



SAP and IBM deliver a high-flying solution for Alenia Aeronautica.

Italian aerospace giant Alenia Aeronautica uses mySAP.com on IBM @server zSeries to provide a comprehensive financial, sales and distribution solution, and is enjoying faster processes, improved data quality and better customer service as a result. The advent of the Euro was a watershed for European industry, and rather than simply update its existing systems, Alenia decided to seize the opportunity to deploy a new integrated IT system. The company wanted to accelerate processes, improve data quality, ensure full integration between systems, and replace legacy applications. The choice of the mySAP.com solutions to be run on IBM platforms was the logical consequence of and in continuity, with Alenia's corporate IT policy. After the decision for IBM software products, the integration of the different components proved easy and opened the IT environment to the external world, enabling smooth supply chain management processes with suppliers and B2B scenarios with other companies. Once the infrastructure had been set up, the IBM software and hardware products convinced with a superior price/performance ratio.

Alenia is now with its e-business infrastructure, best equipped for the

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Vito Cammarota, IT Architecture and Application Manager, Alenia

future, and is benefiting from faster and more accurate information across its operations. Vito Cammarota, IT Architecture and Application Manager, comments: “We chose SAP because it has the functionality to replace almost all of our legacy applications with an integrated framework. User feedback on the quality of data is very positive. Overall, we expect the SAP solution to massively accelerate our operations, and running them on IBM @server zSeries will give us a rock-solid IT infrastructure.”

Thinking ahead

Alenia is an aerospace and defense engineering company, and part of The Finmeccanica Group – the largest aerospace, defense, energy, transportation and IT company in Italy. The group has become a significant global player, with overseas sales accounting for 60 % of total turnover. With ongoing overseas acquisitions and a growing commitment to R&D, it looks set to continue growing.

Industry	Aerospace and Defense
Application	mySAP.com
Software	OS/390® WebSphere® MQ
Hardware	IBM @server® zSeries™ IBM @server® pSeries™ Enterprise Storage Server™ (ESS)



Prior to the installation of SAP, various interdependent sub systems slowed down processes, and users often had to wait for long periods of time for information to be returned from legacy systems. Batch processes were slow, and the net result was that Alenia was struggled to provide effective customer service.

Simultaneously, the advent of the Euro meant Alenia needed a currency-proof IT infrastructure. "Alenia saw this as a golden opportunity to migrate its legacy applications to SAP, to overcome the limitations and to explore new functionalities," says Vito Cammarota. Alenia gradually replaced its legacy applications with the mySAP.com solutions for Financial Accounting, Project System, Material Management, Sales and Distribution, Asset Accounting and Controlling. "The objective is to create a workflow of business events and processes across departments and functional areas. With SAP, employees receive the right information and documents at the right time," comments Vito Cammarota. "Corporate headquarters, manufacturing plants and sales offices will merge for integrated handling of business processes. Accurate information flows quickly through Alenia, which increases the company's ability to service its customers' needs."

Accurate, reliable, integrated

Says Vito Cammarota, "The fundamental benefit of using SAP is the integration of data between systems: data is now more accurate and reliable. Previously, many man-hours were spent sourcing and cleaning data. The integrated SAP solution has greatly reduced this task, so our processes are now far more efficient." The solutions for Financial Accounting, Asset Accounting and Controlling enable Alenia to monitor functions with any input to financial cycle while the Sales and Distribution, Project System and Material Management allow real-time monitoring of raw materials, finished goods, pending orders, units in production, and much more. Says Vito Cammarota. "The interface is also much better and more user-friendly than our legacy applications, and a further benefit is that the integration mechanism allows us to identify specific problems in legacy applications much more easily. As a result, we can rely on our integrated IT infrastructure to support our business activities, leaving us free to focus on our core business."

Smooth transition and seamless integration

mySAP.com gives Alenia the added benefit of migrating its legacy applications in stages to meet the specific requirements of its business. During the first phase of Alenia's SAP project, financial processes are managed entirely by the mySAP.com components, while logistics processes (including business partner inventories) are handled by legacy applications.

The SAP infrastructure is connected via a wide area network (WAN) to legacy systems and to all Alenia operational units across Italy. To handle the transportation of messages, Alenia installed components of the WebSphere MQ family (formerly known as MQSeries® and MQLink). WebSphere MQ is a family of integrated middleware that delivers the intelligence and infrastructure to drive rapid and flexible business change, transforming and integrating business applications and processes through the firewall across the extended enterprise. The software delivers secure, reliable communications between old and new systems to ensure consistent data throughout the migration phase. The solution also resolves specific requirements for data conversion and serialization of operations.

"The step-by-step policy adopted by Alenia for replacing legacy systems with the SAP environment requires data synchronization between application components," explains Vito Cammarota. "We were looking at the best way to integrate our IT infrastructure, and we chose WebSphere MQ as the framework for messaging between SAP and legacy applications. It helps us to ensure consistency of data during the migration phase, which is crucial to the smooth running of the business."

zSeries – a future-proof solution

Alenia has long relied on zSeries as its platform for mission-critical applications, and it remained the automatic choice for the company's SAP system. Both database and application servers sit on the zSeries (a S/390 model), meaning that each SAP system has its own OS/390 local partition to run, and the two-tier environment resides on one box. This delivers unbeatable reliability and stability, guaranteeing full use of the improved data delivered by the SAP system, combined with the performance and high availability of the zSeries hardware. "Reliability is the key issue for us," says Vito Cammarota. "We chose to

run SAP in a zSeries environment, because it is quite simply the most reliable platform of all. There are currently 150 logged users on the SAP system and the scalability of zSeries means the solution will grow seamlessly with Alenia's future expansion," explains Vito Cammarota. "With the SAP system running on one box, we achieve an ease of management and administration, while keeping long-term cost of ownership as low as possible." For storage and data archiving, Alenia chose to rely on the IBM Enterprise Storage Server system, with back up on VTS/3590.

The sky is the limit

Alenia's future plans include the further development of its mySAP.com solutions to fully exploit the functionalities. The company has started by implementing an SAP Business Information Warehouse (SAP BW) on IBM @server pSeries, given it powerful data warehousing capabilities for budget management. "The SAP BW will give us both a forward-looking information management system and the means to optimise our business processes," concludes Vito Cammarota. "The SAP BW is a powerful tool to turn information into knowledge and it will help us to make better business decisions. We are confident further deployment will boost Alenia's ability to service internal and external users seamlessly and efficiently."



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