

“The bridge across the strait? Better 10,000 construction sites”

An interview with Alfredo Romeo, leader of a group with 300 million euro earnings, and president of Ifma-Italia

The only way to save the country from the failure that lies in the numbers and the deeds, is to take a new look at it, to revolutionize history and starting points using concepts of territory, real estate, urban design, and community service”. Alfredo Romeo speaks as the president of Ifma-Italia, the international association of Facility Management companies. But he is also the leader of an entrepreneurial group of services that makes 300 million euros in annual earnings.

How can a “different way of looking at things” affect a company in the South, or our Gnp, or our economy?

Today we are once again talking about a bridge across the Strait of Messina, offering potentially 100,000 jobs. Wonderful. But we'll need 20 years if we start right now, assuming we put an end to all the ideological and instrumental polemics on the subject. But I feel that if we create

10,000 construction sites for urban upgrades in Italian cities, this would immediately set companies, enterprises, and businesses in motion. And this would start off a passion for the public thing, for the common good, for the real destiny of citizens.

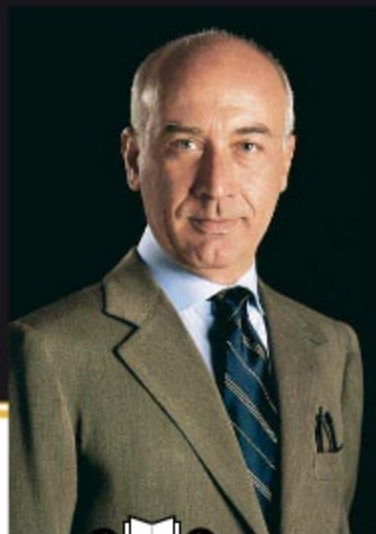
What are you talking about, Mr. Lawyer Romeo?

About how to create new jobs and new well-being. Our “vision” is, at the same time, a way to modernize the administrative machinery and to

re-launch Italia. But it is a radical passage - the culture of doing must be reconciled with that of managing, focusing on providing quality services for the city with the complex community that populates it, and the land, Italia's greatest treasure, with major emphasis placed on our strategic tourism industry. But we need a cultural revolution, which Ifma-Italia intends to support with time and resources.

Can you explain that a bit better?

Article 24 of Sblocca Italia decree offers a strategic operational chance, because it gives to the urban community the possibility to direct and to finance the urban transformations with the aid of fiscal and tax advantages. But it is dangerous to reduce these opportunities for circuits which compensate citizens and administrators to mere terms of subsidiary status or to “administrative bartering”, without activating a new vision of the city or of the economic engines that it offers. This is where



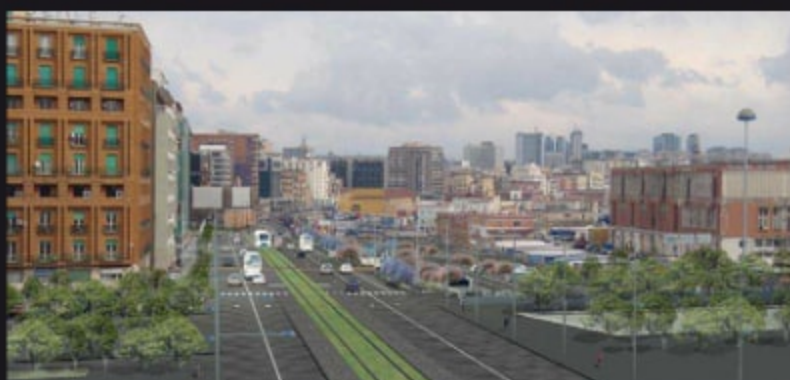
THE LAWYER, ALFREDO ROMEO



Facility Management (the ability to distribute advanced services to complex communities) can play a special role, both economic and social.

Why?

We are talking about a public-private collaboration to distribute services on the territory to bring out the value of real estate and areas of influence, redevelop and administer the architectural and artistic heritage in a modern way along with property, in technical areas such as ports, or regarding the urban revolution that took place in, for example, Bagnoli in Napoli or the former Expo area in Milano. But there are questions that we are not able to answer in a concrete and operational way, and yet our future depends on them. For example, how to help administrators and citizens equip themselves with administrative and organizational support for the definition and the structuring of micro-territories on which to intervene? How to give assistance regarding requests for the facilitations described in article 24? For the constitution of statutes and the financial management of balance sheets? To enlarge associated bases? To define homogenous territories and the services to be provided? And how to activate territorial crowd-funding? Or create a network of specialists who "dialogue" (artisans, storekeepers, etc.) with the administrators of these transformations? And how can one standardize the transparency of earnings and expenses, and those of the activities promoted and dispensed? How do you transform this community into an entity for political and administrative interlocation regarding the territory? Who knows the



REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT FOR THE PIAZZA MUNICIPIO WATER-FRONT AREA IN NAPLES

answers? What are the instruments which can be created? Which laws are missing, and which need to be perfected, changed, or be subjected to other procedures? This is why a new culture is needed.

So what do you propose?

We must insist on informing and transforming, even through the use of the Ifma-Italia Master's Program for Facility Manager of the Territory which will begin in 2017, designed to train "men of the future". Because we need a new class of operators with an integrated vision of the problems. People who know how to adapt their skills for peripheral redevelopment, be it the Port of Napoli or the streams which keep on flooding Genova... To better exploit the excavations in Pompei or the Valley of the Temples in Agrigento. To run, in a profitable and quality-filled way, what we call "urban condominiums", safe-keeping gardens, safety, energy savings, and even care for the elderly. No speculation, but thousands and thousands of construction sites

which, with low investment, without new "consumption of the soil", and with strong participation and sharing among the collective grouping, produce new internal demand, urban development, and quality of life. But a dialogue regarding new policies is needed, with people able to "listen".

Designs that are both ambitious and complex.

Yes. But necessary. With the future industrial revolution which will lead to the "intelligent automation" of 80% of industrial production, only services will be able to provide work for thousands of young people and contribute to the human quality of our lives. Little time remains to begin these structural processes. Once you miss the boat, a new society which - knowingly - thinks and governs its own evolution, the only thing left will be default, with a new medieval culture and economy.



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