

Case Study

Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore

»One of the most significant aspects of the partnership with Fujitsu is the planning ability, combined with organizational capability. Together with this multinational, we are creating processes that will form a significant portion of our IT assets, creating added value for the University«

Lorenzo Cecchi, CIO, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore



The customer

Five campuses, 12 faculties, over 40,000 students and 4,000 teaching staff. This summarizes the numbers involved at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, the largest non-state university in Europe. Established in 1921 by Father Agostino Gemelli, each year, the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore is the choice of approximately 10,000 students, who can rely on an interdisciplinary approach, backed up by numerous research activities (51 institutes and 72 research centers, in addition to Gemelli Polytechnic in Rome). Each day, a population equivalent to that of a small city, moves, studies and works in a total of over 600,000 square meters making up the various campuses, the function of which is guaranteed by technological infrastructures as complex as they are efficient.

The challenge

After years of full outsourcing, which Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore relied on in order to be able to keep up to date at a time of great technological development, the IT infrastructure and, more generally, the administration and development processes for the many services provided would require greater responsiveness in the management of change, in order to be able to deal with the new competitive challenges of the education market.

Hence, the University IT management decided to bring the know-how and the ability to generate value within the organization, delegating all user and IT application infrastructure operational management to a stable, but at the same time, flexible partner.

Lorenzo Cecchi, CIO of Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore says: *“The Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore system is a very complex and heterogeneous machine that must run like a Swiss clock. There are portals used by tens of thousands of students and services provided for the teaching staff (who are in every effect, the stakeholders of the University) and then it is essential to guarantee that over a thousand technical-administrative workers can work effectively. All within a somewhat difficult geographical context: five campuses (Milan, Rome, Brescia, Piacenza and Cremona) housing a total of 12 faculties, plus the colleges with lodgings for over 1,500 students.”*

Therefore, the delicate task of Dr. Cecchi is to construct a bridge between the users and IT, increasing the satisfaction of the “clients” (students, teaching staff and personnel) and restoring planning capacity to the main campus, obviously without any additional costs.

The customer

Country: Italy
 Industry: Education
 Founded: 1921
 Administrative personnel: 1,000
 Teaching staff: 1,500
 Students: 41,000
 Website: www.unicatt.it



The challenge

In recent years, the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore has initiated a process for the innovation of internal services and processes, with the aim of increasing the University's flexibility and competitiveness in an increasingly competitive market. The modernization of the IT infrastructure, its governance process and a guaranteed level of service, are the solid basis for future IT development, for successful strategic change and for differentiation of the services offered with respect to the competition.

The solution

After reporting the functional know-how of the services and applications internally, the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore has decided to appoint a single point of contact, Fujitsu, for the outsourcing of workstation management, the infrastructure and applications with an innovative contract, capable of leaving the client with the flexibility to schedule in technological developments, giving the outsourcer operational management of the service.

The benefits

- Reorganization and optimization of the infrastructure
- Methods and international best practices supporting the rationalization of IT processes and governance
- Integration between infrastructure management, application maintenance and project development
- Recovery of application development planning capacity
- Competitive costs in compliance with strict SLAs

Products and services

- Migration to the FUJITSU Server PRIMEQUEST 1800E with virtualization
- Endpoint management
- Infrastructure management
- Maintenance and development of custom applications

The solution

"The basic idea," says Lorenzo Cecchi, "has been to change the paradigm: from full to selective outsourcing, a formula that should allow us, to a limited extent, to restore control and the know-how of the component with increased added value, and at the same time to respond more rapidly and effectively to new market challenges."

Thus the decidedly strict SLAs are maintained and the various options are analyzed in a competitive environment. On completion of the comparison process, the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore decided to appoint Fujitsu who, in collaboration with their partner Beta 80, presented the plan closest to the needs of the University and with the least impact in terms of costs.

Dr. Cecchi explains: *"The scope of the new partnership with Fujitsu is to outsource infrastructure, endpoint and software administration, while keeping application development and IT development planning in-house, in line with senior management strategic demands."*

To achieve this, Fujitsu first of all stabilized the infrastructure and made it secure thus stabilizing services, implementing the migration from legacy platforms to Intel machines, in particular PRIMEQUEST 1800 servers, and coordinating the presence of new technologies and third party technology partners, such as NetApp and Oracle.

They then continued with the virtualization process, constructing a solid base for the transformation phase envisaged for the coming three years (the outsourcing contract has a duration of four years) together with Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore.

The benefit

By maintaining the focus firmly on users, the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore IT management has been able to change outsourcing methods without any penalties in terms of operating continuity, and even maintaining efficiency by means of strict SLAs at restricted costs.

"We set the availability at 99.6%," explains Cecchi, "and restoration time at less than two hours. The SLAs are cumulative and certainly very strict, also considering the complexity of our infrastructure and the diversity of machine platforms and applications used. Now that continuous monitoring has been implemented on approximately 5,000 endpoints and on over a thousand virtual servers, IT can look ahead to the next stages, one of which concerns security, and in particular the implementation of a disaster recovery solution, scheduled for 2014."

However, improved management of IT resources has not been Cecchi's only objective, who, with an eye on the long-term future, also has the aim of giving the University the capacity for vision and planning, essential to offer its users increasingly more efficient services, and to be able to attract students and teaching staff in search of an environment where they can pursue their dreams and ambitions.

"This is why," explains Dr. Cecchi, "we have initiated an innovation plan with over 15 strategic projects in three years, whereby it is essential to combine the design of application solutions with the implementation of new technological infrastructures. The integrated administration of the various IT fields (server, endpoint, applications and data networks) allows Fujitsu to play a central role in project planning and implementation, guaranteeing response times in line with market demands. The new infrastructure organization, optimized and proportioned according to the number of students and teaching staff, and no longer based on the number of devices, is managed by Fujitsu in complete autonomy, even in consideration of the other partnerships required for proper IT service function, such as those set up with VMware, Oracle or NetApp."

The role of the partner

Even though Fujitsu is the sole point of contact for Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, their partner Beta 80 has a fundamental role in application administration (or at least a large portion of them). The pairing with Fujitsu has brought out the strengths in both organizations: the flexibility and reliability of the multinational and the specialization of the system integrator, who already has experience with important projects in the education sector.

Conclusion

After one year of work (the project started on the 1st of January 2013 after just three months of transition), the majority of processes are running to standard and the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore IT has already re-established the planning capacity and the enthusiasm necessary to prepare a roadmap of new activities, in addition to guaranteeing the efficient operation of all services and portals. Having entrusted infrastructure administration to Fujitsu, the University can then indeed dedicate itself to defining innovative projects, the creation of the relevant working groups and having control and integration over these in order to manage change and continuously improve services.

Dr. Cecchi states, "A flexible and competitive university always expects the maximum from its partners, in the name of a service culture aimed at the complete satisfaction of users and clients. It should be said that Fujitsu has responded excellently to this request, even in the first year, immediately demonstrating a highly targeted approach to client needs, and providing the required service levels, delivering exceptional work both in relation to work stations and infrastructure, and in consideration of the entire application area. The attainment of this significant result, achieved together through process rationalization, relied heavily on the ability of Fujitsu to adapt methods and best practices, developed at the international level, to our situation. Now that we are up and running we can begin to work to construct something lasting and entirely beneficial to the University and its assets."

Contatto

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