

The Municipality of San Benedetto del Tronto is equipped with Pure Storage FlashArray™ on which virtual servers run mission-critical functions related to email, document management, application servers, part of the registry, taxes, and financial flows — in short, everything that would be done in a company by enterprise resource planning (ERP) software. Pure immediately distinguished itself for its technological architecture, performance, and last but not least, convenience.



BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

Pure Storage plays an important role in digital transformation, with the goal of becoming a paperless entity. The strengthening of the IT infrastructure enabled by Pure supports the municipality, which is now a leader of a regional project to integrate skills and services for the citizens and help the municipalities that have been hit by earthquakes in Central Italy.

GEO

Italy

INDUSTRY

Public Sector

“We want to become a point of reference for the institutions of the province, and we think that the revival of the territory can also be supported by digital tools. In this context, Pure Storage can really help and satisfy our requests.”

Mauro Cecchi, *Director of Organizational Development and Information Systems*

PERFORMANCE FOR TERRITORIAL RENEWAL PROJECTS

The Municipality of San Benedetto del Tronto, located along the Adriatic coast in the Marche Region, is centrally located in the Italian peninsula and has about 50,000 inhabitants. The institution has always distinguished itself in the management of ICT since the beginning of the 2000s, when it experimented with electronic voting and was among the first to issue an electronic identity card for citizens.

The Municipality of San Benedetto del Tronto has also participated in important projects at the national level for the provision of services in digital format, such as “People” (Project Enti Online Local Portals E-government), a federated aggregation model of Italian local authorities that involved thirteen regions and over seven million citizens. The goal in that case was to offer a portal to access services, alongside the City Council’s “virtual municipality” for local taxation, the granting of concessions, welfare services, schools and education, the municipal registry office, and territorial services information. It was also involved in a territorial storytelling project of the Marche Region, which used digital channels to describe one of the most fascinating areas in Italy.

The Municipality meets the needs of internal and external customers. The internal customers are about 350 municipal employees. The external users are citizens and tourists who use the online services. These include the One-Stop Shop for Productive Activities (SUAP), and services for taxpayers such as online taxes, certifications, and digital stamps. The Municipality manages two data centers, one of which is dedicated to disaster recovery, and works actively to improve the services of the IT area.

“We have several challenges before us,” explained Mauro Cecchi, Director of Organizational Development and Information Systems. “For example, we want to increase the number of online services, reengineer certain processes, and make the relationship between the authority and the citizen easier and more immediate.”

One of the priorities is the redefinition of back office processes to respond more quickly to the requests and reports of the municipality inhabitants. The Municipality is also in the process of improving payment services for taxes and duties in order to make the entire workflow more streamlined and efficient. It has already started authentication with the Digital Identity Public System (SPID) which addresses cyber security, a central issue in every computerized administration.

The Municipality is highly digitized and focused on new regulations for data protection and security, in accordance with the GDPR. “We have also been among the first organizations of our province to provide a data center for disaster recovery to ensure business continuity and to offer citizen services that are always available,” said Mauro Cecchi.

COMPANY:

The Municipality of San Benedetto del Tronto
www.comunesbt.it

USE CASE:

- VDI

CHALLENGES:

- Become a paperless municipality, replacing physical support with digital services.
- Strengthen the IT system to manage regional projects to integrate services for citizens.
- Reduce time and the costs of access to data and encourage desktop virtualization.

IT TRANSFORMATION:

- Data compression is up to a factor of 3.8: 1.
- Reduction of storage management costs estimated at 20%.
- Alignment with the guidelines of the Municipality for IT transformation towards the virtualization of desktops and thin clients.
- Continuity with the server consolidation strategy to optimize IT resources.

“We have been using Pure Storage for less than a year, and the benefits are already evident. Among these, the main ones are effectiveness, efficiency and speed, not only to improve performance and services but also to reduce costs.”

Mauro Cecchi, *Director of Organizational Development and Information Systems*

The goal of the Municipality is to become paperless — virtually eliminating the use of paper and using only digital. San Benedetto del Tronto is participating in two projects financed with public funds for the integration of the Municipality information systems with regional IT systems. A delegation of 64 municipalities was set up with the goal of providing a single portal dedicated to territorial and cadastral services, Open Data, digital preservation in accordance with regulations, online payments, and electronic invoicing. San Benedetto is the leader of the project, which is expected to end in 2020 and which required a strengthening of the information systems.

“The investment is equal to about € 4 per inhabitant,” explained Cecchi, “and we expect that the costs will be absorbed by the economy of scale, so the project can self-finance when it is fully operational.”

ADAPTING THE IT INFRASTRUCTURE TO MAKE IT FUTURE-READY

The challenge for the Municipality is to adapt the IT infrastructure to make it future-ready in anticipation of the next objectives, including the transition to the cloud to increase flexibility and efficiency.

There are also profound social implications, because the municipalities involved in the regional project are the same — Amandola, Force, Arquata and others — that have been hit by earthquakes in Central Italy. They can now draw on information technology for the resources to start again. “We want to become a point of reference for the institutions of the province, and we think that the revival of the territory can also be supported by digital tools. In this context, Pure Storage can really help and satisfy our requests.”

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Workloads are distributed on different machines, which manage eight terabytes of data. Data compression varies from a factor of 1.4:1 to 3.8:1. The agency also uses other storage solutions that are more complex to manage and more expensive. Pure Storage immediately distinguished itself for its technological architecture, performance, and last but not least, convenience.

“Pure Storage helps us improve system performance,” said Cecchi. “Moreover, abstracting from the same concept of disk, we can affirm that it is a disruptive brand, which favors innovation. All-flash technology represents a real revolution in IT, because it guarantees excellence at the right price.”

Before choosing this brand, the Municipality also evaluated other solutions, but the performance in terms of data compression and speed of access and processing were the decisive factor that guided the purchase decision. The Municipality became aware of the Pure Storage brand thanks to an agency service provider. Another element that influenced the choice was the ease of implementation. This, in particular, is a feature much appreciated by the customers of Pure Storage, which underline the very rapid deployment times to get immediate results.

“We have been using Pure Storage for less than a year, and the benefits are already evident,” emphasized Cecchi. “Among these, the main ones are effectiveness, efficiency and speed, not only to improve performance and services but also to reduce costs.”

SIMPLICITY AND SAVINGS

The solution has brought advantages in terms of increased performance, even in access to the database. This is particularly important for the image of the Municipality as an institutional website. Performance and speed are essential, because they communicate the idea that the City is well represented in the lives of citizens and puts itself at their disposal. “Our customers are citizens, in addition to tourists interested in visiting the territory, so our mission is to offer them the best service, with an online presence designed to meet every need,” explained Cecchi. “We want a solution that is ready for the web, easy and simple in the deployment phase. We are also increasingly moving towards the cloud to introduce flexibility in IT and at the same time maximize the value of investments.”

Speaking of investments, the total cost of ownership (TCO) is another strong point highlighted by those who know Pure Storage, although for the Municipality of San Benedetto it is difficult to quantify this exactly, because the solution has been implemented recently. “However, I would like to underline that Pure enables a much simpler management of the infrastructure, thereby freeing up time and resources that can be destined for value-added activities. These are difficult benefits to quantify in purely economic terms, however they have a significant impact on the budget of the Municipality.”

Another important aspect concerns not only time and work savings but also physical space for hardware and electricity costs. “We can estimate a savings of around 20% of management costs,” said Cecchi. “This also implies advantages in terms of ecological footprint, reduction of consumption, and budget.” Moreover, for some time now the Municipality has started a process of consolidating the servers, which has led to a considerable reduction in the number of physical machines in the data center. Now, all the servers that previously occupied five racks are concentrated in just two racks, and the City Council guidelines for the future will further optimize the infrastructure to achieve the goal of improving services and reducing costs.

A NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH CITIZENS

In addition to transitioning to the cloud, the next municipal developments will be to increase bandwidth to the blade, and will also include energy savings and environmental protection, synonymous with the reduction of consumption.

“The transition to the cloud is imposed on us by the Digital Agency for Italy,” explained Cecchi. “But the transition is not so simple because applications are not always cloud-ready, and the definitions of service level agreements (SLAs) are complex, as well as everything related to privacy and data protection in accordance with European legislation.”

An important project concerns the virtualization of desktops, independent of the three-year plan supported by the public sector. Even in this case it will be important to be able to count on a reliable and secure storage solution for the deployment of services to users. Storage will play a fundamental role especially for the purpose of the Municipality of San Benedetto del Tronto to become truly paperless and enable a different type of relationship with customers. “We want to replace workstations with diskless thin clients and low power consumption, so you can work in always-on mode. The technological part helps to build a better and more dynamic relationship with citizens. This is the profound meaning of our work, to positively affect the whole territory.”

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