ENRICO
BAGNASCO

Chief Executive Officer at Sparkle

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I n this insightful interview, Wida Schmidt engages in a comprehensive conversation with Enrico Maria Bagnasco. Their dialogue delves into a range of topics, offering valuable insights into the ever-evolving telecommunications landscape.

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WIDA SCHMIDT:
Ladies and gentlemen, I am Wida Schmidt reporting from Berlin Studio. Welcome to today's CC Webinar Live Executive Interview. Our distinguished guest today is Enrico Maria Bagnasco, the Chief Executive Officer at Sparkle. Enrico, we are honored to have you with us.

ENRICO BAGNASCO:
Good morning, Wida. Thank you for having me.

WIDA SCHMIDT:
Today marks the fourth consecutive year of our exclusive interview series with top executives from Sparkle. Enrico, we eagerly anticipate your insights into the latest developments and trends. But before we delve into that, allow me to extend my congratulations on your appointment as CEO of Sparkle last year. It is undoubtedly a significant achievement.

ENRICO BAGNASCO:
Thank you, Wida. I appreciate your kind words. The past year has been both engaging and enlightening.

WIDA SCHMIDT:
Certainly, Enrico. Now, I am keen to hear about recent progress at Sparkle, including collaborations and launches. Could you provide an overview of the recent developments?

ENRICO BAGNASCO:
Of course. Two years ago, we embarked on an extensive investment plan encompassing new submarine cable expansion, upgrading our transmission network, and establishing data centers. We are now beginning to witness the outcomes of these efforts materialize. While not all projects are fully realized, they are progressing well. Initiating these endeavors amidst global challenges such as the pandemic, geopolitical tensions, and logistical complexities has been demanding. However, we remain committed to progress. Recent announcements include the inauguration of a new data center in Panama, the launch of a Tel Aviv data center, and the successful deployment of the Blue Raman cable. The completion of the first segment of the Blue Raman cable, connecting Milano, Genova, and Palermo, is a notable accomplishment. Commercial services for this segment will commence in the upcoming month. Further achievements encompass virtual fiber sales to Kush Investment and a memorandum

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of understanding with Libya. These milestones exemplify our advancements in project deployment and commercial achievements.

WIDA SCHMIDT:
Your updates are indeed impressive, Enrico. Your ability to navigate challenges and drive such progress is noteworthy.

ENRICO BAGNASCO:
Thank you, Wida. We believe in the power of perseverance and strategic vision.

WIDA SCHMIDT:
Absolutely, Enrico. Now, let's shift our focus to the evolving market landscape and the ongoing digital transformation. How are these developments shaping Sparkle's business strategies? Could you elaborate on the emerging challenges and opportunities in meeting client demands?

ENRICO BAGNASCO:
Certainly. The market dynamics are undergoing transformation. There is a persistent demand for escalated bandwidth, accompanied by an increasing need for resilient solutions. Reliability and diversification have assumed significant importance. The indispensable role our network plays in supporting vital industry and consumer applications underscores the necessity for not only speed but unwavering reliability. Moreover, larger customers, particularly OTTs, are demonstrating a discerning approach to infrastructure investment. This change in decision-making reflects the heightened competitiveness of the market. As such, precise timing for investments has become crucial to align with genuine requirements. Geopolitical complexities in various regions present a notable challenge to new infrastructure development. Diplomacy and strategic approaches are essential, making infrastructure expansion a comprehensive endeavor.

WIDA SCHMIDT:
Your insights into these market dynamics are crucial, Enrico. The intricate nature of the telecommunications landscape is undoubtedly shaping the industry's trajectory.

ENRICO BAGNASCO:
Indeed, Wida. The industry's landscape is both dynamic and intricate.

WIDA SCHMIDT:
Looking ahead, I would like to revisit our previous discussions, particularly regarding Sparkle's focus on serving multinationals with complex connectivity solutions. What direction is Sparkle envisioning for the coming years? Are there new areas of emphasis or investment strategies on the horizon?

ENRICO BAGNASCO:
Absolutely, Wida. Our priorities from a year ago remain resolute and have gained further traction. Beyond the fundamental connectivity requirements, security has now become an integral component of our offerings. We are integrating security solutions into our IP business for both carriers and enterprises, particularly in the realm of SASE specifications and SD-WAN products. This progression signifies our evolution from infrastructure to virtual networking, with a heightened emphasis on security. Furthermore, the imperative of carrier-to-carrier automation is evident. API-based provisioning, activation, and billing processes are pivotal in streamlining operations as transaction volumes escalate. This automation not only enhances efficiency but also ensures precision. Certified data and automation are foundational to the industry's future. Additionally, the focus on diversification and alternative routes underscores our commitment to delivering robust solutions.

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WIDA SCHMIDT:
Enrico, your insights into Sparkle's strategic evolution are compelling. The deliberate transition towards secure and automated solutions is indeed reflective of industry innovation.

ENRICO BAGNASCO:
Thank you, Wida. We believe that innovation is key to our industry's continued growth and relevance.

WIDA SCHMIDT:
Before we conclude, Enrico, is there any final point you would like to address? I eagerly anticipate our conversations at the upcoming Europe GCCM in Berlin and the CCTIS 23 Summit in Rome in September.

ENRICO BAGNASCO:
Certainly, Wida. I am equally looking forward to those engagements. Allow me to underscore a crucial factor that we haven't touched upon—our people. The industry's vitality is grounded in the competence and dedication of individuals. As we strive for greater efficiency and astuteness,

the challenge lies in building effective teams, fostering common objectives, and harnessing collective intelligence.

WIDA SCHMIDT:
Your recognition of the significance of human capital is insightful, Enrico. Your comprehensive approach to business and emphasis on individuals resonate deeply.

ENRICO BAGNASCO:
Thank you, Wida. It has been a pleasure to share these insights with you.

WIDA SCHMIDT:
Enrico, it has been an honor to conduct this exclusive interview with you. Your insights have shed light on Sparkle's journey and the evolving telecommunications landscape. To our viewers, thank you for joining us for this enlightening CC Executive Interview Live with Enrico Maria Bagnasco, Chief Executive Officer at Sparkle. Until next time, take care.

ENRICO BAGNASCO:
Goodbye, and thank you.

Watch the full video version of this CC-Executive Interview on our CC-Media Portal: https://public. carriercommunity.com/media-channels/cc-webinar-live-interviews/

All transcribed content is subjected to a regular editing process.

ENRICO BAGNASCO has been appointed Sparkle Chief Executive Officer in November 2022. From September 2019 was Sparkle Chief Technology Officer. In July 2018 he has been TIM CTO's Product & Portfolio Manager and from September 2016 he led TIM Technology Innovation with focus on 5G, network virtualization and slicing, big data analytics and cognitive computing. Prior to that, he held different management responsibilities in Telecom Italia in the areas of OSS, Service Platforms and Network engineering, including IP metro, CDN, wireline broadband access, home devices, VoIP/IMS, contact center, video platforms and IoT services. He joined CSELT (Telecom Italia's R&D center) in 1988 and led research and standardization activities on network management and service platforms in ETSI, ITU and TeleManagement Forum. He holds a degree in Computer Science from the University of Torino.

Interview by **Wida Schmidt,** CEO of Carrier Communit

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MESSAGING PLATFORMS-THE URGENT ADAPTION TO THE NEW MESSAGING WHOLESALE OR RETAIL, OMNI OR CPAAS, THE NEED FOR A VAST RESHAPING OF THE MESSAGING PLATFORMS, IS A REAL MUST FOR OUR ENTIRE INDUSTRY WITH **TECHALPHA GROUP**

EXECUTIVE INTERVIEW WITH

ENRICO BAGNASCO

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AT SPARKLE