



### Business challenge

After merging with the American company General Cable, Prysman Group needed to integrate two complex IT environments and build an infrastructure that would support the new SAP technology-based workloads.



Stefano Brandinali  
Chief Digital Officer  
and Chief  
Information Officer  
Prysmian Group

### Transformation

By engaging IBM to build a new environment on IBM® Cloud™, the company gained a reliable and scalable infrastructure to support its North American SAP landscape and anticipates cutting infrastructure costs by 20%.

## Results

### 20% reduction

in total cost of infrastructure expected

### Supports growing SAP-based workloads

with a modular cloud environment

### Two new cloud environments

built in an accelerated time frame

# Prysmian Group

## Reducing IT infrastructure costs by 20% and supporting new business growth with IBM Cloud

Established in 1879, Prysman Group is the industry-leading manufacturer of electric power transmission and telecommunications cables and systems. The company serves a variety of markets including utilities and power grids, telecommunications, construction and infrastructure, transportation and mobility, and others. Prysman employs 30,000 people across 50 countries and operates 106 production plants and 25 research and development centers. The company is headquartered in Milan, Italy, and reports annual sales of over EUR 11 billion.

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—Stefano Brandinali, Chief Digital Officer and Chief Information Officer, Prysman Group



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## Integrating fragmented IT infrastructures

When Italy-based Prysmian Group merged with US-based General Cable in 2018, it solidified its position as the worldwide leader in the cable systems industry. The move complemented the organization's global geographic coverage, expanding its presence into the US and Latin America. It broadened the breadth of its product portfolio and strengthened its ability to develop and deliver the industry's most innovative and sustainable solutions.

The merger also introduced some unique IT infrastructure integration challenges. "General Cable had a very fragmented IT application landscape," explains Stefano Brandinali, Prysmian's Chief Digital Officer and Chief Information Officer. "Prysmian had a single SAP ERP instance covering 90% of our plants. But General Cable had a plethora of systems, a different application landscape for each country. For example, we found 13 different ERP systems, and 12 were not SAP."

Integrating the IT environments, from both an infrastructure and application standpoint, was a top priority, as it would support product and process digitalization and enable the company to act as a single organization as quickly as possible.



Brandinali continues: "IT's strategy for post-merger integration was to become one company quickly, which means we speak the same business language. When you talk the same language everywhere, it's easier to export and adopt best practices to find efficiency."

To this end, Prysmian embarked on a comprehensive integration program. Ultimately, the company wanted an infrastructure that would fuel innovation and business transformation. The environment needed to offer resource flexibility and support SAP system-based workloads coming in from General Cable in the US. In addition, it needed to host an organic growth of

instances for future digital projects and provide on-demand resources for testing and development activities.

Prysmian also needed to integrate the new General Cable workload with its existing IT infrastructure, which is managed by IBM. Under a strategic outsourcing contract, IBM Global Technology Services® is responsible for Prysmian's on-premises infrastructure and providing hosting services in the IBM data centers.

The timing was also right for Prysmian Group to update the older SAP ERP system with [SAP S/4HANA®](#) Enterprise Management technology, SAP's next-generation, intelligent ERP business suite, and migrate the workload.

Brandinali explains the decision-making: "Theoretically, in our original IT master plan before merging General Cable, we'd foreseen moving from SAP ERP to SAP S/4HANA in 2019. We decided to harmonize the data warehouse and other systems, and to move forward with global SAP implementation. At the same time, we started thinking about how we could innovate while integrating.

"So we made the decision to move SAP S/4HANA to the cloud, asking our main partners, SAP and IBM, to support our strategy and be partners in our journey."

## Supporting workloads with a cloud platform

Prysmian turned to IBM to deploy a new cloud infrastructure and extended its current strategic outsourcing contract for an additional 12 months. Under the new extension, IBM will build, configure and implement a new IT environment on IBM Cloud to host the additional SAP technology-based workloads coming from General Cable. IBM will also continue to manage the company's on-premises infrastructure.

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—Stefano Brandinali, Chief Digital Officer and Chief Information Officer, Prysmian Group

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Prysmian investigated several cloud providers. IBM Cloud was a natural choice because of cost, its leadership in hybrid infrastructure managed services and the delivery excellence demonstrated under the current strategic outsourcing contract. IBM Cloud is also recognized by VMware as the virtualization engine of choice for SAP applications.

“The IBM Cloud is, in our opinion, the ideal one for our needs thanks to the stack of services that IBM can provide on top of the very solid infrastructure,” explains Brandinali. “IBM is going to give us a stack of services that other providers cannot give us. So, in this respect, we want to have a partner company like IBM.”

For Brandinali, trust was also a key factor in partnering with IBM. “IBM keeps its promises. That is a level of honesty that we really appreciate, and this is exactly what we need in a partnership.”

IBM deployed a range of SAP technologies hosted on SAP-certified IBM Cloud Bare Metal Servers, a component of [IBM Cloud for SAP Certified Infrastructure](#), running in a VMware virtualized environment. The IBM Cloud platform offers flexibility and gives the company the ability to scale its SAP S/4HANA® environment.

In addition to the SAP S/4HANA application suite, the SAP landscape includes the [SAP HANA®](#) in-memory database deployed highly-available on two hosts, and the [SAP® BW/4HANA](#) business warehouse and [SAP APO](#) supply chain planning solutions.

“We have implemented the new SAP BW/4HANA platform on the IBM Cloud for business intelligence reporting. It has been a great success, with new usability and a

new interface,” adds Giovanni Cauteruccio, Prysmian's Global Enterprise Services Manager. “We are also on the cloud with SAP APO, Advanced Planning and Optimizer, a tool in the SAP HANA platform we use for forecasting and planning.”

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***“When it comes to cloud, we have found that IBM is one of the best players for us.”***

—Stefano Brandinali, Chief Digital Officer and Chief Information Officer, Prysmian Group

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IBM is also managing Prysmian's on-premises [SAP ERP](#) application under the [IBM SAP Applications Management on IBM Cloud](#) offering. In the future, the company plans to migrate its entire SAP workload to IBM Cloud.

IBM Cloud Bare Metal Servers provide a dedicated, single-tenant architecture that gives Prysmian complete control over where and how data is managed, exchanged and processed. With bare metal servers, Prysmian can arrange with IBM the downtime required for maintenance and updating. The designated operating system for SAP HANA appliances is [Red Hat Enterprise Linux for SAP Solutions](#).

The servers run [IBM Cloud for VMware Solutions](#) for all virtualized workloads. By running its native

VMware stack on IBM Cloud bare metal infrastructure, Prysmian can use the same tools and resources it uses for its on-premises infrastructure. “We are using many of the VMware features. It made it easier for us to approach the Cloud,” adds Alessandro Bottin, Prysmian's Global Infrastructure and Operation Manager.

Under the [IBM Security and Resiliency Managed Services](#) offering, [IBM Services™](#) is providing data backup, resilience and recovery on IBM Cloud. To simplify backup migration, the company chose [Zerto on IBM Cloud](#) technology.

Prysmian's cloud infrastructure is hosted in two IBM data centers: the IBM Cloud Milano Cornaredo Data Center for the production environment, and the IBM Cloud Frankfurt Data Center for disaster recovery.

## Speaking the same business language

With its move to IBM Cloud, Prysmian gains a reliable and scalable infrastructure to support its North American SAP landscape and its technological evolution with SAP S/4HANA and SAP BW/4HANA technologies. Designed to be modular, the environment will also support new SAP solutions as the business grows.

Setting a milestone in Prysmian's journey to the cloud, the solution is designed to deliver better end-to-end reliability because of the high standards of IBM Cloud data centers.

"We cannot become a digital company if we are not cloud-based," says Brandinali. "We need to be cloud-based for all the reasons you can imagine in terms of flexibility, accessibility, security. Cloud architecture is the foundation for any digital strategy. No cloud, no digital. I expect that sooner or later, we'll be 100% cloud."

When the integration is complete, Prysmian anticipates reducing IT-related costs significantly. "What we know is that at the end of the journey, the total cost of our infrastructure will be 20% less than the current one, and at the same level of service," adds Brandinali.

Bottin, meanwhile, is impressed with the speed of implementation. "We've deployed two new SAP landscapes

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within IBM Cloud in a very few months," he says. "Going quickly with integration of General Cable and having an environment that was available and stable was really important for us."

Looking ahead, Prysmian is considering adding management services and disaster recovery managed services with the same delivery as its current strategic outsourcing contract.

In the company's General Cable division, IBM Cloud is laying the foundation for the business to move its entire SAP landscape to the cloud. "The lighthouse project was a success and served as a proof point for IBM Cloud being the preferred infrastructure for the company's ongoing digital transformation," concludes Brandinali.

"When it comes to cloud, we have found that IBM is one of the best players for us."

## Solution components

- IBM® Cloud™
- IBM Cloud for SAP Certified Infrastructure
- IBM Cloud for VMware Solutions
- IBM Services™
- IBM SAP Applications Management on IBM Cloud
- IBM Security and Resiliency Managed Services
- Red Hat Enterprise Linux for SAP Solutions
- SAP APO
- SAP® BW/4HANA
- SAP ERP
- SAP HANA®
- SAP S/4HANA®
- Zerto on IBM Cloud

## Take the next step

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