

A new kind of schedule

The **schedule** is a section of this magazine where business archives and museums are described, focusing more on their institutional and constitutive features than on their contents.

Often contents are already made known through meetings, exhibits, and even records produced by the business itself. On the other hand, little attention is paid to other highly significant data:

- the reasons why business archives and museums were created;
- their institutional framework;
- their integration within business' operational activity;
- the financial matters;
- the professional training of their managers;
- the quality and quantity of the services that are offered to the business itself and to the public.

These data are of great interest, paving the way for business archives and museums to further develop within the Italian business system and be recognized as a vital part of the business culture –unfortunately, a scenario that is uncertain at present. Companies often disregard their historical records when seeking to define their own core culture; and focus on recent changes in management styles, or on the turnover of managers with different educational backgrounds. Paradoxically, in searching for the original features of their culture, companies may provide a great amount of resources for business consultancy and training, while leaving their archives in the poorest conditions.

And not only that. Over the last 30 years, the trend for investing in business heritage has not proven to be stable. Second thoughts and doubts come up in relation to an array of variables, and these affect a company's strategic decisions.

It is important to be conscious of these interactions, in order to support the growth and development of business archives and museums. Why continue to blame their scarcity on the cultural delay of Italian companies? It might make sense from a moral point of view, but is of no practical use.

In compiling this new section of «Culture e impresa», we know that it won't be always possible to collect the data we need: sometimes records may be unrecognisable, or contain classified information. Therefore we expect a certain extent of partiality from

our sources. Nevertheless, this approach permits us to understand how an entrepreneur – the brain of a business – came to recognize historical records as an integral part of a project as a whole, and how she or he was able to fruitfully exploit them.