



Banca Popolare di Milano: Big first step toward branch automation

Banca Popolare di Milano (BPM), one of Italy's oldest retail banks, is migrating routine teller tasks to self-service terminals as it moves to improve operating efficiency and attract young consumers.

BMP is ushering self-service into its branches operations. Traditional teller tasks, such as managing deposits and withdrawals as well as cashing checks, are being migrated to self-service terminals. At the same time, new services are being developed to use the terminals in innovative ways. "We were really interested in automating deposits and withdrawals," says BMP Director of Organization Claudio Mereu. "In the past, our tellers spent 50 percent of their time managing these transactions, which were often for small amounts."

The strategy called for ATM terminals that could provide entry-level ATM services, including cash-in and cash-out, but with the flexibility to offer much more such as check deposits and cash recycling. In 2008, BMP has deployed 25 ProCash 3100xe ATMs, with more planned.

Customers have responded positively to the service, especially the ability to bank 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The level of routine tasks performed by tellers has dropped 30 percent—and continues to drop as customers become more familiar with the service. Employees also encourage the use of the terminals to avoid queues. "Many of our customers were not accustomed to using self-service terminals. We wanted to eliminate any barriers and we have," Mereu explains.

A next step is to connect the ATMs to the Internet. Customers will then be able to make money transfers, pay bills and take out loans as some of them already do on their PCs online. "This is an important channel for us to inform customers and sell products," Mereu says. "We want the ATM to become an 'interactive consultant' of sorts."

BMP's vision of the branch of the future is slightly blurred by a need to provide service to two very different target groups: older customers who still prefer to use cash and counter services; and young consumers who like cards, love the Internet and will choose an ATM over a teller every time. "We're trying to find the right mix," Mereu notes. "We really need to draw this new generation of customers into our branches."

High automation of routine teller tasks – flexibility to add value-added services

The project

BPM's 700-plus branches are concentrated in Milan and the surrounding Lombardy region, one of the wealthiest in Europe. The economic success of the region has attracted not only other big Italian banks but also powerful foreign competitors. Growing competition, rising operating costs and a younger generation of customers who increasingly prefer to manage routine banking tasks on their own and who, if left alone, would likely avoid a visit to the branch altogether have prompted adjustments. BPM chose to migrate as many routine teller tasks to self-service terminals as possible and free up employees to consult customers.

The solution

- ProCash 3100xe terminals with CCDM
- Cash-in, cash-out functions
- Intelligent check deposit
- Flexible configuration options (for cash recycling)

The advantages

- High level of automated routine tasks
- Automated cash-in and cash-out, check processing
- Added time for customer consulting
- Level of routine tasks performed by tellers dropped 30 percent
- Positive response of customers for 24/7 service
- Appealing to young customers
- Flexibility to add features such as cash recycling



"We were really interested in automating deposits and withdrawals. In the past, our tellers spent 50 percent of their time managing these transactions, which were often for small amounts. We considered Wincor Nixdorf ATMs to be highly reliable and user friendly. And our main competitors were already using them. The results are amazing. Already 30 percent of the routine tasks could have been migrated to the self-service systems and our customers feedback was remarkably positive."

Claudio Mereu

Director of Organization at BPM



- Banks within the BMP Group: Banca Popolare di Milano, Banca di Legnano S.p.A., Cassa di Risparmio di Alessandria S.p.A., Banca Akros S.p.A., Bipiemme Gestioni SGR S.p.A., Bipiemme Private Banking SIM S.p.A., We@ Service S.p.A., BPM Ireland Plc.
- Total number of employees: 8,900
- Branches: 601 (Milan and northern Italy), 900 (other regions)
- Number of ATMs: 905
- www.bpm.it

Banca Popolare di Milano, established in 1865, has begun exploring the use of ATMs to promote and sell products that appeal to younger consumers, such as tickets to soccer games and other popular events. "We need to create a new 'habitat' for young people, a place where they want to be and not have to be."

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