop in at the graveside of Ignazio Silone, and visit the museum home of Cardinal Mazzarino, the man who played such a big role in pre-revolutionary France. We drive on into the heart of the National Park of Abruzzo, to Pescasseroli where we admire the home of Benedetto Croce and listen to the fluid pen strokes of Dacia Maraini, who drew her inspiration from this place. Not far away are the sugared almond manufacturers of Sulmona, the goldsmiths of Guardiagrele and Scanno, and the pottery makers of Castelli. When we arrive in Pescara, we are welcomed by the literary arabesques of Gabriele D'Annunzio and the spare, biting wit of Ennio Flaiano, whom we have to thank (paraphrasing) for the aphorism, "There are many ways of arriving, but the best is leaving." And leave we do, to the vibrant landscape colours of Cascella and the national labs at Gran Sasso, which have gained a reputation for R&D excellence.

And so to coastal Molise, where we find Teramo, the Matese Hills, Francesco Jovine and his verism, the sound of church bells made in Agnone, incredibly finely-wrought lace pillows, and Michele Sottile's muted, silent paintings. On our return to the Latium region, we stop in at the Roman night clubs that were the initial stamping grounds of singers Giorgia and Fiorella Mannoia, where Alex Britti, Niccolò Fabi, Eros Ramazzotti, and Fabrizio Moro wrote their first songs, and Claudio Baglioni and Antonello Venditti honed their skills as songsmiths. We bump into the huge papier mache giants of Cinecittà, backdrop to the acting triumphs of Anna Magnani, Marcello Mastroianni, Nino Manfredi and Alberto Sordi, the spot-on characterizations of Carlo Verdone, and more recently, of Valerio Mastandrea and "Ignorant Fairy" Margherita Buy. We lose ourselves in Umberto Mastroianni's sculptures and Matteo Basile's artistic and technological lucubrations, in Roberto Rossellini's realist movies, Alessandro D'Alatri and Matteo Garrone's more earthy fare, and the refined elegance of the Fendi

sisters and Valentino... For reading matter, we have books published by hip young houses Nottetempo, e/o, Minimum fax, and Fazi, only to emerge at the Tiburtino Technopark and one of its latest arrivals, the Organic Solar Hub technology R&D lab, which studies alternative energy sources. Before taking our leave from "terraferma", Umbria offers us thousands of years of heritage. It is a veritable crucible of history, art and folk traditions thanks to the civilizations that have come and gone, from the Umbrians to the Etruscans, the Romans, the Lombards, Renaissance masters and the Papal States. Every little village, church and piazza tells of a glorious past. Medieval villages and towns jealously preserve their artistic and cultural masterpieces and protect the knowledge and tools of craftsmen's skills and techniques. We can see it all for ourselves at Umbria's festivals: Umbria Jazz, the Cortofonino Festival at Terni, and the Spoleto Festival.

We set sail from Civitavecchia for Sardinia: a land of tourism, natural beauty and intoxicating fragrances, not to mention the brooding villages of Giuseppe Dessì's writings, Grazia Deledda's malleable and transparent reeds waving in the wind, and Salvatore Satta's day of judgement. Milena Agus's *Mal di pietre*, which has done so well across Europe, evoking as it does the hard, dry stone of the ancient nuraghs, stands in stark contrast to the bright Mediterranean blues and yellows of Emerald Coast pottery. And lest we forget, there are technology parks at Pula and Alghero, where sixty-five firms work in industries as diverse as biomedicine and communications technology. Sardinia is the ideal place to pause on our journey, and reflect on what is to come: a vibrant future, heralded by innovation and anchored to the solid traditions of these lands. ■

Mini-bios

MILENA AGIUS

Born to Sardinian parents, Agus teaches Italian and history at a technical high school in Cagliari, the town where she lives. Her first novel *Mentre dorme il pesce* (Nottetempo, 2005) was reprinted twice within a few months of coming out. However, *Mal di pietre* is the book that has made her name around the world (translated into five languages, and a bestseller in France).

MATTEO BASILÈ

In 1994, Basilè made his debut with graffiti and street art at the tender age of twenty. In 1996, he was one of the first of his generation to experiment with digital photography and light boxes. His personal at the Mart, *The Saints are Coming* – at which he exhibited outsized digital pictures printed on aluminium, a video and a sculpture – was a huge success.

FRANCESCO JOVINE

(Guardiafiera, October 9, 1902 – Rome, April 30, 1950) was an Italian journalist and essayist. A realist and verist in style, he set his works in the region of Molise. His most famous books are *Signora Ava* (1942) and *Le terre del sacramento* (1950), which won the Viareggio prize.

MICHELE SOTTILE

Born in Termoli, Sottile lives and works between Lugano and Marseille. His artistic curriculum is international in its reach. His latest exhibition, *Vertigine del bianco*, revolves around the fascinating topic of white as a surface, as the canvas on which he works. ■

Carsoli, The Pride of Marsica

Services-based Olivetti Group companies are located in this small Abruzzo town.

Our journey through the Group's multifarious businesses starts with Advalso, a company that employs 118 people who provide customer care services to Telecom Italia clientele. Set up just under two years ago as part of an industrial reconversion project, Advalso's brief is to manage front-end and back-office technical and specialist operations. It also activates prepaid TIM mobile telephony cards for ethnic and domestic clients, and manages the entire after-sales cycle on behalf of 4,500 TIM sales outlets. Operations manager Alessandro Comotto fills us in on the company's objectives: "To be a Competence Centre in charge of the customer value chain by adopting a high standard of ongoing, appropriate and timely service. In order to achieve this, we have invested in efficient processes, technology and professionalism. We recently obtained ISO 9001: 2000 certification, but that's not our end goal. Competitive pressure is on the rise and customers are becoming more and more choosy. What makes the difference is the professionalism of the people in direct contact with customers. Investment in competencies is a priority for us."

An open invitation to schools

Advalso signed up to the National Customer Relations Day, organized last October by Customer Management Multimedia Competence, and opened its doors to the Carsoli High School for Scientific Studies. According to Carlo Castellani, a Quality Assurance employee at Advalso and one of the promoters of the initiative, "We invited older pupils to showcase a local employer whose company mission is customer relations. We wanted to show schoolkids what it is that we really do. During our open day, we combined information sessions about Advalso's objectives with visits to operational areas. What we wanted to do was to show the work we do every day – its terms and conditions and its rules. Colleagues talked about their own work experience. The day was an opportunity for us all to sit back and think in a different way about customer relations and how to make the most of competencies associated with specialist positions."

Helpdesk

Olivetti's Field Services department prides itself on providing timely, flexible and high-quality responses nationwide as a provider of technical assistance and maintenance services in support of automated gaming, lottery and betting terminals.

"Lottomatica and other industry operators are our clients," explains Olivetti Field Service manager Roberto Maresi. "Carsoli is where we coordinate our operations. It's here that we define the procedures, intervention methodologies and training programs vital for putting together and maintaining standards of excellence in our interventions and conduct towards customers. We manage the IT system, which is the hub of all technical assistance activities. Our control room constantly monitors service levels and, when necessary, steps in with rapid solutions. We receive over 100,000 breakdown reports every year, and conduct around 90,000 site visits."

"In order to ensure an efficient response, we are organized into twelve technical assistance centres across the country, each of which has its own workshops and the competencies and tools they require to repair terminals," says Piero Cipriani, Gaming Terminals Field Service Manager. "Our technicians can be on site at any location within four hours of receiving a call. On draw days, this is reduced to two hours, provided that the malfunction is in a major town. All of our engineers are young, keen and highly knowledgeable. They're equipped with all of the technological and computerized tools they need to rapidly analyze problems and come up with solutions. The strong point of our service is its team spirit, along with flexibility, on-the-job refresher courses, and a customer-centric approach. All of these factors – and a pinch of pride – set our professional approach apart." ■

A Vocation for Excellence

Telecom Italia's Top and Enterprise Customer National Service Centre is a centre of excellence for data, telephony and VoIP outsourcing services. We visited the facility in Rome.

Technological innovation and a customer-centric focus are just two terms that define the National Service Centre (CNA in the Italian acronym), the Technology & Operations unit that has been providing Telecom Italia Top and Enterprise Customers with data, telephony and VoIP outsourcing since 1994, delivering a competitive advantage to Group customers. A unique operation with an international reach, the National Service Centre is a complex technology hub staffed by highly specialized employees, offering far-sighted technical supervision and a tight focus on customized customer service for managing networks that belong to nationally-prominent companies.

With six premises across the country, in recent years the National Service Centre has significantly boosted the number of contracts it handles (up from 800 in 2005 to over 1,200 at the time of writing), while significantly upgrading the ICT services on offer.

Main offices in Milan focus on banking, mass retail and industry; the Rome facility principally handles government and strategically-important national organizations (the National Flight Controllers' Organization, the Bank of Italy, Italy's most prominent ministries and the Italian post office). Daniele Cipolloni and Alexio Guerra, both of whom work at the National Service Centre's offices in Rome, tell us how they harness operational excellence to serve customers.

▼Daniele, how does the CNA go about offering telephony service technical assistance to customers?

▲The services we manage include the 118 health emergency service, a national service used by all citizens. Our system combines a wireless network for ambulances, an IT system, telephone recording devices, a mapping service, and traditional telephony services. As far as we're concerned, preventative maintenance is the key to successfully keeping malfunctions at bay. If malfunctions do occur, we very rapidly deploy remote diagnostic tools and on-site intervention.

▼At your service, attentiveness to the customer really means attentive monitoring and effective prevention...

▲Without doubt, ongoing monitoring and rapid intervention are indispensable to guar-

antee quality and service continuity. For example, in September, when the Pope was on a visit to Cagliari, we set up an *ad hoc* unit there: so many people were attending the event and it was so hot, being the summer, that there was a considerable risk of criticalities. To avert this, in the days leading up to the event we ran simulations of all possible anomalies and checked how the system would react under stress. Everything went as smoothly as could be.

▼The customer comes first in your job...

▲Precisely. The customer is our constant point of reference, to whom we dedicate all required competencies.

▼Alexio, what's your experience working on data and VoIP services?

▲The National Service Centre was initially set up in Rome as a complex data network monitoring centre. For example, we monitor the National Flight Controllers' Organization air traffic support infrastructures 24 hours a day. We also work outside Italy: in partnership with our colleagues at Sparkle, we undertake outsourced management of data networks for customers with offices beyond Italy's shores (TOD's, Barilla, etc.). We also do outsourcing for the Italian Postal Service. Not only do we offer assistance services that guarantee strict SLAs for around 14,000 post offices, we also support technology upgrades at post offices such as VoIP telephony and advanced services over the data network infrastructure. Our mission is to satisfy the customer and keep customers loyal to our company. ■

National Service Centre key figures

The National Service Centre manages:

- Over 1,200 contracts
- 184,000 devices
- 400,000 accesses
- 35,000 IP LANs
- 687,000 traditional telephone customer lines
- 60,000 IP phone lines ■

"Social" Education? Yes, please

Seventy co-workers from Charging and Operations, led by Angela Giuliodori of National Wholesale Services, worked with Nunzia Puglisi from Human Resources Top Clients1 on a plan to refurbish Villa Maraini in Roma, the Italian Red Cross's headquarters for drug addict recovery, as part of a project management training exercise. After a theory lesson and a meeting with Italian Red Cross chairman Massimo Barra, our colleagues found themselves running and organizing activities that were highly involving, if very different from their usual routine. The group painted the primary reception centre, refurbished the gym, ironed out the bumps in the bowls area and spruced up the green spaces. One of the group's ideas, which received the backing of Riccardo Delleani, Head of National Wholesale Services, is set to become an advertising campaign promoting the structure on Rome's subways and public buses. The people who work at Villa Maraini were extremely pleased with what was achieved, while our Telecom Italia colleagues enjoyed a truly unique training experience. ■

"New Technologies? They're indispensable for relations with citizens"

We speak with Maria Rita Lorenzetti, President of the Umbrian Regional Administration.

The Umbrian Regional Administration is implementing a 34 million euro investment plan that will offer more and more citizens, businesses and local institutions access to the latest digital technologies. *noi.magazine* met up with Maria Rita Lorenzetti, President of the Umbrian Regional Administration. Born in Foligno, she went into social activism and politics very young, and was one of the first women in Italy to be elected mayor (of her home town) in 1984.

▼President, how would you say new technologies can improve relations with citizens?

▲New technologies are a key, must-have tool for establishing a direct relationship with citizens. This is why Umbria is investing resources and political capital in upgrading technology and making sure that citizens are better able to seize all of the opportunities opened up by modern science and technology. We want to make Umbria Italy's first fully-cabled region, and completely banish the 'digital divide'.

▼How would you describe the relationship between the Umbrian Regional Administration and Telecom Italia?

▲In many ways, it's a consolidated relationship. It's also a relationship we endeavour to keep 'fresh' through new initiatives. For example, just a few months ago we signed a memorandum of intent with Telecom Italia to extend broadband network coverage to over 92% of fixed telephone lines across the region by the end of 2008. As part of this agreement, we're planning to work together and jointly assess the most appropriate way of further extending broadband coverage to 98% of fixed phone lines, using infrastructure belonging not just to Telecom Italia but to the regional administration and other local government departments. The three-year agreement will see the parties working together to develop and start up new public utility ICT services accessible via high-speed internet connections for healthcare, tourism, personal and local security, e-government, enterprises and citizens.

▼How do you see this collaboration developing in future?

▲Telecom Italia is a major enterprise with which the regional administration works and wishes to continue working. Telecom Italia is our partner. We are keen to launch more joint initiatives across our territory, such as the one we're preparing with the Foligno Health Authority, focusing on healthcare and medicines. I'm sure that we'll be seeing positive developments in our relationship with Telecom Italia. ■

Umbria: Something for Everyone

Visitors to the green heart of Italy, as Umbria advertises itself, are spoilt for choice for things to do, from mountain hikes to cultural pilgrimages, extreme sports and exciting itineraries.

Energetic nature lovers can trek through the Nera River Park and the Monti Sibillini Park, where they will be enchanted by stunning landscapes. Thrill-seekers can go rafting from the peaks of the Sibillini mountains, through gorges, fast-flowing streams and canyons towards Valnerina. Culture buffs will be enthralled by the Franciscan Routes, on which they can discover Umbria's churches and wind up in Assisi, one of Italy's most prized artistic destinations, and, with the Basilica of Saint Francis, one of the world's most religious sites. And if you're feeling too tired and lazy to do all that, why not treat yourself to a gastronomic tour along the Terni-Macerata road, sampling the thousand flavours and tasty local products on sale from the Sibillini mountains down to Castelluccio? ■

What We Do is Make TV

Rome: We talk to Patrizia Console, a La7 Executive Producer of News shows, Features and In-depth Specials.

“When people talk about business, they often bandy about words like ‘synergy’ and ‘teamwork’, because results are achieved by a group working together. In many cases, it’s true. In TV, its the rule we live and die by,” says Patrizia Console, an Executive Producer at La7.

What really goes on in this world of good news and bad news, weather forecasts, news flashes, football matches and live broadcasts, where the unexpected can happen at any time and last-minute revisions are the norm? How can this world be explained to TV viewers, who gaze into this box of curiosities for hours on end from the comfort of their own homes?

Well, it is a world of professionals from a wide variety of backgrounds: journalists, producers, researchers, floor managers, cameramen, video and sound engineers, sound mixers, IT experts, archivists, editors, post-production staff, and wardrobe and make up, all of whom do their jobs in accordance with the dictates of a schedule that can sometimes, under exceptional circumstances, be cast aside, and everybody’s work must be double-checked before the product goes out on air.

Time zones? What are they?

At La7, they start work very early, and often finish very late. This comes as no surprise to people who watched coverage of the Gulf War, who waited on tenterhooks for the first Italian hostages to be freed in Iraq, or the sports fans who stay up all hours to watch a live sports event.

It’s an organized Orchestra ready to respond to the most desperate of orders: “Turn up the volume, we can’t hear anything in the studio”, “Testing, testing 1-2-3”, “Get the make up lady in here right now”, “a close-up, we need a close-up”, “Wait, the item isn’t ready yet, move on to the next piece”, “Is the interpreter ready for the simultaneous hook-up?”, and so on. Lights. Everything’s ready. Silence in the studio. The theme music rolls and the concert starts. The machine works smoothly; everything moves in harmony, overcoming any unexpected hiccup to bring fast, effective up-to-date news, always.

Patrizia also has to fit in planning and organization around this frenzy. Her department has to draw up a budget of costs for the entire year, stay within its bounds, constantly monitor spending, find the resources

they need and manage the various teams of people they work with. La7 has always considered news to be a key part of its output, ever since the days of Rete Globo, which then became TMC, when flexibility, putting up with uncertainties, a sense of service and continuity were imperatives.

Patrizia concludes: “Mistakes are allowed, though we weren’t the ones who came up with the aphorism ‘You have to work to make mistakes’. But it’s really hard to swallow something that goes wrong and directly impacts the video. You’re already working flat out on adrenaline, and you know that the next day everybody’s going to be working just as hard to guarantee delivery of the usual news bulletin.” ■

Snuggle down onto the couch and enjoy the show

La7 relies on multimedia as it rolls out a new interactive channel portal on its digital terrestrial platform

The T-Portal, which is up and running 24 hours a day on La7, offers sneak previews of upcoming cult shows, access to extra information and content, and the latest real-time news stories on politics, economics, sport and much more from APCom.

The latest element in La7’s bouquet of multimedia TV offerings, the interactive TV service opens up a whole new channel of communication and distribution for content and images over the internet. It also offers viewers a new opportunity for fun and enjoyment, with games and competitions tied into the channel’s programmes.

All that’s required to access the portal is a digital terrestrial decoder hooked up to the TV: tune in to La7 and press the red button. Navigating through the portal is simple and straightforward: simply use the four arrow buttons, the OK button and the coloured buttons on the remote control. ■

The Difference is in the Detail

We look at two Customer Care operations in Central Italy: the Consumer Privilege portfolio and a multiple-office Care Centre.

From Sardinia...

Since July 7, 2008, the Cagliari Customer Care Centre, run by Daniele Bolognini, has a new function. Together with Ancona, Venice/Treviso, Bergamo/Brescia and Catanzaro (TCC), it is one of five units across the country in charge of the Consumer Privilege customer portfolio. As Mr Bolognini explains, the portfolio unites the best consumer customers: either customers who have signed up to innovative services (Alice 20 mega, IPTV), are high-spend, or are a specific marketing target.

▼Daniele, what characterizes the quality of service offered to Privilege customers?

▲Without doubt, longer average call times than standard, because of the complexity of the issues our customers have to tackle. Their calls are about “big” issues which require high levels of relationship management, competencies and professionalism, in order to treat the customer with the utmost care.

▼Do you have tools to measure Privilege customer satisfaction?

▲As well as official surveys, during calls our sales reps ask about customer perception of the quality of service they’re offered, and at the end of the call ask if they have thoroughly explained everything.

▼Which areas of Italy do customers call from?

▲They call us from all over Italy. In our unit, we obviously look after the front-end; we also carry out typical back-office activities associated with individual calls, and process letters customers send in. Our goal is 360° customer management.

▼What does it mean to you and the people you work with to be a Privilege Customer Care Centre?

▲We’re very proud. The fact that we were chosen is an acknowledgment of the commitment and results we have achieved over the years, and a stimulus to improve.

...to Latium

Fabrizio Montiroli, Head of Rieti/Viterbo Customer Care Operations, spends his working life between the mountains and plains. Since 2003, he has been running a “multi-premises” Customer Care Centre.

▼How is your structure organized, Fabrizio?

▲The Customer Care Centre is split between two locations, Rieti and Viterbo, which are 120 kilometres apart. We have 66

people working at these two locations.

▼What’s it like to run a unit spread over more than one place?

▲It’s a big challenge. It takes a lot of work for supervisors and employees to feel part of a single team. I try and make sure that I spend an equal amount of time in each location. I hold regular meetings with supervisors at both locations, to talk constructively about objectives and results. Everybody works hard to ensure ongoing communication and information exchange, in order to bridge the logistical distance between the two teams.

▼What is your primary objective for 2008?

▲This year we’ve worked hard on trouble tickets. Our ongoing goal is to achieve one-call solutions.

▼What is your team most proud of?

▲In the first half of 2008, we were the top team in Italy for quality of service to the customer. We achieved excellent results in competency, clarity, courtesy and completeness – the “4Cs” that are the yardstick of customer satisfaction.

▼What is the key to your success at the Rieti/Viterbo Customer Care Centre?

▲Without doubt, it’s the fact that we’re a consolidated team, our supervisors are independent, our employees are skilled, and, yes, there is also healthy competition between the staff at each location. ■

“Our Business Is to Make You Dream”

noi.magazine visits the Rome headquarters of Lottomatica, one of the world’s biggest lottery operators and Italy’s number one gaming industry player.

noi.magazine travelled to the offices of the Lottomatica Group to meet Roberto Saracino, Head of Operations and Architecture. Fifty-six percent owned by the De Agostini Group, which has over 100 years heritage in publishing, media and finance, Lottomatica is listed on the Milan stock exchange, and in 2006 registered turnover (with GTECH) in excess of 1.7 billion euros. The company has more than 6000 employees in over 50 countries around the globe.

▼How and to what degree has Telecom Italia contributed to the growth of Lottomatica’s business?

▲We’ve worked with Telecom Italia to build an extensive network linking over 90,000 sales outlets around the country to our data centres in Rome and Milan. By using the most innovative broadband solutions available, we are guaranteed to handle large numbers of online transactions (our 190,000 terminals process over 4 billion transactions, at a rate of up to 5,000 transactions per second, worth a total of some 25 billion euros). We have also developed services that have more and more multimedia and security built in.

▼What Telecom Italia technologies will you be adopting in the near future?

▲In observance of the rules that a concessionary company like Lottomatica has to follow, we will continue to leverage all best practice technology solutions that foster the growth and flexibility a company like Lottomatica needs. The strengths we expect from our important relationship with Telecom Italia are quality of service and the ability to deliver at individual sales outlets. At present, the issue on the table is a further boost to extend broadband coverage.

▼How would you describe the partnership between Telecom Italia and Lottomatica?

▲Relations are excellent, because they are built on relations between very professional people. Our group serves as an excellent testbed for nationwide network coverage, as we are a 99% user of telecommunications products.

▼What would you say are the margins for improvement in terms of the services and offerings we already supply?

▲As with all services companies, there is always scope for improvement in the quality of delivery and assistance. Indeed, such improvements are even more important when relations are consolidated, and based on professionalism and mutual respect. ■

Centrally... Comunico-IO

This project was initially launched to identify and fine-tune tools that facilitate communication between colleagues with hearing difficulties and colleagues without such issues.

The idea behind Comunico-IO was to “provide a voice without making a fuss”, to support and enhance the ability of people with hearing difficulties to work independently and be fully integrated into the company’s operating processes.

How did it all begin?

Comunico-IO came into existence... around a table... following a video interview broadcast on the company’s web-based TV channel, *noi.tv*, with a hearing-impaired colleague who told us how just a few small improvements would make a huge difference to his life inside and outside the company building. What hearing-impaired colleagues wanted from the company was simply a cell phone with a larger screen that made it easier to see the sign language they use to communicate. The goal of the Comunico-IO project was to issue all hard-of-hearing Group employees with a kit that comes with joint-working, communication and internet access services (on Griffon fixed-line devices for those who did not already have them), plus a high-definition webcam to make it even easier to interact via chat or sign language.

A dream bridge...

Italy’s National Deaf Association (*Ente Nazionale Sordi* or ENS) already offers a service known as “the Bridge”, in which a sign language interpreter with a webcam and chat console facilitates a non-hearing person’s interaction (using the same equipment) with the world by translating signs into words and making it possible to hold verbal phone communications. We took the “Bridge for the Deaf” cognitive approach as our starting point. Our dream was to create an in-house service – through an IT system built by Loquendo – that enabled hearing-impaired people to communicate with their colleagues. In particular, the system can turn written information into speech and, vice versa, extract information from speech and present it as text for the hearing-impaired to read.

How does it work?

Via the webTEL-chat interface, the hearing-impaired person dials the phone number of the party they want to speak to. The webTEL

server then takes over and calls the desired party. Once it is connected, it sends a pre-recorded message using a “unique” synthesized voice in place of the hearing-impaired person’s voice, and informs the called party that they are about to receive a call via an interpreter. The called party may respond speaking slowly and clearly. Loquendo’s technology extracts the information from the “spoken word” contribution and presents it as text to the hearing-impaired person via a web-chat interface. Voice synthesis technology can read any written text naturally and accurately, with expressiveness and emotion, in voices that are increasingly indistinguishable from human speech. Because the voice used for each person is unique – for example, it might be based on a member of the hearing-impaired person’s family – it has an exclusiveness and recognition factor that will be associated with all of the hearing-impaired person’s conversations.

Work in progress

The network of internal communication supporters is being used to take requests for the Griffon service, activation and kit distribution, following a meeting in November at which the project was presented to communication leaders and supporters. ■

TIMtribù: Put These Dates in Your Diary

There are very few blank pages in the TIMtribù diary, what with so many high-energy things to do. For example, this December break dancers from all over the country are converging on Rome to battle it out among themselves. The winners will be travelling to the United States to do their thing against the world's top dancers. This dream is possible thanks to a partnership that has united TIMtribù, Eastpak and Vans. These three youth-oriented companies have teamed up for a range of freestyle sports and music events that have been running across Italy since June: hip-hop, break dance and graffiti writing, hard rock, rap music and electronica, and skate, snowboard and BMX freestyle. The TIMtribù community flocks to these events because they highlight the passion of youth, young people's desire to be at the forefront of the action, be creative, be themselves and express themselves.

The busy calendar kicked off on June 25 with the TIMtribù Skate Cup, a four-event tour that wound up at the TIMtribù Village in Ostia on November 22-23. The greatly-awaited HIP HOP Connection Revolution is booked in to the Musica Incontro venue in Rome on December 13 and 14. On offer are six plane tickets and stays in the United States, including a special course and a competition on US soil. ■

Objective Assurance

Umberto Fancelli of Central Italy Assurance Services tells us about what his unit does.

A team 1,050-strong spread across six of Italy's regions, working in 25 buildings located in 14 cities, every single day keeps customers satisfied by providing the key process of technical assistance. At least three and half million malfunction calls are directly managed and resolved each year, in over 70% of cases without requiring a site visit by external engineers. Different operating departments handle different customer segments, broken down by geographical location and service recovery times. "Because of our Open Access mission, we also manage OLOs (Other Licenced Operators)," Mr Fancelli tells us, "for all types of service, and with the same care we use with our own customers."

Ongoing training has made it possible to increase online resolution rates. The next step is "call solution". Mr Fancelli explains: "We know it's vital to continue investing in individual and group competencies, because it's the only valid response to issues generated by innovative services. Our future goals revolve around productivity and efficiency, a professionally versatile team that exploits internal synergies to guarantee the highest possible level of service across all customer segments, and the satisfaction of premium clients through nationally- and European-recognized standards of professional excellence." ■

The team in thirteen questions

1. Nickname
2. Age (real)
3. Married?
4. The secret of your success
5. If you hadn't been a Telecom Italia manager
6. You would never do without...
7. Favourite dish
8. Best ever trip
9. If your department was an animal, it would be
10. The greatest compliment you've received from a co-worker
11. The greatest compliment you've received from your boss
12. A message for your co-workers
13. A message for your boss

Augusto Di Domenico

1. DiDo
2. 41
3. Yes
4. Commitment, a good ear for listening, the desire to do good
5. Army officer
6. Taking on a challenge and coming through
7. Trenette pasta with pesto
8. My next trip
9. A cheetah, the fastest of all
10. Thanks for being honest
11. I forget them all too easily
12. Our contribution to the decisions made at the top of the company is assiduously to look after our customers
13. We're ready for you!

Stefano Marchetti

1. Ste
2. 42
3. Yes
4. Working as a team
5. Studying physical education
6. Spending time with my kids
7. All kinds of fish
8. Bali
9. A horse, you've got to be able to move fast
10. You're a pain in the... How do you say that in Rome?
11. Great: we're in full agreement!
12. You're working for everyone: trust yourselves!
13. Take it easy: everything's under control

Gianluca Gentili

1. Gianluca
2. Next question please? 39
3. Yesssss
4. Enthusiasm

5. I'll let you know
6. Chocolate
7. Everything
8. Canada and Finland
9. Ants... Loads of ants...
10. It's taken too long
11. It's taken too long
12. Get with it, guys
13. An SMS or MMS?

Alessandro Monti

1. Alessandro
2. 46
3. Yes
4. Insight and perseverance
5. The Naval Academy at Leghorn
6. My kids
7. Fish
8. Greece's micro-islands
9. Rhinoceros
10. I always give a clear, transparent answer
11. Pragmatic and quick
12. Together we can do everything
13. He's got so many already he has a whole file under my name

Angelo Giamberini

1. 'Giambe
2. 43
3. Of course
4. I'm myself
5. I'd be working in sustainable development
6. "Nespresso, what else?"
7. French onion soup
8. Florence – Rome, return ticket
9. *Acinonyx jubatus*: agile, determined, and nimble
10. I feel like I'm working with the company when I'm working with you

A Close Encounter with the Stock Market

Aldo Perrone of Investor Relations fills us in on a typical day's work at his department.

Aldo Perrone works at Investor Relations. We met him at his office in Piazza Affari, a stone's throw from Italy's historic stock exchange. It's a sunny day the likes of which you don't normally expect in autumn. Though the barometer is forecasting fine weather, the same cannot be said of forecasts for the stock exchange; a storm is sweeping through Milan, New York, London and Tokyo.

▼What role does an Investor Relator play? ▲At Telecom Italia, just as at other major listed companies, Investor Relators serve as the interface between the company and the financial markets. Our goal is to ensure that our main target, an audience of institutional investors, individual investors and financial analysts, have a correct perception of the Group's strategic orientations, the results it achieves, and how its individual businesses are performing.

▼Can you describe the profile of the resources who operate in Investor Relations?

▲Why, certainly. The IR team currently consists of ten professionals, led by Elisabetta Ripa. To respond as well as possible to the needs of the financial community, Telecom Italia has chosen an organizational model differentiated by type (analysts and institutional investors on one hand, and individual investors on the other) and by Group business area (Domestic and International Operations).

We also keep a close eye on our domestic and international competitors. Though we're a small team, we need to be able to interpret trends on the financial markets, know a great deal about the telecommunications business, and have a natural predisposition for communication and interpersonal relations.

▼How do you interact with the rest of the Telecom Italia universe? Which departments do you have the most contact with, and why?

▲Investor Relations has ongoing relations with other departments, particularly with Finance, Administration and Control, to which we belong, and with which we share information and update one another on financial and operational trends. Investor Relations works with the Press Office to prepare press releases on financial topics. Everything we do is in close contact and in support of top management.

▼What media do you use to disseminate information?

▲It depends who we are targeting. Our potential channels run from telephone calls

and daily meetings to corporate events like the Investor Day. We also conduct a number of actions to stay at the leading edge of the web, given the importance of the internet and the company's websites as primary sources of information for our target groups in the economic and financial world. An example? Well, we have added specific interactive graphics to present share price performance in the Investor section of the Telecom Italia website, where analysts can also assess the Group's financial and operational performance through presentations, financial statements and other documents. Of course, we're constantly updating the Investors section with the latest, fullest and most transparent information. Within Investor Relations, the retail office manages relations with individual shareholders through the TI alw@ys ON club.

▼What are the things you bear in mind during your work?

▲We strive to match European best practice for financial communications – not just for the telecommunications industry – and pay close attention to the requisites laid down for the annual assessment conducted by Hallvarsson & Halvarsson, which classifies the best Italian and European company websites. Last year we came top in Italy and in Europe. ■

The Power of Our Logo

Loredana Grimaldi, Head of External Relations Branding, Corporate Identity and Research, tells us about what her team does.

Loredana Grimaldi's unit is responsible for Group brand management policies, including research and competitive benchmarking on brand and advertising perception. The unit also plans and develops Corporate Identity systems and ensures Group-wide web coordination and monitoring.

▼What path has your career taken?

▲I first joined the Telecom Italia Group in 1987. I worked in Communications until 1993, at the Press Office. I had always worked in financial and corporate communication, particularly relations with radio and TV: Italian TV and domestic radio/TV enterprises. After that, I moved to a Communications back-office job in Media, where I set up a documentation facility that exhaustively, accurately and rapidly supplied responses to requests from outside the company. I developed a new knowledge culture – one which did not previously exist in Telecom Italia – by building the Telecom Italia Group's web site, which I ran until 2003. Currently, I'm involved in research into the Group's image, communications and corporate identity development, which is a strategic activity for the Company and its brand. Over the years, I've also been passionately involved in our company archives, located in Turin.

▼What role does External Relations play in the company today? What competencies do the people who work here need?

▲External Relations resources must to some degree be able to predict how background factors are going to evolve, if they are to serve as a front-end to external communications. They must keep a finger on the pulse of what's going on outside the company, not just beyond the classic competitive scenario, but also in terms of stakeholder points of view. People who work in External Relations must be able to interpret the external context globally, especially from so-called "weak" signals, if they are to come up with responses ahead of time and exploit the positive side to developments.

The skills required to work in External Relations are the skills typical of Information and Communication Technology workers. People who work in this business must have a system-wide overview, and be capable of rapid synergies in operational interaction, because in External Relations things shift pace all the time.

Speed of reaction to change, determination,

Abruzzo, Land of Manzoni, Land of the Wild Gospel

and a good instinct for communication and relations are key. Since the advent of the web, the job of communicating has evolved, and now requires a degree of specialization. For example, the results of planning and output control are now disclosed immediately to the public. ■

"Ye villages, scattered and glistening on the declivity, like flocks of grazing sheep! Farewell!" Such is the farewell to the mountains delivered by Lucia, in a famous extract from Alessandro Manzoni's verse novel "The Betrothed"; a farewell that applies just as well to the whole Abruzzo region as it does to the area around Como, given the similarity between the mountain and lakeside scenery. And if you ignore the fact that this region of central Italy, unlike Don Lisander's lands, extends along one of the most beautiful coastlines in the Mediterranean – sandy beaches for dozens and dozens of kilometres, interspersed with sudden high rocky outcrops – Lombardy would, with its juxtaposition of mountains and plains, orographically speaking, appear to be a sister to Abruzzo. Another thing they have in common are centuries of trade in textiles and the most highly-prized saffron in the world (which is cultivated on the plateaus around L'Aquila to grace Milanese risotto) and the migration of "Lombard" artists to a region known for its stone, to which they brought a singular approach to building, at one time making Penne and Sulmona two minor capitals of the art.

Why is Abruzzo "Manzonian"? Is it for the houses sprinkled over hillsides like flocks of sheep? For its many forbidding castles, perched – much like the castle that belonged to Manzoni character "The Innominato" – like eagles' nests on high, fortified with battlements during the late Middle Ages when civic communities, no longer protected by the Roman Empire, moved to higher ground and abandoned their former valley homes, which they could no longer defend? Perhaps it's because of its rivers – the Aterno, Vomano and Sangro – which, like the Adda and Ticino, reflect the sky, while down in the valley snakes "l'erbal fiume silente" a sheep-track, as immortalized by Gabriele D'Annunzio, the poet of Pescara?

No. It's not just for these reasons. There is a more deeply-rooted reason for the similarities between these two regions. Manzoni's Lombardy is a metaphysical land, reflecting the religious inspiration that underpins his work. It is transcendental. It is hieratic. It is spiritualized, just like Abruzzo, except Abruzzo goes even further: Abruzzo's landscape is involuntarily Christian, thanks to more than a millennium of sheep-herding, much like Judea in the time of Christ. Abruzzo is sheep-track central, the very home of sheep-rearing. It is an example of man's identification with the land as transient and transhumant, generating identical metaphors and identical ways of conceiving of existence. It is a summary of the condition that, through Jewish and Christian culture – in the great number of parables fea-

turing a Shepherd, flocks and individual sheep – was to become a leitmotiv of all Western culture.

Abruzzo is its own wild gospel. Here, shepherds have followed millions of head of sheep for thousands of years. Here, we find the motorways of antiquity, as somebody once called them – sheep trails graven into a mountain landscape unique even to Italy: from the soaring peaks which, so close to the sea, are sun-kissed rather than fog-bound, not unlike the landscape of Galilee, though thank God the area is less arid and desert-like. In Abruzzo, the bleat of the lamb is all the more heart-rending, because it is already sacrificial.

And that's not all. Abruzzo is a land of plants and vines. The men who sow seeds today no longer replicate the old-fashioned gesture of casting the seed, merely avoiding brambles or areas where there is insufficient soil cover to sustain the plant. Nowadays, they sow from a vehicle, but the moment of the miracle, the awareness of the rite – indeed, the accompanying twang of the heartstrings – have remained unchanged, despite the changing tools.

At harvest time, before they set to work, farmers cast their eye over sun-ripened ears of wheat with the same gleam in the eye as farmers did in Judea two millennia back, when they saw all that wheat and all that chaff growing together, prior to the separation of good and evil – just like on the final day, when that huge scythe comes down on us all.

Nowadays, vine-growers love, terrace and coddle their vines with modern techniques, producing Montepulciano, Trebbiano and Cerasuolo wines that have won themselves a reputation around the globe; but the loving look that takes in the vine shoot remains unchanged from two thousand years ago, when man set to thinking what the fruit of the vine might yield. It is the same look as in the eye of the jubilant psalmist, when "from the arid land, the waterless steppe" celebrated by Ezekiel – so similar to the landscape on the high plateaus of Gran Sasso or Maiella – he espied an ice-cold stream against all the odds, opening up the heart to change, heralding the end of the drought and the baptism of hope, just like the waters of the Jordan. ■

A Literary Life

Our colleague Giovanni D'Alessandro was born in Ravenna in 1955. A law graduate, he lives and works in Pescara. He made his literary debut in 1996, when Donzelli published "Se un Dio pietoso". The book was short-listed for the Viareggio, Palazzo and Bosco prizes, and won the Penne-Mosca and Convegna Maria Cristina awards. In 2004, Mondadori published his second novel, "I fuochi dei kelt", which won the 2005 Scanno prize. In 2006, Rizzoli published "La puttana del tedesco", which this time took the 2007 Fenice Europa award. In 2008, San Paolo published his first collection of short stories, "Il guardiano dei giardini del cielo", which in July won the 2008 Maiella prize. D'Alessandro is, in addition, an essayist, an enthusiast of English-language literature and history of art. ■

Fale pelo Cliente: A Year of Excellent Results

The service takes the *Premio de Ouro* for its success, as it transforms co-workers into customer carers.

In São Paulo, TIM Brasil won the *Premio de Ouro* (gold trophy) during the awards ceremony held by the Brazilian Association of Telemarketing (ABT) for its *Fale pelo Cliente* ("Speak on behalf of the customer") service. This is a well-regarded Brazilian award that each year is given to best practice at call centres. The *Fale pelo Cliente* service was launched in June 2007 to satisfy customer requests sent in on behalf of customers by Brazilian colleagues (see *noi.magazine* 2-2007). A year on, the customer care channel employs three supervisors and 52 consultants who work in a special unit at the CRC (Centro de Relacionamento com o Cliente) in the city of Curitiba. In its first thirteen months of operation, more than thirty-five thousand requests have been processed by the system.

"*Fale pelo Cliente* shows who's really important in the company," says Paulo Henrique Policena, Head of the CRC. On the first anniversary of the service, the positive results achieved so far confirm that the initial goal – of "winning over customers" – has been achieved.

"Before *Fale pelo Cliente*, a customer enquiry might pass through four different sets of hands, taking longer to resolve and lowering levels of customer satisfaction. Now that we have this channel, we have avoided around 140,000 pointless e-mails," confirms Júlio César Freire, who works in Customer Relations.

Our Brazilian colleagues contact the service by sending an e-mail to falepelocliente@timbrasil.com.br. Within 48 hours, the colleague who sent in the request receives a response, even if the issue has not been resolved – and it has to be resolved within 72 hours at most. Over the last three months, more than 70% of enquiries have been resolved within this deadline.

Once the issue has been resolved, the customer relations consultant must call the colleague who raised the issue as well as the customer, and let them know that everything has been sorted out. "The customer must not think that we came up with a solution, but rather that it was TIM, the phone company the customer has chosen. Everybody's a winner: the company does well out of it, as does the co-worker, who feels motivated," Júlio César tells us.

Thus far, 5% of contacts are for more information, 23% are requests, and 72% are complaints. "As well as looking after the customer, our main goal is to resolve the prob-

lem at source, and avert subsequent calls. Ours is both a corrective and preventative action," says Marcos Tiraboschi, who heads up the *Fale pelo Cliente* team.

Paulo Henrique Policena sums up the mission of this channel: "We are turning 10,000 co-workers into agents. Looking after the customer well is not something that is solely the preserve of call centres and sales outlets."

Now in TIM stores

For particularly tough or repeat cases, store managers can get in touch with *Fale pelo Cliente* and obtain priority status. Meanwhile, channel managers are raising awareness within the company so that colleagues make use of the service properly. As Júlio César explains, "Many cases regarding corporate clients can be resolved using specific channels for this purpose. Requests of this nature only overload *Fale pelo Cliente* and negatively impact service performance."

In July, a feedback survey was conducted among 150 colleagues in Brazil who have used the service. The answers to three straightforward questions showed that *Fale pelo Cliente* is most definitely on the right track. Satisfaction with the service averaged 8.6 (on a scale of between one and 10); 99% of colleagues would use it again, and 97% would recommend it to fellow colleagues.

Marcos Di Bonito, who works at TIM Sul Consumer Sales, is one of the most enthusiastic users of the service, with 10 requests resolved over the past year: "It's top quality, and the solutions always make a difference. Many times, what began as a customer complaint ended up with a clarification and the customer turned out not only to be satisfied but better-informed too. Even with what seem at first to be serious problems, we know we can count on *Fale pelo Cliente*".

Eraldo Silvestrin, of Regulatory Affairs is another satisfied user of the service. His daughter needed his help, and he managed to sort out a long-term problem. For Eraldo, "All companies have their critical issues. A channel dedicated to resolving such problems makes a difference and makes life simpler for us." ■

Follow the Footsteps

TimCafé, the TIM mobile community, has been revamped and now offers blogs and personalized services.

There is a place where people can make friends, share their hobbies and passions, leave messages, and celebrate their birthdays with friends. Where? *TimCafé*, Italy's largest mobile community with almost 1.8 million registered users.

The mobile community owes its success not just to its large membership, but to the quantity of channels and services it offers. *TimCafé* subscribers can interact, play, communicate, send one another messages and chat using a variety of tools ranging from text messages to multimedia messages, the web, WAP, PC and mobile clients, and voice and video chat (nickname to nickname). *TimCafé* subscribers meet new people securely and anonymously, either privately or in public chat rooms and forums.

Now, after seven years' service, the mobile community has undergone a revamp, with a fresh look and exciting new features. The gradual rollout of the new site will be completed in March 2009, by which time it will have been completely updated.

TimCafé is set to become an environment where community members can express themselves even more easily, and show the world who they really are.

New interfaces and user modes including customized personal pages and blogs will satisfy user needs.

Users will be able to add more new detail and information to their personal profiles, facilitating contacts among community members, making it easier to find people with similar tastes and interests, and showing who the most active people on *TimCafé* are.

Hi, how ya doing?

Users will be able to find out if the person they want to contact is online or off-line, geographically nearby or far away, the channel on which they may be playing, the activities they follow inside the community, and their "mood" at that moment. It will also be possible to search through multimedia content published by virtual Café regulars either on their personal pages or in open access areas of the site.

It'll be also easier to see one another face-to-face. All it takes is a webcam to video chat on the web. Community members will be able to call a *TimCafé* short-form number, connect to a video portal and view video content from other community members, as well as record their video profile directly onto their cell phones – a real web 2.0 revolution.

My Page profile

Every patron of the busiest cafe in the Italian virtual world will have their own personal page (My Page) to manage and enrich their profile information and content. Instruments and advanced functions include the ability to customize the web page background, set up a network of friends, launch a personal blog to convey thoughts and offer topics up for discussion, and configure which community notices to receive.

TimCafé life includes special events such as an opportunity to video-chat with VIPs or take part in parties and competitions. The most active and loyal community users can look forward to rewards: every community member features in a special league table, with prizes given out every week (telephone top-ups and free messaging bonuses to be spent). All you have to do to win these prizes is to take part in cafe life and contribute your own engaging, witty and interesting content. ■

Olivetti 1908-2008: An Industrial Project

An exhibition curated and put on by the Olivetti Archive at the *Officina H* exhibition area, Ivrea.

It was evident from this exhibition that the Olivetti company's industrial project was never limited just to workshops and research, technical design and product engineering. The company's scope was far broader, extending to social and architectural issues affecting the workforce, a sense of social responsibility, and a sensibility for culture in all its diverse forms of expression. The Olivetti "project" was a collaboration between and interaction among every part of the corporate body; it involved men of culture, scholars, intellectuals, architects and socially-committed individuals in an environment typified by significant creative freedom, a commitment to ongoing learning, and the promotion of study and research. The exhibition brought together a rich and varied collection of objects, documents, film clips and images, most of which had never been seen before, all of which told the story of a company that created a unique style and earned worldwide recognition for its singular approach to "doing business" – one which, to this day, continues to be acknowledged and studied. Starting with the company's first 1908 factory, the exhibition offered visitors an overview of the company's progress through the years, including the elements that were key to significant technical innovation in processes and products, from mechanics to electronics, early electronic calculators, personal computers, the evolution of computer networks and, ultimately, telecommunications. The company's open-ended attitude to an international reach is a constant of its history. Olivetti designed for a world market, and in the process set up a network of relationships and partnerships that girded the globe not just in terms of industry, but technology, research and communication. The exhibition concluded with a summary of the values that characterized Olivetti's industrial project – values which remain a forward-looking stimulus for designing and building the future. ■

Equal Opportunities: Live from Germany

A mother and a father who work at HanseNet share their parental leave experiences with us.

Mothers seeking a work/family balance have to go through contortions. And yet now that fathers increasingly want to spend time with their children alongside their partners, that balance is becoming easier to achieve. *noi.magazine* asked two HanseNet colleagues (a mother and a father) to tell us about their experience in Germany, a nation known for its advanced social policies.

The new mum...

Ilka Ritterswürden, who works in Human Resources, gave birth to her son in January 2006. She and her husband wanted to spend time with their baby boy without completely turning their back on their jobs. She decided to take six months off at home and then go back to work part-time. Under German law, mothers and fathers can take up to three years' parental leave. During this time, they are guaranteed to keep their job, and they can also opt to go part-time without changing their contract.

"I had no idea how much time and care a newborn baby needed, and how much work it took get everything organized. I really appreciate that my bosses supported me in my choice." During the first months of her leave, Ilka and her husband both decided to go back to work part-time. This was in October 2007. She explains how they arranged things:

"My husband works full-time during the second week of each month, and then stays home in 'turnover'. When he's free, I work longer hours. During the week when he works more, I go home at midday. At times when we're both at work, our baby is at the crèche with the kids of other employees."

Ilka didn't want to stay home for three years because she likes her job, even though it is by no means easy, because "it always feels like you're about to forget something. You can't be as flexible as you'd like because the baby has fixed times. It's a real challenge to make the quick change from work to mummy. Sometimes I have to skip meetings. When that happens, colleagues fill me in. In any event, the HanseNet units I run as a personnel consultant are aware of my work schedule, and I manage to get everything done." Even with Germany's family-friendly laws, it's still tough to juggle two working lives and look after a child.

As Ilka puts it: "For this and for other reasons – say, traditional gender roles or money problems – you don't often find both parents working part-time. And yet even people who

haven't done things the way we have are really interested in our experience." In January 2007, Germany's Minister for the Family, Ursula von der Leyen, replaced the old *Erziehungsurlaub* ("educational holiday") system with the *Elternzeit* system (parental leave, or "parenting time"). The new law guarantees 67% of the parental income necessary to look after children. Partners also get two months leave – in reality "daddy months".

...And the new dad

Christian Sorge, Head of Customer Service in Hamburg, is a father who took his statutory two months' leave.

"Our son was born in March, and I wanted to take time off during those early months. How does it work? Well, you either take both months right away, or you reduce your working time up to a maximum of 30 hours a month. You can't just take one month. I wanted to have time to look after my son without completely giving up work for two months, so I chose to go part-time. That way, I could continue managing my unit, which looks after the technical aspects of activation."

Christian had to iron out some bureaucratic problems along the way, but as he says, "Though I had these things to sort out, I was also pleasantly surprised because everybody at HanseNet reacted favourably to my choice. My boss supported me fully, and Human Resources were much better informed about things than the ministry. I started my first period working part-time in August, going in just on Fridays. I'm starting my second period in February, when I'll be working three days a week. The system gives you the freedom to choose and to look after your children without causing financial headaches, at the time that your children need you the most. It's an experience I'd advise everybody to try." ■

Communicating Security

Security awareness campaign launches.

Attentiveness, awareness and sensitivity are the bywords of a wide-ranging communications campaign rolled out by the Information Protection unit to foster data protection.

"Protecting data is one of the most important issues of our time," says Unit Manager Rocco Mammoliti. "We decided to follow an innovative approach to communication to achieve this goal."

Posters in common areas and meeting rooms remind co-workers to be responsible when handling data, and not to jeopardize the company's data assets.

Using an appealing, attention-grabbing graphic approach, the Security Web Game tackles a number of key issues and offers tips to improve corporate security, from using badges to password-selection advice and how to avoid *phishing*. ■

A voi comunicare

A new media campaign showcases Telecom Italia's open dialogue with all communities. The "One World" theme reappears in the 2009 Diary distributed with this issue of the magazine.

"Every closed door represents the death of a civilization." Recognize the quote? It's by Giuseppe. Where? During a TV panel discussion? At dinner with friends? Around the coffee machine with colleagues? No, he said it in a "town square" where potentially he could communicate with an infinite number of people. A town square with no benches and no fountains: a virtual town square. It's the *A voi comunicare* blog, which Telecom Italia opened on September 11, a symbolic and by no means coincidental date.

Franco Bernabè explains the thinking behind the site: "We're building a new Telecom Italia. Not a huge, inaccessible, closed-in corporation, but an enterprise open to dialogue and ready to listen."

A voi comunicare is an important piece of the puzzle. Carlo Fornaro, Head of External Relations, defines it as: "An open space for people to converse, learn about what other people are thinking, exchange ideas and hear new opinions." Discussions on the site revolve around far-from-simple topics.

A voi comunicare was launched to mark the unexpected rediscovery of a 1947 speech by Mahatma Gandhi, in which he tackles the delicate relationship uniting East and West. A multichannel communications campaign publicizing *A voi comunicare* ran in newspapers, on TV, and on internet blogs starting on August 8, to coincide with the start of the Peking Olympics.

How have things gone since then? The figures speak for themselves. Since it launched in early November, more than 700,000 unique visitors have been to the blog, which has registered over 2 million pageviews and racked up more than 2,000 comments on posts.

The blog is run by a team of students from the LUISS University, supervised by Michel Martone. *noi.magazine* was keen to find out what they thought and felt "behind-the-scenes" at the blog.

Francesco, a 23-year-old who is studying to become a lawyer, feels it is vital to find 'symbols around which we can unite': "Reading the comments, it's clear how much people want concrete commitments."

Maddalena, who hails from the Calabria region, is passionate about the social issues that the site deals with. Twenty-two-year-old Antonio loves the teamwork that unites

them. "When we're putting together interviews, everybody finishes off what they were thinking with a comment or observation from somebody else." Michele, also 22, is fascinated by the potential opened up by a creative flow of comments.

Flaming on the net? Simply another opportunity to think things through

More than one of the young editorial staff swim against the tide and admit that before *A voi comunicare*, they "loathed blogs, chat and online video... But I'm flabbergasted by the opportunity to share thoughts and ideas."

Indeed, every "flame" [attack in web parlance] that comes in from the blogosphere is experienced as a "shock", but "what always prevails is the will to respond with a calm rebuttal".

According to Daniele, "It's better to field some criticisms, as it feeds the debate." Giulio, aged 21, is a dab net hand who knew his way around search engines and e-mail addresses at the tender age of ten. "Nowadays," he says, "I'm much less interested in classic social networking sites, but I'm passionate about web environments where people discuss legal matters that help me in my studies."

Is there one universally-acknowledged benefit? "Yes: the blog offers an opportunity to get in touch with your next-door neighbours... Many people sign their comments simply 'A family guy.'" Twenty-two-year-old Massimo is evidently proud of the decision to staff a blog with young people.

Self-aware young women and men

Chiara, a 23-year-old radio announcer, is impressed by the maturity revealed in the comments left by teenaged girls: "It's been a pleasant surprise to find a world that is not full of 'brain-dead' people with no interests. Far from it. You get a glimpse of fresh ideas, the desire to act, a truly enthusiastic awareness. We were particularly struck by China's experience, because it's so personal, and such an example."

Claudia is very happy with the five hundred comments left on the 'universal values' post. "As far as I'm concerned," she says, "it's a sign that people want to debate topics that we all share, topics that affect us all. The blog is like a huge whiteboard that anybody can write on, anybody can say how they feel."

"The best thing I've seen written?" muses Daniele. " 'Freeing oneself from selfishness is peace', a message that though it may at first look trite, is something we really should aspire to."

To find out more, visit <http://avoicomunicare.myblog.it/> ■

One world

"Let your hearts clap in unison with what I'm saying, and I think, I shall have finished my work." Gandhi's April 2, 1947 speech, to the conference on Inter-Asian Relations, has become known as the "One World" speech.

Nineteen forty seven was a crucial year. Following the end of the Second World War, the world was rapidly being divided into two main blocks: Soviet and Western. Berlin became a huge bone of contention. Things were hardly better in the East, which was also afflicted by the clash between the Communist and Western blocs. Events precipitated in the 1950s, first with the Korean War, and then in the 60s, with the Vietnam War. Gandhi's speech was delivered at a time of cleavage and division around the entire globe: splits and divisions to do with religion, ethnic group, ideology and political interests.

Gandhi had already voiced some of the principles contained in his April 1947 "One World" speech during a 1931 radio broadcast that first carried the Mahatma's voice to the United States – Gandhi used the most advanced communications media of the day to spread his ideals. At that time, he said: "I feel in the innermost recesses of my heart... that the world is sick unto death of blood-spilling. The world is seeking a way out, and I flatter myself with the belief that perhaps it will be the privilege of the ancient land of India to show that way out to the starving world."

In January 1948, Gandhi began his final fast in protest at persecution of Muslims in India's capital. One week later, a Hindu extremist assassinated him with a single pistol shot. ■

Famous faces

A voi comunicare features video interviews and video messages, including:

Bob Geldof, the man behind Live Aid and Live8.

Ramin Jahanbegloo, born in Teheran, one of the most important promoters of debate between the world's various cultures.

China Keitetsi, born in Uganda in 1976, who divides her time nowadays between Denmark and Rwanda, where she works to protect the rights of down-trodden children.

Tara Gandhi is an active proponent of the message spread by her paternal grandfather, through the project "Gandhi in Indore", which runs homes that take in and look after women and children.

Tahar Ben Jelloun is one of Morocco's best-known authors.

Joaquín Navarro Valls: between 1984 and 2006 ran the Holy See Press Office.

Mikael Gorbachev, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, was the man behind the reforms that changed the shape of the globe. ■

2009 Diary

One World is also the theme of Telecom Italia's 2009 diary. This year's diary has been created by you all: we asked all co-workers to take inspiration from Gandhi's thoughts on dialogue, respect of difference, tolerance, debate and listening, and to send in photos and aphorisms (no longer than text messages) that embody these values. The blank pages in the diary are now full of colour from photos and emotions from the phrases you sent in.

Some phrases and photos have been selected to inspire us through the year. We will try to publish the others – all of them were interesting and moving – via various company channels of communication. This year's diary follows a weekly format and, as a slim paperback, is highly portable. Our hope is that this year we really can believe more strongly in one world, and welcome diversity as an enhancement to our lives. ■

Everyone’s an Editor-in-Chief!

How to write effective titles for paper publications and the web

Concise, clear and informative... even better if you can make them evocative... Titles must convey information right away, while at the same time prompting the desire to read on. A vast amount is asked of newspaper article titles – so much so that writing titles is considered the quintessence of journalism, the preserve of editors-in-chief and managing editors, rather than cub journalists. Shorter is indeed sweeter. Since the internet revolutionized the entire communications world, like many other publishing operations, title writing has been sprung from the prison of journalism to become a daily act for many people at home and at work. We write titles when we add a subject line to our e-mails, a slogan for a handbill, the title of a blog post or a web page, or the table of contents in a corporate document. The objective remains the same as that of a newspaper editor-in-chief: to convey the essence of the piece promptly, using the fewest characters possible, and get people to read on.

Read first, write last

If the title has to sum up a whole story, communicate an item of news or simply arouse people’s curiosity, the best thing to do is to write it at the end, once you have the content and style of the text clearly laid out before you. Read it all through carefully, and ask yourself what the most important thing is for the reader to know right away. Then, give them a little something extra:

Crèche Opens in Florence Today for Employee Children.

And More are On the Way...

You should polish the title until it fits into the tight space available: get down to basics, stick to naked facts and figures, and eschew pointless adjectives. If you still don’t have enough space, you can always extend the title by using the expedient of a colon:

Towards Zero Impact: In 2008, 90% of Paper Used In-Company Recycled.

Steps on the text scale

On the web, titles are an even more important element for getting round. Minimal screen real estate only allows us to see one portion of text at a time. Everything else is either above the title or below the title; very often, it takes a click to get anywhere else. Online text goes deeper and deeper: titles and subtitles must be easy-to-navigate steps that lead us in to an article, a news item, a brochure or an e-book. Just as newspaper article titles have a slugline and sum-

mary, online titles must have a subtitle. Every usability expert worth his salt advises never to neglect this text: it acts as an interface between the title and the rest of the text. Like in newspapers, titles and subtitles must be conceived at the same time, without any overlap or repetition of the same words:

A 1m Square Gym:

10 Simple Desk Exercises To Try Right Away.

The dilemma facing all titlers is whether to plump for witty, catchy and playful titles that arouse the reader’s curiosity, or go for concrete, succinct titles that run the risk of being bland. Look at the above title. Did you notice what we did? Simply by adding a subtitle, we can play on multiple stylistic registers. Initially, we are mysterious; then we come in with concrete information. Of course, it can also work the other way round too.

Fuelling the search engines

Titles and subtitles may act as guides to readers, but for the real arbiters of the web, the search engines, they’re positively pilots. Search engines do not consider all words born equal. Titles, or the words used in titles, are worth much more than others; and words to the left are worth more than words to the right. Good titles help to scale the ranks at Google. It’s worth trying to shoehorn keywords into titles – the words that web surfers will be typing into their search queries. Being practical is key. It’s unlikely that people will type into Google “dream holiday” or “emerald-coloured sea”. They’re much more likely to look up “Seychelles”, “swimming pool”, “massages”, “vegetarian cuisine” or “baby club”. It’s not a question of giving up your dream holiday, it’s a matter of leading people in and offering them the right information:

Wellness centre, with poolside vegetarian cuisine.

A dream holiday in the Seychelles.

Back to paper

Honing our titling skills is a good way to persuade people to open up, read and digest long and complex corporate documents such as projects, research papers, surveys, white papers and presentations. “On the Far Side of the Great Wall” is more enticing than “Analyzing Market Prospects in China”. “The Glass Ceiling: Closer to Heaven, or Head in the Clouds?” would be an intriguing title for a research paper into women in corporate management. ■

Radio Frizz, Dedicated to Fixed-Line Customer Care

The radio station goes out to colleagues on *noi.portal* and over company mobile phones. News briefs are broadcast on Tuesdays and Thursdays, presented by Nick & Berry with verve and wit. We tune in to find out what it’s all about.

The company radio station dedicated to Fixed-Line Customer Care personnel began broadcasting in April. *Radio Frizz* has already won many fans among the people who work at Fixed-Line Customer Care – the voice of our company.

Working at Fixed-Line Customer Care takes a great deal of energy, not just to keep up to speed, but in terms of psychological and emotional input. It is a challenge to stay up-to-date with the vast numbers of products and services the company offers, resolve customer problems and interpret needs that are not always clearly expressed, all the while remaining affable and polite.

Telecom Italia decided to offer our colleagues an enjoyable, shared break. The radio show, which enables workers’ voices to be heard from one end of the country to the other, is spiced up by the banter of radio presenter duo Nick & Berry. Funny stories are interspersed with serious issues regarding work processes (tackled humorously, of course) in the audio interludes of the “radio station that puts the fizz back” into Fixed-Line Customer Care.

But let’s hear from the people to whom the radio station is dedicated, and who, in true Web 2.0 style, are also partially responsible for its content. We spoke to a Fixed-Line Customer Care colleague who works in Perugia, the town where the live radio road-show began its tour, as it brings the station team and recording studio to Fixed-Line Customer Care offices up and down Italy. ■

“A Breath of Fresh Air”

Radio Frizz goes to Umbria: Giovanni Castellani, who works at Fixed-Line Customer Care in Perugia, shares his thoughts.

Radio Frizz arrived, or to be more precise, “landed” in Perugia, in the words of the wacky presenters and the various characters they have on their show, given that our offices are located at the top of the mountain, and they struggled to make it up here. In October, we finally had a chance to see the faces behind the zany voices produced by Nick, Berry, Apina and all the characters that have been animating our company radio station for a while now.

It’s really great that Telecom Italia took an “old-fashioned” form of communication and put it in a new context, offering all employees, and particularly those of us who work at Fixed-Line Customer Care, a new way of interacting in our working lives. I really think we should take full advantage of the opportunity the company has given us. It’s great, and stimulating too, to contribute to the content of the radio show, rather than just sit back and listen.

The human values that the show draws upon, boosted by the experience and knowledge every one of us has inside and outside the workplace, is incredibly wide and varied, and manages to encompass the whole country. It’s clear from the name of the radio station what the idea behind it is: to be funny and ironic, served up in small doses, and give us a fillip with its carefree fizziness.

Radio Frizz is good clean fun for everybody to listen to. As far as I’m concerned, it’s a less forbidding and distant means of conveying company information and content of all kinds than the more usual channels. Being able to have a laugh at what you do is a great way of calming oneself down and getting new oxygen to the brain. It’s like when we throw open the windows where we work to get some fresh air in: we feel better immediately, and we go about our work with renewed energy.

That’s how I feel about the few fizzing minutes of each new episode. I’ve always had a lot of time for “laughter therapy” and its scientifically-proven positive psychological and biological effects. For whatever reason Telecom Italia decided to launch this service, if the radio station gets us to smile every now and then, that can only be a good thing for us and for our well-being.

Staff invaders

Returning to the visit (well, rather than visit, I’d call it more of an invasion by *Radio Frizz* staff of the Perugia offices, with all the

sticky tape they left around the place)... we had a really great time. Apart from spending a day that was very different from the usual work routine, Fixed-Line Customer Care workers and the radio presenters had a chance to see and use each other’s tools of the trade, and exchange our opinions. We’re always hearing about poets and singers, legends of knights and ladies, stories secreted away in a desk drawer and shards of everyday life that come to prominence as if by chance – something that each and any of us might have been sitting on for who knows how long. It was great to see colleagues of mine (with those headphones perched on their heads!) taking turns at the microphone with the presenters, and coming out with all kinds of anecdotes dredged up from the recesses of their memory. For example, Paolo talking about that time that he told a client on the line, “Madam, if you don’t hear a thing, there’s no need to worry... it’s just me not talking.”

They read out poems, talked about their passions, sang songs and showed another side of themselves, beyond their professional persona. We all got to know one another better and had a good time together. I love listening to the show for work and for fun. And let me say, telephones and the radio have one thing in common: “The pull of a voice that fosters the imagination.” ■

Got an Idea? Post it on the Blog

Colleagues at Technology and Operations took a web 2.0 approach to improving the “Regman” system used to configure, provide technical help, and update software on all modems and terminals supplied to Telecom Italia Alice customers.

“The blog enabled us to speed up the design and development phase for Regman, and avert the ever-present risk of failing user expectations,” says Carlo Filangieri, the man in charge of Creation-To-Assurance Engineering. Where did all this start? Well, it began as a questionnaire on main systems sent out in June 2008 in an on-line survey of around 20,000 users. The survey came up with a number of criticalities in the Regman system, most notably that it was overly complex to use and its performances had shortcomings. The action plan drawn up in partnership with Human Resources to resolve the problem used a web 2.0 tool for redesigning the user interface. The interactive tool made it possible to quickly exchange documents, opinions and new ideas, and allowed the knowledge and experience of over 4,000 Regman users to be tapped. As a result, the objective was achieved in just 60 days. Gianfranco Cocchieri, of Network Assurance & Management, explains: “We set ourselves a number of objectives. First of all, to find out how users really perceived the system; next, to understand what they wanted; and lastly, to share the project with them prior to rollout.” We look at what the project achieved at each stage.

Listening

It was vital to get a more in-depth idea of how users perceive the system to ensure that the action plan would effectively tackle the identified criticalities, which in everyday use represented real difficulties. It was really useful to virtually accompany users in their daily work, and correctly perceive the situation in the various contexts in which Regman was used.

Understanding

Different user groups around Italy have different competencies and activities. We needed to understand their needs to develop a product that would allow all of them to do their jobs simply and rapidly, among other things improving customer problem response times.

Sharing

After “listening” to complaints and vital suggestions, and after “understanding” what

end users of the system wanted, we had to make sure that we all crossed the finishing line together... In other words, we shared the final project before rollout. During the final phase, the prototype of the new interface and new functionalities was published on the blog and discussed within the community, so we could be sure that improvements addressed the needs that were expressed.

Results

“We have discovered a new way of interacting with our clients (that is to say, system users) that is less distant and more hands-on. Though it does open us up to criticism, it guarantees that we leverage the strength of the group and allocate resources to real needs,” Mr. Cocchieri concludes. The initiative was successful because the blog focused on a specific issue, and we worked out beforehand the length of time and steps we wanted to follow. The end result is a new interface for Regman users. The experience prompts us to adopt this method – based on sharing and collaboration – in other areas of Information Technology, in order to make relations with our customers increasingly direct and beneficial. ■

“Three hundred comments on the blog”

Blogs are such a versatile communications tool that it took very little time to find a technical solution, instead of expending enormous amounts of energy in meetings for colleagues dotted around the country, and spending not inconsiderable sums of money. Because blogs are dialogue-based, they allow all users to be in contact with all other users. The central hub and outlying nodes can exchange messages, opinions and above all documentation extremely rapidly, which made it easier to come up with a “eureka” idea for the Telecom Italia Alice customer help system. More than 5,000 accesses and around 300 comments were registered over a two-month period, and a great deal of documentation was exchanged – the real added value for the success of this venture. ■

Regman is updated thanks to a blog

The blog resulted in a new interface for Regman users. Here’s what’s new:

1. A new way of presenting the Home Network. Telecom Italia operators see all devices on the customer’s home network, including summary descriptions and highly accurate status information.
2. Ease of use. The main functions are quickly and easily accessible for the operator. Equipment configuration is instantly readable and usable.
3. Revised functionalities. A number of functionalities have been added, offering users additional tools for more detailed and more accurate analyses. ■

Otto e mezzo and Lilli Gruber

The journalist gets to grips with La7 in a brand-new challenge.

One of Italy's most famous TV journalists has been helming La7's current affairs show *Otto e mezzo* since September.

In 1987, Lilli Gruber became the first woman to front an evening news bulletin on Italian TV. She has earned a reputation as something of a "brainbox" behind-the-scenes, and in the European Parliament, where she was elected in 2004 with 1.1 million preferential votes.

"Telecom Italia Media contacted me at the precise moment when, after four and a half years, I decided not to stand for a second term in the European Parliament because I wanted to go back to doing what I do. It was an extraordinary coincidence, and a great way of closing my experience as a journalist seconded to politics. I was really pleased with the idea of starting out on a new project, so I decided to accept the proposal and move from Tg1 – Italy's main primetime news show – to a journalist-based current affairs show like *Otto e mezzo* on La7."

▼ A few months in, can you tell us how it's going?

▲ Yes, it's been a really positive experience. Every day we strive to improve what we do and win new viewers, battling it out in the timeslot with quizzes, the Gabibbo and news bulletins. We choose the topics and guests, usually those you see less often on TV, rather than the same old faces. I'm responsible for the show, along with my colleague Paolo Pagliaro, who does the opening *Il Punto* segment. We build the show together, item by item.

▼ How would you say the show is different compared to the version conceived eight years ago by Giuliano Ferrara?

▲ We're a very different beast. Giuliano's a real "political animal". I'm a journalist driven by curiosity. The only thing we have in common is that we are both very professional people. I like to investigate, listen and compare different opinions. These are the foundations I build on every day when I'm putting together the show. The choice we made before starting – that we didn't want to be the stars in a star vehicle, we wanted to be witnesses; we didn't want to have preconceived ideas or ideological blinkers – are yielding the results we hoped for. When I began working on the show at the end of the summer, I told people exactly what things I definitely did not want: egocentric journalism and infotainment, that intolerable admixture of news and entertainment that's colonizing Italian TV, and is in almost every

journalist-based show nowadays. I decided not to choose guests just because they're famous. I wanted to tackle Italian news by placing it in a European and international context. I also decided, at long last, to give space to many very talented women, given that Italy still suffers from a chronic deficit in representation by and of the other half of the equation.

▼ The presence of women in the *Otto e mezzo* studio is very obvious. Why the preferential treatment?

▲ Every day we strive to show the women you would never otherwise see on TV – women who are active in Italian politics and civil life. To succeed takes a vast amount of commitment and determination. But by doing this, we give our viewers extra information, something different, something above and beyond the competition. ■

Lilli and the witches

"The last 'witch' in Europe was, officially, Anna Göldi of Switzerland, who was decapitated in 1782. Some commentators believe it was Barbara Zdunk, who burnt at the stake in 1811. Barbara, a Polish woman, was 42."

This is the beginning of "Streghe", the most recent book authored by Lilli Gruber, a woman who was a European MP from 2004 to 2008 and yet always remained "a journalist at heart". Gruber wrote the book to speak to and with women. She also wrote it for men who want to discover the rich world of women, and uncover the potential of the male world too.

What did Gruber want to achieve with the book? She wanted to explore the long – and still ongoing – struggle for rights. The other half of the equation is still poorly represented in the places that matter: in parliament chambers, boardrooms and universities.

Her book is chock full of recollections, ideas and sensations from a rich and varied tapestry of women. The many women who responded to the journalist's call include Gianna Nannini, Natalia Aspesi, Emma Bonino, Rossana Rossanda, Chiara Saraceno, Luciana Littizzetto, Anna Maria Bernardini De Pace, Lucetta Scaraffia, and Rita Levi Montalcini, along with a great many "anonymous" mothers, wives, students, employees and housewives. Gruber didn't just stop there. She also interviewed Massimo D'Alema, Camillo Ruini, Giuliano Ferrara, Adriano Sofri and Umberto Veronesi, and Italy's Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. She finishes the book with a modern yet particularly old-fashioned fable: the beautiful Elisabetta Gregoraci who became Mrs. Briatore, a Cinderella for 2008. ■

A Career Built on Instinct and Passion

Maria Clara Jacobelli, who died last year, was one of the first women managers at SIP and the person behind many famous advertising campaigns. Director Ferzan Ozpetek dedicated his latest movie – *Un giorno perfetto* – to her.

"To Maria Clara Jacobelli" – The dedication in the opening frames of Ferzan Ozpetek's movie *Un giorno perfetto* is a perfect opportunity to mark the life of a woman who had an amazing personality and wrought a paradigm change within the company.

Maria Clara, the person

Maria Clara rose through the ranks at SIP advertising, from her first position as a secretary all the way up to managerial level, spurred on by her abilities, hard work and above all, her proverbial intuition. "All without compromises," as she liked to say. The years she spent working her way up the organization were useful, she always said, because it's good to "be able to do a little of everything".

With an independent spirit, an even temper and always ready to help out, her talents were acknowledged not just by all the people who worked with her, but also by those she met after she retired, when in 1998 she founded the *Consorzio in Lucina*, where her daughter Claudia Tarizzo now works.

"My mother," says Claudia, thinking back, "was a hyperactive woman who was always on the go from the wee hours onwards. She was in the office by 8 a.m. because, as she always said, she got more done by 9 a.m. than during the rest of the day!"

As well as being a hard worker, she was also an excellent trainer of the people who worked for her. She undoubtedly pushed people hard to get the best out of them, but she also knew how to develop their potential. Claudia remembers her infallible instincts, "her ability to get the best out of the people she worked with by encouraging them to believe in themselves. Some small but concrete gesture on her part would allow them to come up with the ideal solution by themselves."

Her professional triumphs

Her professional instincts were behind some major triumphs for the company. In the 80s and 90s, with the Armando Testa Agency, the company ran advertising campaigns that have gone down in the history

of Italian advertising. The 1984 corporate campaign "the future is online" featured the SIP red wave logo, launched a year previously, as the company's first coordinated identity. In 1986, she came up with the "Traffic" campaign, known for the "ear-worm" *You love me, but how much do you love me?*, which was reprised in a series of adverts from 1993 as the "Bellini Family"; "ET phone home", which launched the *inSip* franchised chain of stores; and the hugely famous "fort" in *Live longer with a phone call*, starring Massimo Lopez. Casting Lopez as the "condemned man" was another of her strokes of brilliance.

Mrs. Jacobelli loved the casting stage, preferring what she referred to as "clean little faces" without overly strong defining characteristics. "As for the girl in *Mi ami, ma quanto mi ami?*, that was a parody of me," says Claudia with a smile, "because at the time I was always on the phone!"

The way they remember her

Unrelenting and strict, with an eagle eye for detail, Mrs. Jacobelli was always scrupulous in her integrity when dealing with people at work. Dario Chirichigno, now Head of Advertising at Telecom Italia, recalls: "I was a young account at an advertising agency, at a time when my father was Telecom Italia CEO. And yet when I tried to get in touch with her, she never ever returned my calls. Her attitude both surprised me, and left me extremely curious. I persevered, and when I finally managed to get in touch with her, we became great friends, as well as holding one another in high professional regard. She taught me the first key rule of advertising: advertising shouldn't be something that affects people like or something that affects them; it's people, the viewer-ship, who must like it and be touched by it." Maria Daniela Rossi, who currently works at the Domestic Fixed Services Cost Programs Unit, remembers Mrs. Jacobelli's professional code of ethics and perfectionism: "I worked with her for around 25 years, from 1973 to 1997. I remember her as a particularly kindhearted woman, though she was hard as nails with people who were underhand. In my job, which ran from maintaining relationships with advertising concessionaries and acquiring advertising space to publishing all of the company's operating and financial disclosures, she had to sign off on everything. We had a really great working relationship; it was almost as if she was a member of the family to me."

In 1994, Maria Clara Jacobelli won the Marisa Bellisario Foundation Award, for "pursuing a highly successful career at SIP

with intelligence and great managerial skill. One of the first women to become a manager at the company, her advertising campaigns won prizes around the globe." She later became Chairman of the Marisa Bellisario Foundation. She may have been a high-profile manager, a woman with a tremendous eye for detail and sensitivity, yet she always considered herself "a completely normal person". ■

"I've lost a rock in my life"

Ferzan Ozpetek, the highly perceptive Italo-Turkish director of hit movies such as *Un giorno perfetto*, which premiered at the Venice Film Festival and was dedicated to Maria Clara Jacobelli, is the man who uttered these words.

His voice swells with emotion as he thinks back affectionately. "I was really close to Maria Clara. She was one of the most important people in my life in helping me make key choices, professionally and personally. It was thanks to her that I was chosen to direct major adverts such as the BancoPosta campaign. It was she who helped me break through in the film world. She treated me like a special person, and we were always speaking on the phone.

We had a kind of ritual: I would send her the scripts and screenplays I was working on, and then we'd talk about them over lunch. She was one of the first people who read *Saturno contro*. She was always highly objective. She had an incredible instinct, and every piece of advice and encouragement she gave was valuable.

"She was a real genius! She told me I had nothing to worry about with *La finestra di fronte*, even after a really well-known director told me it would be a flop. With *Cuore sacro*, she said that people wouldn't understand the film immediately, but as time passed they'd reassess it, and that's exactly what's happened.

"I think of Maria Clara practically every day. With her passing, I have lost a rock in my life; her passing has shown me the real feeling that death leaves in its wake." ■

Smiling as Power

We continue our tour of the *noi.perloro* voluntary community with our colleague Diego Barboni, who in his spare time becomes a Clown Doctor for the *!Ridere per vivere!* Association.

To get better, you have to learn to laugh. That may seem to be a strange thing to say, but communication, positive thinking, smiles, trust and empathy are taken increasingly seriously in healthcare. For a few years now, some rather strange doctors have been doing the rounds in hospitals, especially on paediatric wards. Rather than a white coat, they wear multicoloured suits; they always go around in pairs; they sport weird hairstyles; and their noses are bright red: meet the Clown Doctors. Since 2004, our colleague Diego Barboni, who works at Wireless Network Quality in Ancona, is one of these doctors: Doctor Trifle, to be precise.

▼ Diego, what do Clown Doctors do, and why did you decide to become Doctor Trifle?

▲ Clown Doctors are professional social healthcare workers who use the arts of clowning (comedy, humour, conjuring tricks, theatrical improvisation, music and puppets) to cheer up people in healthcare facilities and combat the negative emotions of fear, anger, disappointment and sadness. We allow people to express these emotions and turn them in a positive direction, into smiles, hope and bravery. We make a "visit tour" of every single room; we turn up during medical treatments or invasive examinations. Doctor Trifle is the culmination of a long journey that began for me in 1999, when I decided to enrol in a theatre workshop to get over my shyness. I absolutely loved it, but I soon realized that I'm not particularly interested in the stage or applause. When I saw Robin Williams' movie *Patch Adams*, I realized I could use my talent for making people laugh to help others. I joined the *!Ridere per Vivere!* Association because they have a really good, in-depth training course. The name "Trifle" – actually, in Italian, it's "Giuggiola" – came spontaneously; my friends used to call me "Giuggiolò" (Italian for a boy who doesn't want to grow up).

▼ How do you manage to "give the gift of a smile" to people who are in pain?

▲ One thing with a clown in a hospital, he's guaranteed not to get anything "right". And that really works, it subverts the context. You have to do a lot of work before you go in, and you must always stay on top of things: we have to be the first to wear a smile if we're going to pass it on to somebody else.

A Certificate-proofed Environment

The History of Laughter

Hippocrates and Galen said that laughter was therapeutic, but it is only in modern times that people have begun talking about gelotology (from the Greek *ghelos*: laughter) and the use of laughter as a method of prevention or as an adjuvant to treatment. It has been proven that laughter stimulates endorphins and enkephalins. Laughter is a muscular and breathing exercise that frees up and purifies the organism by expelling carbon dioxide, increasing blood oxygenation, and acting as a muscle relaxant. Endorphins reduce feelings of pain and tension, while enkephalins reinforce the immune system. ■

If not, the “magic” doesn’t work. Communication and contact with people who are suffering takes place predominantly through empathy. That’s why patients know immediately if your cheerfulness is a put-on. That’s the reason why, if you feel worn out, you should get somebody else to go instead of you. Supervision by an external psychologist, and the friendship and teamwork we experience, all help to maintain and regenerate this energy.

▼How do you involve parents in these activities?

▲It’s vital to involve parents in what we do. Parental anxieties, worries, feelings of desperation at not being able to protect their child, they all inevitably affect the child, even the really little ones; they pick up on their parents’ state of mind, and sometimes even blame themselves for it. It’s a vital part of the therapy to help parents get their anxiety levels down, either by involving them and getting them to sing, play music, dance or act funny, or by giving them a chance to get out of the room for a while and de-stress while we’re in there. Calming down parents helps to calm down children.

▼Do Clown Doctors ever get home after making a gift of smiles and break down and cry?

▲There are moments when you might feel a bit down, but it’s all about a positive take on life. Laughter therapy has to come from the inside, it has to course through your veins before you can pass it on. If you aren’t capable of working through your negative emotions when you get home, then you won’t be smiling and you won’t have anything left to give. The smile must prevail; it’s the kids who teach us this. When you’re in a hospital and you come across a kid who’s at the very edge of survival, and that kid gives you a smile, it’s your duty to smile back and smile again. Laughter therapy and Clown Doctoring is without doubt a very demanding and serious type of voluntary work, emotionally and in terms of demands on your time. That said, you get back what you put in a hundredfold. ■

A project running at two call centres in Rome and Naples minimizes pollution and protects natural resources during operations.

“People might object that it’s just a certificate, but for the first time ever, an Italian telecommunications company has launched a pilot project and obtained certification for an integrated call centre safety and environment management system,” says Marco Marrali, who works in Quality Management at Operational Planning.

Launched initially on a trial basis in 2007/2008, as part of this project Telecom Italia voluntarily signed up to the UNI EN ISO 14001/2004 regulation and the BSI OHSAS 18001/2007 standard. The project led to the development and certification of a safety and environment management approach that in February 2008 received CSQ certification.

The project was initially rolled out to a pair of call centres dedicated to the “187” and “191” services: Via di Oriolo Romano Buildings A and C in Rome, and Towers A4 and B1 at the Centro Direzionale in Naples. The Integrated Management System has been conceived to protect worker health and safety and protect the environment too.

Carla Iaia and Eliana Tius, who work in Prevention, Protection and Environment Services, confirm: “The path to certification was the result of a partnership with and input from headquarters and outlying Customer Operations, Human Resources, Technology & Operations, Real Estate Acquisitions and Facility Management. It was an opportunity to bring together under a single system all of the procedures, operating instructions, and inspection and control processes and systems that Telecom Italia has been using for a while. It also enabled us to plan new targets for improvements to comply with the principles underlying the company’s new integrated health, safety and environment policy.” ■

Benefits for Customer Care

What real benefits will this integrated certification bring to the people who work in Customer Care centres?

At the two premises where the trial has been running, internal processes have been improved to make monitoring of activities and actions preventing risk to safety and the environment even more systematic than before. Environmental impact has been reduced through a management approach that minimizes pollution and conserves natural resources. There is now guaranteed monitoring of all main worker safety

processes. Local organization structures in Rome and Naples have adopted an integrated policy to constantly assess health and safety risks, while minimizing personal risks by ensuring adoption of the best technologies and IT technologies.

A culture of safety, health and protection of the environment has been disseminated through information drives and training for all staff. Refresher courses have been scheduled in order to measure levels of achievement.

Franco Mezzotero, who works at Prevention and Safety, notes: “One of the key aspects of the project is dialogue among the various parties with a view to ongoing improvement, and a constant flow of information to colleagues, the unions and authorities regarding health, safety and environmental activities, services and objectives. We’re also setting targets for improvements, and for regular checks on application throughout our call centres.”

The company has made a commitment to investing in training, refresher courses and personal improvement. Initiatives are being fostered to develop quality in the workplace in order to promote greater personal well-being. Work is underway to improve waste management by focusing on reuse, recovery and recycling of materials, while the use of energy sources, natural resources and materials is being optimized to reduce consumption. ■

Publish a story in *noi*.magazine

In this issue we publish short stories by Alfonso De Vizio and Anna Maria Fumarola, two of the four winners in the 2008 *Publish a short story in noi*.magazine competition. We include comments from the jury (Rosaria Carpinelli, Alain Elkann, Andrea Kerbaker, Mario Quinto Massazza, and Gian Piero Quaglino).

We’ll Dance Again

We’ll dance again. That’s what my dad always used to say when the sea became rough; it’s just the kind of thing he liked to say. When I was a kid, I didn’t understand what he meant, I didn’t realize that he was talking about responding quickly to problems. We’d dance at the slightest opportunity. Even for some minor illness, affecting myself or one of my siblings. Perhaps it’s because I always associated “dance time” with something unpleasant, something enforced, that I never learned to dance.

As kids, we danced when my grandma was ill with dementia, forcing us into nighttime dashes to get her back, grab her as she wandered the streets in our area, on the track of some idea that had got away. Sometimes, when we met up with our relatives in the country, we didn’t dance the way my dad understood it; but we did, sometimes, dance the way most people dance, especially if we ate and drank well. We weren’t allowed to turn down any food, and the number of dishes exceeded our childish fantasies.

After gorging ourselves, we’d grumble; once, my sister went white, started sweating and began babbling in monosyllables. We all fell about laughing, though I was afraid, and worried too, until she recovered from the aftermath of that stuffing.

All grown up, we dance with our customers, with the building manager, for the city traffic, with the plumber, with the tax collectors and with our kids. For example, at exactly the same time, one kid has to be picked up from football training, and the other has to go to a piano lesson.

I never did learn to dance. I think that at my age, I’ve given up the idea.

When my mother and father – now elderly, the both of them – have to visit the doctor for my mother’s condition, he still says that they’re off to dance. We follow the problems of our teenage kids, timorously we ponder their future. We still haven’t worked out if it’s fear that makes us think things are getting worse, or whether we’re worse at working out what’s happening. It turns out that we’re still dancing. ■

Alfonso De Vizio, Rome
Technology and Operations

In the Company of Nagging Thoughts

You’re held in check. Penned in, piled up. You should pull yourself together. But how? It’s 4.30 p.m.. You’re champing at the bit. You start scratching at the door like a crazed puppy, pining for the park. No, please, not now! I’m in front of the monitor, finishing up an accounts report, there’s still half an hour to go ‘til the end of the working day. But you’re insistent. Urging. Oppressive. Impatient. I can’t hold you back anymore... And they’re off, as if a gate has suddenly swung open, a flock of disparate thoughts fizzing out of my head. With leniency, I try to haul you back. There you are, Madam Meeting at the Nursery School this coming Tuesday. You, Polite Postal Payment Slip for the nursery, walking arm-in-arm with Obligation to Make an appointment with the help desk (Remember to pick up the form first). And then the Melancholy Weekly Shopping. The Cheery Better-Made Gift for the mother-in-law & the Little Something for my neighbour who found my car keys (as far as my other half is concerned, You, Little Something, are a mere figment of my imagination). Not to mention the Chatty Call to the Beautician, before I turn into some old ivy-edged building. The High Society Condominium Meeting. The Anxious Pick-Up of dad’s medical tests. And bringing up the rear, that Knotty Question: Housework Again Tonight, or an Intangible Journey to the Land of Reading? Overflying them all, Mute yet Imperious, That Meeting tomorrow morning at work.

Slowly, tenderly, I take you by the hand like a bevy of over-excited little school children and I lead you all home. Head bowed, shoulders sinking, you file back through the gate and in, jostling to find your place. I scold you for running off like that, though I know you have your reasons. My head is not the most comfortable place in the world to be in. Who knows if I can find some witty Feng Shui manual to arrange you thoughts more felicitously? After all, if you’re happy, I’m happier. And with this thought, make some room to welcome another Friend into your midst. ■

Anna Maria Fumarola, Torino
Administration, Finance and Control

