



### Business challenge

The company's existing SAP systems struggled to cope with the huge increase in data volumes. Reporting and analysis took too long to run, which slowed C-level executives in decision-making activities.

### Transformation

IBM® Db2® with BLU Acceleration® helps Edison to reduce operational costs, cut maintenance, software and storage costs, and improve the performance of its SAP® applications.

### Business benefits:

**Ten times**  
faster data processing  
deepens insight into  
customer needs and  
expectations

**75%**  
database compression  
allows for better  
management of continuous  
data growth

**EUR 1 million**  
per year saved, releasing  
resources to fund  
customer-facing services

# Edison Improves SAP performance whilst decreasing operational costs at the same time

Founded in 1882 and headquartered in Milan, Italy, Edison is Europe's oldest energy and utilities company. Operating in more than ten countries, Edison employs over 3,000 people across its two main business units – electricity and gas – and delivers energy services to more than one million customers in Italy alone. Since 2012, Edison has been part of French firm EDF (Electricité de France).

*"Thanks to IBM Db2 we were able to speed our business and invest saved money in strategic new projects."*

Moreno Carandente  
ICT - Infrastructure Manager  
Edison

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## Brightening up customer-facing activities

Historically, the energy sector in Italy was characterized by regional monopolies, and firms provided simple services with limited variations in plans and rates.

With the liberalization of the energy market, new energy companies are emerging, and these offer a wide array of services and options based on customer usage. With many different providers and multiple energy plans and rates that customers can choose from, how can energy and utilities companies thrive?

The answer is that by introducing value-added services, utilities can create new revenue streams, often served through new digital channels. To identify these fresh opportunities, utilities are collecting and analyzing huge amounts of energy consumption and customer data – and at the same time commercial pressure is driving the companies to cut operational costs.

Moreno Carandente, ICT - Infrastructure Manager at Edison, takes up the story: “Customers seek faster, innovative ways to communicate with us across digital channels, such as web and mobile. If we can capture these interactions and match them with consumption data, we gain tremendous insight into behaviors that help us enhance the customer experience with individualized offers.



“This approach generates an exponential surge in the data that we gather and analyze.”

*“The move to IBM Db2 with BLU Acceleration was so transparent and hassle-free that our employees couldn’t believe their eyes when they saw how much quicker the solution was working.”*

Moreno Carandente, ICT - Infrastructure Manager, Edison

Edison’s existing SAP systems struggled to cope with the huge increase in data volumes. Reporting and analysis took too long to run, which slowed C-level executives in decision-making activities, which in turn prevented the company from innovating and improving the customer experience.

## Unveiling customer insights at the speed of light

Edison had earlier sought IBM’s help in 2012, helping the company to improve the performance and response times of its business-critical SAP landscape. Edison operates [SAP Business Warehouse](#), [SAP Customer Relationship Management](#), [SAP ERP](#), [SAP for Utilities](#), [SAP Process Orchestration](#), and [SAP Supplier Relationship Management](#).

Moreno Carandente recalls: “In 2012, we realized that the database that we were using in support of SAP was no longer offering the rapid, reliable and efficient performance that we needed. We have approximately 1,000 concurrent SAP users across the whole company. Users were frustrated by the inability to process queries or handle data analysis as quickly as the business required.

“As a first step, we ran tests to verify the performance and data compression rates of [IBM Db2](#).

“Our findings showed that IBM Db2 greatly outperformed the existing solution, so we opted to move our entire SAP world to IBM Db2, running on [IBM Power Systems™](#) servers and the [IBM AIX®](#) operating system.”

Next, Edison decided to improve the performance of its SAP Business Warehouse system, and the team looked at in-memory database technologies as possible solutions.

“We considered several in-memory database platforms, and the simplicity of a Db2 upgrade and the lower costs led us to choose [IBM Db2 with BLU Acceleration](#),” comments Moreno Carandente.



To complete the database migration, Edison first upgraded to SAP Business Warehouse version 7.4, and subsequently implemented IBM Db2 with BLU Acceleration.

Moreno Carandente explains: “Moving our SAP Business Warehouse to IBM Db2 with BLU Acceleration boosted our data processing and analysis speed to unprecedented levels. We also took advantage of the Active Memory Expansion technology on our IBM Power Systems servers to increase the effective

memory capacity, which allows us to analyze much larger amounts of data.

“IBM Db2 also features impressive data compression capabilities, which helped us to reduce the size of our SAP Business Warehouse by more than 50 percent, from over 15 TB to 7 TB in the first phase. In the second phase, by introducing IBM BLU Acceleration, we gained further advantages and shrunk the size of the database by a further 30 percent to less than 5 TB. As an added bonus, the solution is really easy to use, and employees across the company are growing increasingly satisfied with it.”

## **Illuminating the way to stellar customer experience**

By migrating its SAP Business Warehouse solution to IBM Db2 with BLU Acceleration, Edison has reaped impressive benefits. Thanks to the great speed enabled by the in-memory capabilities of the IBM solution, the company has accelerated processing times by a factor of ten, which translates into faster, more precise insights into crucial data.

“The move to IBM Db2 with BLU Acceleration was so transparent and hassle-free that our employees couldn’t believe their eyes when they saw how much quicker the solution was working – they thought that the database was broken, as it couldn’t possibly be that fast! We can safely say that IBM Db2 with BLU Acceleration has had an extraordinary effect on the way we work now,” remarks Moreno Carandente.

He continues: “In the past, certain reports were ready early in the afternoon, whereas now our employees find fresh reports on their desk first thing in the morning. Such speed helps us to be more proactive and efficient.”

Following the migration to IBM Db2 with BLU Acceleration, Edison has recorded an unprecedented 75 percent data compression, helping the company to better control and manage its continuing data growth, without affecting service delivery or business continuity.



Data compression has also helped the company to save a remarkable EUR 1 million per year in storage and maintenance costs, as Moreno Carandente confirms. “Because of the way in which we can store and organize data now, we no longer need to carry out lengthy and potentially disruptive maintenance operations, and we have dramatically slashed our storage costs.”

The money saved on storage operations can be effectively allocated to more valuable business-oriented activities, as Moreno Carandente concludes: “We can now focus on devising and improving new digital channels to interact with our customers, and this has brought about a real digital transformation within our company.”

## Solution components

- IBM® AIX®
- IBM Db2® with BLU Acceleration®
- IBM Power® 780 server
- SAP® Business Warehouse
- SAP Customer Relationship Management
- SAP ERP
- SAP for Utilities
- SAP Process Orchestration
- SAP Supplier Relationship Management

## Take the next step

To learn more about IBM Db2 with BLU Acceleration for SAP solutions, please contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following website: <http://www-935.ibm.com/services/sap/solutions/db2.html>

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