

# Empoli FC redefines sco ahead in Serie A

Empoli Football Club, Adjacent and IBM



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# Enhancing scouting to outpace competitors

[Empoli Football Club](#) (FC) (link resides outside of ibm.com) has long been recognized as a powerhouse for nurturing young talent, having launched the careers of over 50 players in top-tier teams across Italy and Europe. Known for identifying and training stars like Antonio Di Natale and Tommaso Baldanzi, the club has earned a reputation as a launchpad for the next generation of soccer players.

As one of the smaller clubs in Serie A, Italy's top soccer league, Empoli FC must outcompete wealthier rivals by identifying and developing emerging talent faster and more effectively.

Scouting for new soccer talent has become a race against time. Thousands of players vie for attention, while rival clubs use advanced tools and networks to gain an edge. For Empoli FC, managing the sheer volume of data—from live match reports and performance metrics to in-person scout evaluations—was becoming an overwhelming challenge. Traditional methods were no longer enough to keep pace, and any delay in analyzing data could mean missing star players.

"The world of soccer moves fast," says Armando Perna, Chief Scout of Empoli FC. "If we aren't ahead in identifying talent, we risk losing top prospects who could define our future success."

Empoli FC's leadership recognized that they could not rely on tradition and intuition alone to stay competitive. "Our scouting has always been strong, but given today's challenges, we wanted to enhance it with something that could match the pace and precision we strive for," Perna explains.

"It's incredible how much this tool is helping us in the search and selection of football players. Every piece of insight helps us shape the future of our team and stay true to our philosophy of talent."

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# Empowering scouts with next-generation tools

Empoli FC partnered with IBM and Adiacent to enhance its scouting strategy. Adiacent S.p.A. Benefit Corporation, part of SeSa Group S.p.A., is a trusted IBM partner that combines deep expertise in data science and AI-driven innovation to deliver transformative digital solutions. Adiacent focuses on modernizing applications and using AI to help organizations achieve their strategic goals. Building on its existing player database and harnessing the power of [IBM watsonx™](#), Empoli developed Talent Scouting—an AI-driven portal that enhances the precision, efficiency and speed of player evaluations.

The Talent Scouting portal integrates seamlessly with Empoli FC's operations, consolidating data from live match observations, historical records and performance metrics into a single, accessible platform. Its AI-enhanced clustering organizes players by key attributes, generating actionable profiles that scouts can use for deeper analysis without wasting time on manual data gathering. The system also adapts as new data is added, helping scouts stay ahead of the competition.

“The portal acts like an untiring assistant, processing vast amounts of information and pointing us toward the players who best match the profile of Empoli FC,” says Perna. “It has helped us refine and accelerate the process of identifying the desired profiles in ways we couldn't have imagined.”

Adiacent played a critical role in tailoring the solution for Empoli. The company worked closely with IBM, Empoli FC and the Computer Gross Competence Center for watsonx to align the solution with the club's vision for innovation and talent development. Adiacent's deep understanding of Empoli FC's unique challenges enabled swift problem-solving and smooth implementation.

“We've shared a long journey with Adiacent, and they understand not only our needs but also our values,” Perna notes. “Their support ensured that every detail of the implementation was aligned with our goals.”

With Talent Scouting fully operational, Empoli FC has embraced a data-drive that blends the artistry of soccer expertise with the science of artificial intell

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# Sharper scouting, faster decisions, better results

Empoli FC has enhanced its player evaluation and recruitment process with Talent Scouting. *With time-consuming data analysis out of the way*, scouts can now focus on identifying and assessing players' unique strengths and potential. The club now acts faster and more decisively in the competitive arena of talent acquisition.

"It's incredible how much this tool is helping us in the search and selection of football players," says Perna. "Every piece of insight helps us shape the future of our team and stay true to our philosophy of developing talent."

Moreover, the portal's intuitive design ensures that the team can easily adapt and refine the system based on new requirements and insights. "The portal doesn't replace us—it amplifies what we do best," Perna emphasizes. "Tools help us work more efficiently and effectively. But for us, the human touch remains equally important: knowing the player, understanding their character and seeing them up close."

Beyond enhancing the efficiency of scouting, the Talent Scouting portal strengthens Empoli FC's reputation as an innovator in soccer talent development. With this cutting-edge tool, the club is better equipped to maintain its competitive standing in Serie A while continuing its tradition of launching the next generation of stars.



## About Empoli Football Club

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[Empoli Football Club](#) (link resides outside of ibm.com), founded in 1920, competes in Italy's top soccer division, Serie A. Known for its youth development program, Empoli FC

has a history of launching players to the highest levels of the sport. The club remains a key player in nurturing future stars and fostering competitive excellence.



## About Adiacent

[Adiacent](#) (link resides outside of ibm.com) is the global digital business partner for Total Experience. With over 250 employees across 9 offices in Italy and 3 abroad (Hong Kong, Madrid and Shanghai), it serves as a hub of cross-functional expertise dedicated to driving business growth and enhancing value for companies. Adiacent uses digital solutions to improve interactions with all stakeholders and integrate various touchpoints, delivering impactful results.

### Solution components

[IBM watsonx™](#)



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