

Is tomorrow's Banking here ?

The international financial and banking system is increasingly subject to sudden changes, often at the base of which there is also technology. Yet the Confederation would seem to have all the cards in order to maintain its hegemonic position, but will it be enough?

Hard times for the finance industry?

Of course, no less than that in recent years, with but one fundamental novelty: is no longer the only one, on the contrary. It is in good companionship. For many reasons the situation of the sector has apparently improved and radically over a period of simple quarter, an improvement that compared to the rest of the economy undoubtedly has some sensational. What that is going to be an autumn very complicated, followed from a winter marked by the return of the plague of the Npl, who will weigh down the balance sheets of all actors in the financial system, but compared to a real economy never as in this moment bent from the health emergency, the state of health of the sector appears all in all more that discreet. After years of creeping support, but not too occult, the Central Banks have returned to flood the markets of concerted liquidity, pending this once



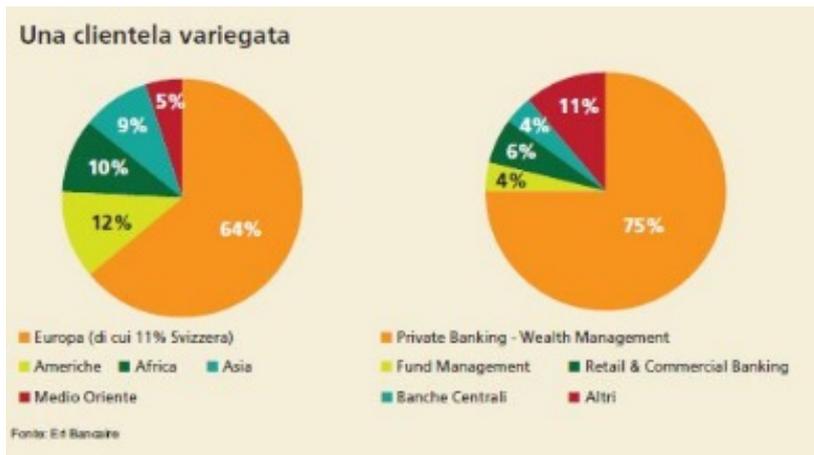
ERI Bancaire's offices

the governments know how to do it really the difference. So a kind of bridging loan, waiting for what it is he hopes it's not yet another Godot.

Financial and central institutions are also the center of attention for the delicate digital transition time they are experiencing, particularly accelerated given the short period, which is exponentially changing its face. Eri Bancaire is undoubtedly among the true proponents of this change: an international company, and today market leader in

Switzerland, Luxembourg and the Principality of Monaco, sees its specialized OLYMPIC Banking System platform, integrated and modular, a protagonist in over 50 countries.

Over 300 customers have adopted it, also due to its extreme flexibility and adaptability to the most disparate client's needs. In fact, these include the entire range of market players: independent asset managers, financial companies, credit institutions and central banks. Known markets, with thirty years of know-how, and firmly managed by offices in London, Paris, Luxembourg and Singapore,



Clients from every part of the world and from every segment of market; that is the Switzerland industry leader's company.

as well as in Zurich, Geneva and Lugano. « At the moment IT management and investments in IT weigh on average for 20% of the total expenses of a Swiss financial institution. The growing use of outsourcing is helping to containing them, especially in the case of small and medium-sized banks, but over the next few years there will probably be a further slanting of the growth curve, with a key role played by innovation. New technologies that are increasingly complex and related to mobility will place the players in the sector in front of an obligatory choice» says Jean-Philippe Bersier, head of Business Development at Eri Bancaire, since 2002, and who can boast previous experience in Cap Gemini Ernst & Young, Siemens, and in the IBM galaxy.

In all this, an extremely fluid and changeable

scenario, fits the 'novelty' of the moment: smart working; a very sensitive issue, in terms of IT security, especially in the case of a financial institution. «Covid 19 has been able to demonstrate that massive use can also be made of teleworking in normal circumstances, maintaining productivity and operational efficiency of the operations, for example meeting the needs of collaborators, thus guaranteeing them a better balance between professional and private life. A novelty that despite all the myths of the case, however, has nothing new; it has been years since at least the largest institutions have made regular use of it, only not on such a large scale, which will make it possible to rapidly reorganize the workspaces» continues the Director.

Every self-respecting crisis, breaking the previous balances in a more or less traumatic way, presents by its nature different opportunities, which one must however be able to seize. These include

evidence that the margins offered by digitisation and the development of new work models are far from exhausted. "Even if further demonstration was needed, it has arrived. Much more can be done than has been done until yesterday.

Information technology, especially in the advanced tertiary sector, in fact makes it possible to decorrelate almost entirely the services provided by the workplace, something on which all the main Swiss companies have been at work for some time, and which the infrastructure of our country allows.

Although technology allows a lot today, however, the absence of a regular and physical confrontation between people is unthinkable of the same team, it is often this at the basis of the success of the most part important of their work, the moment creative» emphasizes Bersier. A digitization that is therefore investing the financial world by now different time, and to a more pronounced extent for about two decades, but that proceeds to variable geometry, with substantial differences from segment to segment, although not without specific exceptions, and with several twists that have yet to occur.

A phenomenon that should therefore maintain its relevance also in the next few years. «Among the many segments of the financial sector, is probably

retail banking to boast on average the better level of development, or at least a discreet 'progress of work'. Of course, it is also a large construction site in the open air, subject to change substantial, but the boundless customer base, with not too specific needs or dissimilar, has been able to provide large institutions with sufficient resources to cover investment needs; they can therefore already offer platforms and Apps functional for the purpose. The case is different however of private banks, reality not too large, whose customers also have needs much more sophisticated and specific, than the technology often fails to meet yet, even in the face of very important costs for individual institutions» says the manager, who also has an MBA in Economics behind him, at the University of Lausanne.

A different way of conceiving the banking system, transversal to all advanced companies and often generations, which is also influencing the very nature of the relationship between the customer and the credit institution, helping the delicate transition phase underway. "Increasingly sophisticated Apps, some results achieved in the real estate sector are incredible, and with increasingly integrated functions, they are making the idea of a branch obsolete, which in fact is the subject of heavy cutting and efficiency programs. In a few

years the branch will become a meeting place to face the most complex customer problems, the occasion in which targeted consultancy is still able to

"Customer loyalty is a complex operation, and of long run something to which banks in other forms they always confronted each other.

Today a digital offer to the height and quality is essential, but it is alone a tool start building"

Jean-Philippe Bersier,
Director
Business Development
ERI Bancaire

make a difference, but which is certainly no longer on the agenda » clarifies the Director. This, however, raises many questions on the developments that the relationship with the customer may be taking, even to the point of questioning it. If everything were to be reduced to simple technology, what could make the difference between one reality and another, if not the simple cost? "Customer loyalty is an extremely complex and long-term operation, something that banks in other forms have always faced.

Today, a high-quality digital offering is essential, but it is only a tool, a base on which to build. The typical 'consultative e-banking' of the last few years in the case of HNWI is destined to disappear definitively, the new generations of the



highest customer segment expect much more, they want to be part of the investment activity, and easily communicate with the own consultants, on whom the task of 'bringing the bank to the customer' falls. This presupposes secure IT infrastructures that take due account of the rules of cross-border business. It can therefore be inferred that the emblem of the Swiss square of the past, the 'sitting room', will continue to exist, but it will be less physical, and more virtual" specifies Bersier. A world, banking and financial, both in progress and globalized, in which the competitive advantage of the protagonists is gradually decreasing, in the face of a particularly intense internal competitiveness. In which high costs, but in proportion much lower than in the past, reduce the technological gap between individual actors. «We are one of the main players among the Banking Core Systems, our platform must therefore be able to evolve constantly, keeping up with new regulations, technologies and functionalities.