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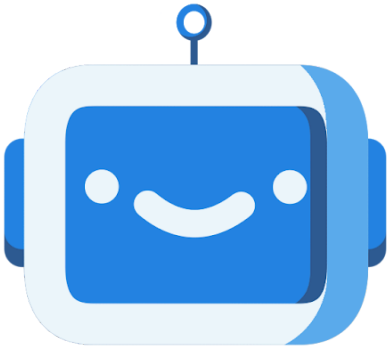

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POSTAL 3

Work Package n°2

Italian Case Library

1. Italian context

The adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is steadily increasing, yet significant disparities remain across sectors and regions. In many contexts, AI represents not only an opportunity to enhance competitiveness but also a means to address structural transformations driven by technological evolution.

In particular, SMEs are often required to adapt quickly in order to remain relevant in a rapidly changing market, where automation, cybersecurity, and operational efficiency are key factors. The following case studies illustrate how certain businesses have tackled these challenges by integrating AI solutions into their processes, each with different approaches and noteworthy results.

2. Case studies

SME #1 ITALY	**CASE TITLE:**	Adapting to Technological Change: The Transformation of Eurotel System Srl		
	SME Name:	Eurotel System Srl		
	Number of employees:	15	**Years in operation:**	20+
	Sector:	Telecommunications, Video Surveillance, and Digital Communication Systems		

1. Overview and contents

Eurotel System Srl is an Italian SME that evolved from a traditional telecom installer into a provider of AI-enhanced video surveillance and digital communication systems. Facing rapid technological changes, the company integrated artificial intelligence to modernize its business model, reduce operational inefficiencies, and offer value-added services aligned with current market demands.

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2. Background

Founded over two decades ago, Eurotel System Srl initially specialized in the installation and maintenance of traditional telephone switchboards for businesses and public entities. With digital transformation and the growing convergence between telecommunications, IT, and security, the company faced several pressing challenges:

- the obsolescence of its original business model based on analogy systems;
- a growing demand for intelligent video surveillance solutions capable of proactive threat detection;
- a need to remain competitive amidst digital acceleration and emerging AI-driven competitors;
- an internal skills gap, as staff were trained primarily on legacy technologies.

To address these issues, Eurotel initiated a deep transformation, positioning AI as a cornerstone of its innovation strategy.

3. Approach and Implementation

Eurotel System Srl introduced AI across two key operational areas:

1. Smart Video Surveillance Systems: the company adopted advanced cameras equipped with AI-based sensors capable of human/animal recognition, reducing false alarms and enhancing response times to genuine threats.
2. Intelligent Virtual Switchboards: Eurotel deployed machine learning-powered virtual assistants capable of handling calls autonomously, learning from interactions, and providing increasingly personalized responses over time.

Implementation steps:

- Internal training: a structured learning path was introduced to upskill staff in digital and AI technologies.
- Pilot testing: new systems were tested in controlled environments with selected clients to gather feedback and ensure reliability.
- Gradual migration: the company phased out legacy systems step by step to ensure continuity and minimize service disruptions.
- Infrastructure upgrade: IT systems, including the company's data center and data management infrastructure, were upgraded to support new AI-based services.
- External collaboration: Eurotel partnered with AI and cybersecurity startups and consultants for both strategic and operational support.

4. Results and Impact

The integration of AI technologies delivered measurable outcomes:

- The virtual assistant improved customer experience by delivering real-time, personalized responses—even during emergencies or power outages—enhancing Eurotel's reputation for reliability.

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- The smart surveillance system significantly reduced false alarms (by 60%) and improved incident response speed through accurate detection.
- The automation of responses led to a 40% reduction in call handling time.
- Remote monitoring capabilities contributed to a 30% drop in maintenance costs.
- Digital infrastructure upgrades improved data resilience and cybersecurity readiness.

These benefits collectively increased operational efficiency, freed up staff for higher-value tasks, and enabled the company to reposition itself competitively in a fast-evolving sector.

5. Lessons Learned

Eurotel System Srl's transformation revealed that adopting AI is not only a technological shift but also a cultural and organizational one. Addressing the internal digital skills gap required substantial investment in training and a change in mindset. Active employee engagement, hands-on experimentation, and support from external experts were critical to the successful integration of AI. The company also learned the value of a gradual, test-driven approach to minimize disruption and ensure scalable innovation. Most importantly, the case demonstrated that AI is not just about automation or cost reduction—it's a strategic enabler to reinvent service models and unlock new market opportunities.

6. Future Directions

Eurotel System Srl plans to expand its use of AI into predictive maintenance and network analytics. It is also exploring the development of AI-as-a-Service offerings to make its innovations accessible to smaller businesses via cloud-based platforms. This opens up new revenue streams and positions the company as an AI solutions provider for the broader SME ecosystem. The case highlights how even small-to-medium enterprises, when equipped with the right vision and skills, can lead innovation in highly technical sectors.

SME #2 Italy				
	CASE TITLE:	Faster diagnoses with AI: The Case of Intellimed Srls		
	SME Name:	Intellimed Srl		
	Number of employees:	3	**Years in operation:**	10
	Sector:	Electromedical		

1. Overview and contents

Intellimed Srl, active for over ten years in the maintenance and repair of electromedical devices (lasers, CT scanners, ultrasound machines, etc.), has transformed its technical approach through the use of artificial intelligence. In the past, each diagnosis was lengthy, complex, and economically unsustainable. To remain competitive and respond to increasingly urgent demands, the company adopted a solution that uses sensors and automated analysis to assess the reparability of devices within minutes, estimating intervention times and costs. This has improved

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operational efficiency, increased customer satisfaction, and expanded business opportunities—demonstrating how even a micro-enterprise can successfully innovate by addressing concrete needs.

2. Background

Intellimed Srl is an Italian micro-enterprise that has been specializing for over ten years in the inspection and repair of electromedical equipment used for diagnostics, therapy, aesthetics, and physiotherapy. As the only certified laboratory in the area, Intellimed receives a growing number of requests from clients seeking assessments of various types of equipment to determine whether repair is feasible and economically viable compared to purchasing new devices. Given the unique features of each piece of equipment, along with the regulations and procedures involved, every diagnosis previously required time, specific expertise, and often a level of effort that was hard to monetize—or not remunerated at all. This working model made it difficult to provide timely feedback to clients, who increasingly expect fast solutions to avoid interruptions in service and are often tempted by alternative options such as equipment rental. In a market where "everything, immediately" had become the norm, clients demanded instant answers regarding diagnostics and repair times. Additionally, the shortage of specialized technicians and the growing technical complexity of equipment made it difficult to identify recurring faults or accurately assess the condition of devices. To tackle these challenges and stay competitive in a rapidly evolving market, Intellimed decided to integrate artificial intelligence into its processes. The goal was to make the initial diagnostic phase faster, more reliable, and sustainable, while also improving operational efficiency and customer service. Recognizing the need to reduce costs and achieve more accurate diagnostic results, the company's owner chose to adopt AI-based software tools. These tools, supported by sensors capable of measuring parameters such as noise levels or the yellowing of device casings, help assess the "aging level" of the equipment. With this data, the company can quickly determine whether a repair is feasible—based on parts availability—and whether it is economically worthwhile, comparing the value of the equipment to the cost of the repair. The introduction of this technology led to a 17- to 20-fold increase in the number of clients served, with response times slashed to less than 1/20 of previous levels. As a result, initial diagnostics are now offered for free, significantly enhancing service quality and customer satisfaction.

3. Approach and Implementation

To transform its operational model and improve the effectiveness of technical diagnostics, Intellimed adopted an integrated approach combining advanced sensors, artificial intelligence, and historical archives—structuring an innovative, objective, and scalable diagnostic system. The equipment was enhanced with the addition of sensors capable of collecting valuable data from the devices, such as information on their physical condition and the environment in which they operate:

- Microphone + Accelerometer: Used to detect abnormal noises and vibrations—early indicators of mechanical wear or misalignment of moving parts (e.g., fans, motors).

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- Infrared Thermal Camera: Employed for thermal mapping of devices, useful for identifying hotspots and estimating structural aging, such as yellowing or casing deformations.
- Leakage Current Meter: Used to verify the quality of electrical supply and detect potential circuit anomalies (such as thermal derating or power supply aging).

All the data collected by these three groups of sensors are processed by an internally developed and continuously updated AI model. The system generates three key outputs:

- An equipment aging index, useful for estimating the residual life cycle.
- A failure prediction, based on the detection of abnormal signals.
- A cost-benefit assessment of repair, which helps determine whether to proceed with repair or replacement, taking into account parts availability, costs and lead times, residual equipment value, and the cost of a compatible new solution.

To ensure the system's reliability and continuous evolution, Intellimed established a strategic partnership with a U.S.-based company specializing in predictive analytics. This granted access to a vast dataset, enabling robust initial training of the AI model. Simultaneously, Intellimed integrated its own intervention history—based on a certified, replicable procedure—into the system. This created a continuous learning cycle, constantly refining the model's predictive capabilities based on real-life field cases. The system runs on an in-house server to ensure data privacy and prevent corruption of existing records. Thanks to this methodical and collaborative approach, Intellimed has significantly increased the accuracy of initial diagnostics, reduced customer response times, and optimized the use of technical resources.

4. Results and Impact

The introduction of the new system based on smart sensors and artificial intelligence has generated extraordinary results for Intellimed, both operationally and economically. In terms of client portfolio growth, the company recorded a remarkable increase—estimated between 3,000% and 4,000%. This translates to a 30–40-fold growth in the number of clients managed compared to the period before adopting the new technology. This leap had a direct impact on revenues, allowing the company to expand its market and strengthen its position in the field of electromedical equipment repair. Operational efficiency also saw significant improvements. Diagnostic times—which previously required 1 to 15 days of manual work and subjective assessments—were reduced to just a few minutes. This allowed the company to dramatically accelerate the entire service process, boosting internal productivity and enabling the handling of a much higher volume of requests in shorter timeframes. Finally, the level of efficiency achieved made it possible to offer the initial diagnosis as a free service. This not only removed a key barrier for potential clients, but also became a strategic commercial lever. The free diagnosis—combined with the speed and accuracy of the service—played a decisive role in building customer loyalty and acquiring new contacts.

5. Lessons Learned

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During Intellimed's digital transformation process—aimed at improving the speed and accuracy of customer response—numerous complex challenges emerged. The first difficulty was identifying objective and measurable indicators capable of accurately determining the aging level of medical devices. It was essential to define reliable parameters to assess not only the actual condition of a device, but also the economic viability of a repair—comparing the residual value of the equipment with the costs and feasibility of the intervention. Another major obstacle was the initial lack of a structured database on the most common faults, which was necessary to train the artificial intelligence model. To overcome this limitation, Intellimed partnered with a specialized company, gaining access to a large international dataset and integrating this knowledge base with the company's own historical records of past interventions. Finally, one of the most significant challenges was the training phase of the software model, where it was crucial to fine-tune the algorithm to deliver increasingly accurate diagnoses aligned with the actual conditions of the devices. This process required substantial investment in both time and expertise, but it enabled the company to acquire deep technical know-how—now considered one of Intellimed's strategic assets. By overcoming these obstacles, Intellimed was able to develop a reliable, accurate, and replicable system capable of supporting rapid, evidence-based decisions. This significantly enhanced customer service and strengthened the company's competitiveness in the market—so much so that Intellimed is now considering turning the service into a software product for the international market.

6. Future Directions

In light of the results achieved, Intellimed is now looking beyond the field of electromedical repairs, with the goal of valorizing and commercializing the software it has developed across other industrial sectors. The system has been designed with flexibility and modularity in mind, making it adaptable to various production contexts—provided the model undergoes a training phase tailored to the specific characteristics of the target industry. This opens up compelling scalability prospects, both within the manufacturing sector and in other fields where predictive maintenance and automated diagnostics offer a competitive edge. Intellimed therefore plans to launch a new development phase focused on standardizing and refining the platform, with the aim of ensuring compatibility with a broader range of devices and industrial environments.

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SME #3 Italy				
	CASE TITLE:	AI as a strategic tool for EU project Development and Management		
	SME Name:	Exeo Lab srl		
	Number of employees:	8	**Years in operation:**	7
	Sector:	Consultancy and Public Affairs, Innovation, EU Funding, Territorial Development		

1. Overview and contents

Exeo Lab is a strategic consultancy firm that supports public authorities, SMEs, and innovative startups in areas such as EU funding, internationalization, policy research, public procurement, and social innovation. The company combines traditional expertise with the use of advanced digital tools to enhance project quality and impact. It is recognized for its commitment to transparency, innovation, social responsibility, and inclusive practices.

2. Background

In a highly competitive and complex field like EU project development, Exeo Lab faced several challenges:

- High cognitive load in writing, structuring, and managing multiple project proposals across funding programmes (Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, Interreg, ESF+).
- Need to streamline repetitive tasks (e.g., formatting, literature reviews, eligibility checks) without compromising on quality.
- Difficulty in keeping up with changing rules, keywords, and thematic trends across multiple calls for proposals.
- Demand for more time to dedicate to strategy and innovation, rather than clerical or mechanical aspects of proposal preparation.

3. Approach and Implementation

Exeo Lab has gradually integrated AI tools into various aspects of its work, adopting a pragmatic and human-centred approach. The process began with internal experimentation, where senior consultants explored how AI could support tasks like drafting proposals, summarizing EU policies, and organizing data. Building on these early successes, AI was extended to support project implementation—contributing to the creation of training materials, stakeholder engagement tools, and dissemination content. To ensure responsible and effective use, the company established internal guidelines and provided targeted training to its staff. Rather than replacing expertise, AI is used as a collaborative assistant that enhances productivity while preserving the critical role of human judgment and creativity.

4. Results and Impact

The integration of AI tools into Exeo Lab's workflow has led to significant improvements in both efficiency and strategic focus. By automating time-consuming tasks such as drafting, research, and

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formatting, the team has been able to dedicate more energy to high-value activities like innovation design and stakeholder engagement. This shift has resulted in a measurable reduction in preparation time for funding applications and an increased capacity to respond to more calls without additional staffing. Beyond operational gains, the use of AI has reinforced Exeo Lab's positioning as a forward-thinking consultancy, strengthening its reputation for agility, innovation, and client-oriented solutions.

5. Lessons Learned

Exeo Lab's experience demonstrates that artificial intelligence can be a powerful enabler when integrated thoughtfully into daily professional work. The key to success lies not in replacing human expertise, but in complementing it with tools that enhance efficiency, creativity, and responsiveness. The adoption of AI required a clear internal framework to ensure responsible use, continuous staff upskilling, and an open-minded approach to experimentation. Most importantly, the team learned that AI must be used with critical thinking and domain knowledge: its value emerges when guided by strategy, not automation alone.

6. Future Directions

Looking ahead, Exeo Lab aims to deepen the integration of AI across its operations, particularly by exploring tools for grant tracking, opportunity mapping, and automated partner searches. The company is also considering the development of tailored AI assistants to support internal workflows and client services. Additionally, Exeo Lab plans to share its experience by offering training and strategic support to other SMEs and public entities interested in using AI to enhance their project development and innovation capacity.

Below you can examine a Norwegian example of AI application, which has been relevant in Italy.

SME #4 NORWAY	**CASE TITLE:**	Savvie – AI to Reduce Food Waste and Optimize Small-Scale Food Production		
	SME Name:	SAVVIE		
	Number of employees:	Fewer than 10	**Years in operation:**	Since 2020
	Sector:	Foodtech / AI for the hospitality and food service sector		

1. Overview and contents

Savvie is a Norwegian startup that leverages artificial intelligence to help small food businesses (bakeries, cafes, and restaurants) to optimize their daily production, minimize food waste, and increase profitability. Its platform uses machine learning algorithms to analyze sales data and

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provide real-time insights and tailored recommendations to guide production and inventory decisions.

2. Background

Small food outlets often struggle with overproduction and food waste due to fluctuating customer demand and lack of data-driven planning tools. These challenges reduce profit margins and increase operational inefficiencies. Savvie was established to address these issues by providing AI-powered tools that are simple to use and tailored for small business environments, where technical expertise is often limited.

3. Approach and Implementation

Savvie developed a cloud-based platform that integrates with existing point-of-sale (POS) systems. Its key features include:

- machine learning algorithms that analyse historical sales and customer behaviour;
- a user-friendly dashboard displaying actionable recommendations for daily production;
- predictive analytics that adjust suggestions based on weather, weekdays, and seasonal patterns.

Implementation doesn't require technical installation or specialist training, making the solution accessible to non-technical users in small businesses.

4. Results and Impact

Savvie has delivered clear, measurable benefits to its customers:

- significant reduction in food waste, often by over 30%;
- improved operational efficiency and optimized staff workload;
- increased profitability through better alignment of production with demand;
- greater sustainability impact aligned with Norway's circular economy and green transition goals.

5. Lessons Learned

Savvie's experience highlights the importance of designing AI solutions that are intuitive and accessible to non-technical users, especially within small businesses. Throughout their development process, close collaboration with end users proved essential to ensure the tool aligned with actual workflows and operational realities. Additionally, they found that educating users on the value and practical application of AI significantly enhanced adoption and effectiveness.

6. Future Directions

Savvie aims to expand its platform to other sectors within the food industry, including catering and event-based food services. The team is also working on developing enhanced predictive tools, including long-term demand forecasting, and exploring integration with supply chain partners to enable end-to-end optimization. International expansion is also an idea, particularly in markets with similar SME structures in hospitality and food retail.

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3. Conclusion

The five cases presented in this section—from Italy and Norway—provide a clear and compelling snapshot of how artificial intelligence can be adopted in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across diverse sectors and business models. From telecoms to electromedical services, consultancy, and foodtech, these SMEs demonstrate that AI is not a distant or inaccessible technology, but a practical tool that can be meaningfully embedded into everyday workflows to increase efficiency, reduce waste, and unlock new value. In all cases, a common paradigm emerges: AI is introduced not as a radical innovation, but as a targeted solution to existing challenges. Eurotel System Srl modernised its services using AI for intelligent video surveillance and intelligent call management. Intellimed adopted AI to revolutionise the technical diagnostics of electromedical equipment, speeding up analysis and multiplying its customer base. Exeo Lab integrated AI into the drafting and implementation of EU-funded projects, allowing consultants to focus on strategic rather than repetitive tasks. Norway's Savvie brought artificial intelligence into small food businesses, enabling precise production planning and waste reduction through real-time sales data. The motivation in adopting AI was not technological ambition, but operational necessity responding to shifting market demands, labour shortages, or inefficiencies in daily processes. Importantly, none of these SMEs treated AI as a “plug-and-play” solution. Rather, they invested in understanding how to use it responsibly, trained staff to support its integration, and developed internal guidelines or collaborations to ensure ethical and effective implementation. A critical insight that runs through all the examples is that AI must be guided by human judgement. Although the tools vary, from predictive maintenance to content generation and demand forecasting, they all serve to augment human capabilities, not replace them. The cases show that when staff are involved, trained and encouraged to experiment, AI becomes an empowering tool rather than a source of fear or resistance. These examples highlight the wide applicability of AI in all sectors, including those not traditionally associated with technology. The fact that micro-enterprise can integrate AI effectively sends a strong message to SMEs across Europe: size is not a barrier when the approach is clear, the need is real and the support is available. Safe integration of AI technologies demonstrate that small.

businesses can embrace innovation while remaining true to their ethical and social commitments.

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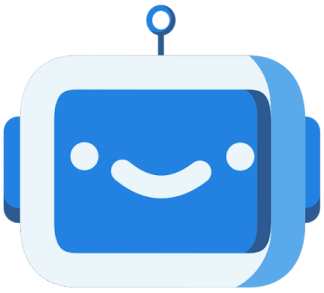

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