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—Maria Alessandra Cavestro
  Project Manager
  Europcar Italia

When in Rome.

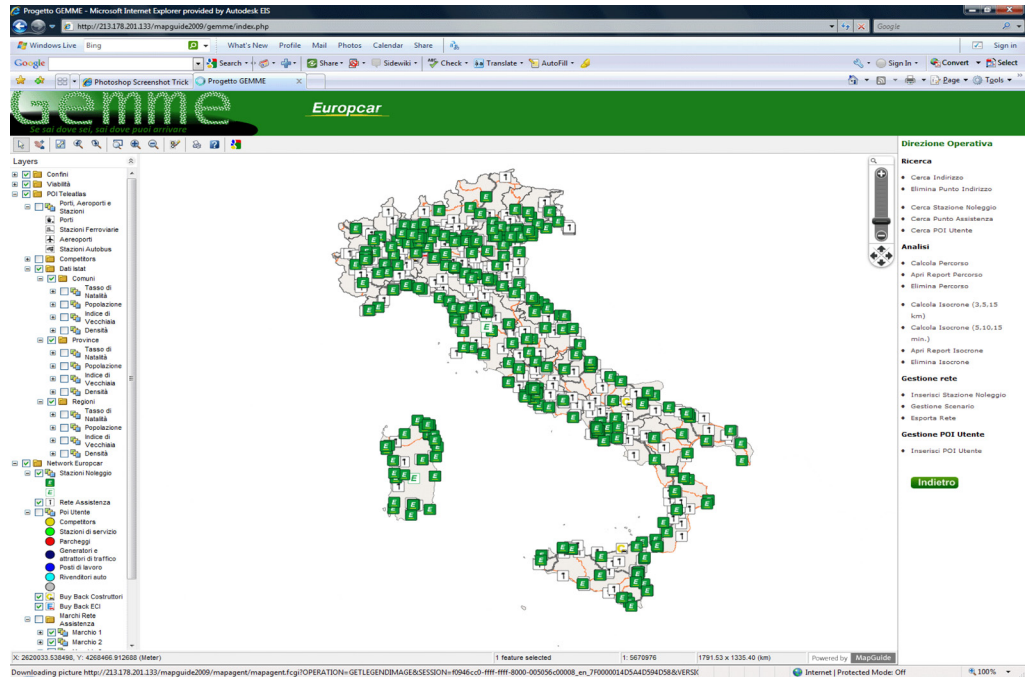## Europcar Italia gets things moving with Autodesk Consulting and Autodesk MapGuide® software.

Image courtesy of Europcar Italia

Project Summary

Europcar is the European leader in passenger car and light utility vehicle rentals. The company serves business and leisure customers throughout Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Asia-Pacific. Excluding franchise operations, in 2009 Europcar signed 9.5 million rental contracts, with 7,000 employees and a fleet exceeding 190,000 vehicles. In September 2008, Europcar and U.S. market leader Enterprise Holdings joined forces in a strategic commercial alliance to form the world's largest car rental network, with more than 1.2 million vehicles and 13,000 locations around the world. Europcar is owned by the French investment company Eurazeo.

When Europcar Italia, the Italian arm of the company, was tasked with creating a richer, more complex intranet application to grow its national network, as well as provide important information to and about the over 290 Europcar rental stations across Italy, the company reached out to Autodesk Consulting for help.

The result is the Geographical Exploitation Management Monitoring Environment (GEMME), a comprehensive geographic information system (GIS) that uses Autodesk MapGuide® Enterprise software to provide analysis of site locations, dynamic map and routing status, customers, local markets, and competitors. "We need to have a clearer understanding of how best to serve our customers in Italy," says Riccardo Menichetti, ICT manager at Europcar Italia. "We needed a system to help inform and improve our decision making when it came to integrating, improving, and installing our rental stations across the country. Italy may not be the largest country, but this was definitely a big project."

The Challenge

Europcar Italia currently operates out of two main offices in Italy, one in Rome and another in Milan. While the vast majority of employees work out of those locations and the rest in the sales and operation subsidiary offices, another 290 rental stations are run by contracted business partners in the country. With such diverse and divergent operations, data management was handled according to decidedly disparate methods.

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Europcar wants to fully exploit its GIS data as a business support tool for the most basic to the most complex activities.

"Overall, our internal customers were not using software to manage all that data," says Menichetti. "They were using things like spreadsheets and online mapping services, but that information was not tied together. The information was coming from a great many sources, and we needed to have a centralized, unified source to work more efficiently. After a lot of deliberation, we decided that a GIS system was our best option. We felt having a system like this would bring our company to a new level of efficiency."

As any corporate executive will tell you, change is always necessary, but it is rarely an easy process.

"Change management was one of our biggest challenges," says Maria Alessandra Cavestro, project manager at Europcar Italia. "It was a struggle at first to bring our internal and external customers on board. We needed to convince everyone involved that the level of information this system would provide would enable them to work in ways they would never before have dreamed. That can be a little frightening, but is usually worth it."

The Solution
With in-depth assistance from Autodesk Consulting, Europcar has implemented the first phase of GEMME, a user-friendly application based on Autodesk MapGuide software. Autodesk MapGuide Enterprise software is used as a web-mapping engine, while Autodesk MapGuide® Studio is used as an authoring tool.

While the project has only recently completed the first phase of database installation and configuration with a limited rollout to a few offices, the efficiency and ease of use of GEMME is already getting people excited. Europcar will now be able to better centralize data for all of its

Italian operations, and more effectively coordinate the way its partners do business and how the company develops and maintains its network.

"Autodesk Consulting showed us a better way to work," says Cavestro. "They helped us to precisely define our needs, put them into context, and convince our employees to use the new system. They worked hard to understand our business from the inside out, to the point of becoming virtual Europcar employees. The Consulting team was so understanding and hands-on that we had every confidence that they would come up with the best solution. It was a wonderful collaboration."

Already one of the first European companies to change to a full GIS system, Europcar plans a wider national rollout that will give it a multitude of advantages over its competition, including completely searchable directions throughout Italy, calculations of driving times and distance, statistical analysis of customer and competitor data, map viewers, and more.

The Result
In the coming year, Menichetti and Cavestro estimate that GEMME will service three times the number of users it does now. Indeed, upon showing the system features to other Europcar departments, they were greeted with great enthusiasm.

"We have a lot of work ahead of us," says Menichetti. "What we really want is to fully exploit our GIS data as a business support tool for the most basic to the most complex activities, whether it's providing directions to the nearest rental stations to serve customer purpose or strategically increasing our presence in the Italian territory. Every time customers see GEMME, even at this early stage, it sparks their imagination and boosts their
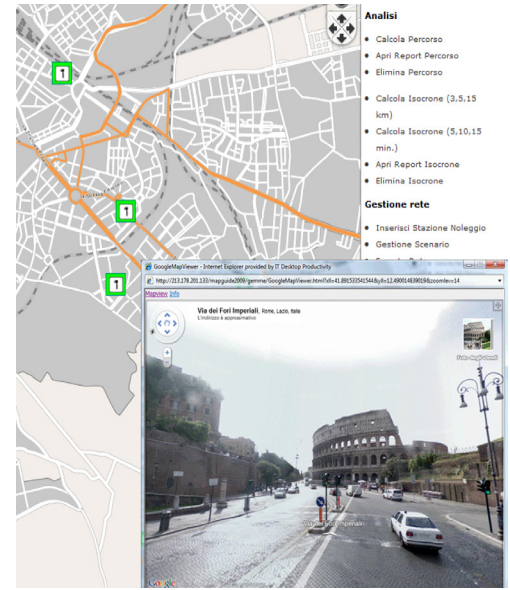

Image courtesy of Europcar Italia

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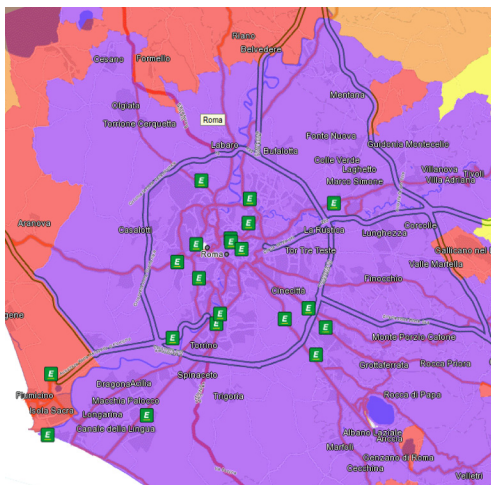To learn more about Autodesk Consulting, visit, **www.autodesk.com/consulting.**

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—Riccardo Menichetti
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