

“ITALY, A NEW START” UBI BANCA AND ITALIAONLINE OPEN UP THE DIGITAL PATH TO MERCHANTS, ARTISANS , PROFESSIONALS AND SMALL BUSINESSES

As part of the €10 billion programme launched to support businesses, households and the third sector just a few days after the beginning of the health emergency, the Bank and the largest Italian internet company are launching a joint collaboration to allow artisans, merchants and professionals to expand their online activities.

Milan, 20th May 2020 – To allow merchants, artisans, professionals and small businesses to expand their digital channel activities in order to accelerate the growth of business on the web is UBI Banca and Italiaonline's objective. They have therefore launched a series of initiatives aimed at providing these people with the tools they need to strengthen their businesses especially during this period of economic difficulty.

The project forms part of measures adopted in the broader programme “Italy, a New Start”, the €10 billion programme launched by UBI Banca at the beginning of the health emergency to support businesses, households and the third sector. It is also an important part of the collaboration between the Bank and Italiaonline which started last year to assist small to medium-sized businesses with their digitisation processes.

In order to support businesses that choose to open digital channels or expand activities already started by grasping opportunities offered by the internet, UBI Banca has made its "Italy, a New Start" initiatives available to finance investments. These are linked to a series of wide-ranging services which include virtual POS, to receive payments securely on the web thereby avoiding payment on delivery and its BluImpresa Multirischi Policy with full digital assistance. This provides support when problems with printers, computers, smartphones and tablets occur.

As part of this partnership Italiaonline is offering UBI Banca customers free of charge checkups by its digital consultants designed to identify activities required to open digital channels or to improve their use to grow their businesses. In this respect, Italiaonline, is offering a series of services to make businesses easier to find on the web (Presence), to make a good presentation with professional sites (Site), to receive traffic and contacts with digital advertising campaigns (Publicity) and, on request from customers, to implement tailor-made communication, e-commerce and digital marketing projects. Italiaonline also provides 14 hours of online courses on digital marketing, free of charge, provided by IAB Italia, if a contract is signed before the end of 2020.

“In recent months small businesses have been obliged to rapidly start using digital channels if they wish to continue to offer their products and services to their customers, taking a necessary step in a very short period of time" **said Natascia Noveri, Head of Marketing at UBI Banca.** "Having a presence on the web is absolutely essential, especially in this very difficult economic context.

This partnership with Italiaonline enables us to accompany our normal banking products with a series of Italiaonline solutions to assist both those firms who have not yet taken advantage of the initial opportunities offered by digitisation and those who have already taken their first steps and wish to consolidate their business by using online channels".

"The digital world is central and strategic for any business, and also for the micro, small and medium-sized companies", said **Andrea Chiapponi, Chief Marketing Officer at Italiaonline**, "that form the backbone of the country's economy. That is why today more than ever it is our duty as the country's leading internet company to support them on their path towards digitisation in order to support the entire Italian economy and this must be both rapid and effective. Together with a partner such as UBI Banca, we can offer a series of concrete and easy to implement solutions, which will quickly make the digitisation of SMEs a concrete reality and help the whole of Italy to take a step forward into the future".

UBI BANCA

UBI Banca is the third largest commercial banking group in Italy by market cap, with a market share of around 7%, 1,566 branches in Italy and approximately 19,629 employees. UBI Banca is a banking Group listed on the Milan stock exchange and included in the FTSE-MIB index.

ITALIAONLINE

Italiaonline is the number one Italian internet company, with 4.8 million unique users* who daily surf on its web properties, (of which 3.3 million using smartphones) and a 63% market reach**. Italiaonline provides web marketing and digital advertising solutions, including media planning and lead generation services through social and media search engines. The company's strategic aim is to consolidate its leadership in the digital advertising market for major accounts and in local marketing services, while its mission is to digitise Italian SMEs. Italiaonline offers SMEs, the true backbone of the country, a full range of products integrated down the entire value chain of digital services, ranging from online presence to digital advertising, web design, web marketing and cloud solutions.

The following form part of Italiaonline today: the portals Libero, Virgilio and superEva, services for businesses and individuals provided by Pagine Gialle, Pagine Bianche and Tuttocittà, the online advertising concessionary, IOL Advertising, and over 660 agents, who form the largest Italian network of service and product consultants for large and small enterprises.

* Source: Audiweb View 2.0, powered by Nielsen, TDA DAUs July 2019

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