



OMNITEL INVESTS 15 BILLION LIRE IN BOLOGNA, TO OPEN A CALL CENTER THAT WILL EMPLOY 500

Bologna, 22 July, 1999

Omnitel Pronto Italia, Italy's first private GSM operator, inaugurated today its eighth Omnitel "Call Center" in the city of Bologna, the second in the North Eastern region of Italy (an area that includes the Regions of Triveneto and Emilia Romagna), after the one located in Padua. Growth in this area of the country justifies the opening of a second customer service center: the number of subscribers in the area has doubled as compared to last year to break the 1.5 million mark, employees are now 1,200 and investments in network and other infrastructure amount to Lit. 600 billion. 40% of these numbers relate to the region of Emilia Romagna alone.

"The objective is to grow even closer to our customers," stated Ferruccio Borsani, Director General Omnitel for the North East. "But also to grow closer to our potential customers by increasing our presence in the area."

The call center already employs 200 employees destined to grow to 500 by the end of 1999 and required an investment of Lit. 15 billion and aims at servicing 500,000 incoming calls per month.

"We have built this facility in just a few months: in January we decided it should be located in the Emilia Romagna region and selected the city of Bologna because it best met our requirements: geographic location, presence of a large university, an innovative and technological culture.

Having identified the site, 10,000 sq. meters used by the EDP office of a local bank, we started works in April and it has taken just 3 months to open the Call Center," commented Ferruccio Borsani. "The Bologna Call Center joins the other Omnitel Call Centers located in Ivrea, Milan, Padua, Pisa, Rome, Naples and Catania."

Candidates for customer service positions in Bologna had to undergo the same severe selection process undertaken by the other 3,500 customer representatives employed by Omnitel. The Bologna customer service reps have been selected among 10,000.

Only 2,000 were admitted to the selection process to fill the 500 jobs. Candidates hired entered Omnitel's "Service University," a comprehensive training programme and then spent 5 additional weeks training at the company's Call Center in Padua before returning to Bologna last week to take their first call.

Omnitel's success in the Italian market depends on its focus on the customer and on the quality of its human resources. Omnitel is committed to making sure that

besides training, the company's employees work in a safe and comfortable environment.

70% of the employees in Bologna are women, 30% hold a university degree, and 50% of high school graduates are university students. The average age is 28 and 50% of employees come from the city of Bologna or the neighbouring provinces.