

CRITICAL PATH CASE STUDY

Identity Management—A Fundamental Foundation for System Integration & Security

Throughout Europe, banks and other financial institutions are joining forces to form bigger, stronger organizations that are better able to compete in today's increasingly competitive market. The corporations resulting from these mergers are becoming dominant players in their domestic markets, while building powerful alliances for international business.

In Italy, Banca Intesa is the first such financial powerhouse to emerge. Founded in 1998, Banca Intesa was formed through the merger of Cariplo and Banco Ambrosiano Veneto. In 1999, Banca Commerciale italiana joined the group, making Banca Intesa the leading bank in Italy and one of the foremost financial institutions in Europe.

RAPID GROWTH DEMANDS A MORE INTEGRATED INFRASTRUCTURE

Due to its evolution through mergers, Banca Intesa had numerous disparate systems and scattered user profiles on its hands. Crucial information about each user was often duplicated or missing, leading to errors, delays and higher operating costs. Banca Intesa needed a common intranet infrastructure that would integrate multiple platforms and provide a centralized Web framework for authentication, authorization and user profile administration.

To build an integrated infrastructure, Banca Intesa first had to centralize the management of its authentication and security services and physically separate "security-related" user data from other "non-security" user data. Critical Path helped Banca Intesa tackle this challenge. The highly scalable Critical Path Directory Server provided a central repository for Banca Intesa's 50,000 user profiles. It allowed the company to build a central "Security Directory" for security-related user attributes as well as a central "Mail Hub Directory" for other important user data. Alongside these primary directories, the Critical Path Business Continuity Server was deployed to provide failsafe backup and recovery services and to ensure highly reliable directory services at all times.

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Challenge

The banking group needed an Intranet infrastructure that integrated multiple platforms and provided a centralized Web framework for:

- Authentication
- Authorization
- User Profile Administration

Solution

Critical Path Identity Management

- Critical Path Meta-Directory
- Critical Path Directory Server
- Critical Path Business Continuity Server

Benefits

- Reduced Time and Costs
- Increased User Productivity
- Improved Security
- Simplified System Integration



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“Critical Path provided the fundamental technology we needed. Everything from system integration to security depends on the Identity Management foundation Critical Path helped us build—it’s an invaluable part of our infrastructure.”

Stefano Cabianca
IT Security Manager
Banca Intesa

With these fundamental directory services in place, Banca Intesa now had a solid foundation for the integrated intranet infrastructure it wanted to build. The next critical step was to make user data accurate and consistent across its many diverse systems. Critical Path's Meta-Directory simplified this complex process by enabling Banca Intesa to integrate and synchronize data across Active Directory, Windows NOS, DB2, Oracle, RACF, SAM Jupiter and SAP systems.

ADVANCED SECURITY MADE POSSIBLE WITH IDENTITY MANAGEMENT

With user profiles now centralized and consistent across all systems, Banca Intesa can more easily build important security applications on top of its infrastructure. Critical Path helps IT organizations create entitlement and security policies, enforce those policies, and streamline the creation, modification and deletion of user identities through online processes. Critical Path helped Banca Intesa implement secure authentication, authorization and single sign-on applications, using identity management as the foundation.

The solution delivered by Critical Path has had a significant impact on Banca Intesa's business. Not only has the company increased security with better control over user profiles and access privileges; it has also significantly reduced its operating costs. Users throughout the organization are more productive now that they can access many applications through an integrated intranet with a single user name and password. What's more, IT time and costs have been dramatically lowered. Because user profiles are now centrally managed and automatically updated across systems, making changes and provisioning or de-provisioning users takes less time and fewer IT staff members.

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