



US Marine Corps: Key Elements for the Innovation of the Italian Army

Published on 01/01/2026

There is a passage in the article **“How the US Marine Corps Reinvented Itself in 2025”** (Military.com, Darius Radzius, December 30, 2025), that sounds like a definitive statement: the Marines are equipping themselves for **the battles they will inherit**, not for those they remember. It is not rhetoric. It is the way an armed force agrees to live in a world where war returns to high intensity, multi-domain, data-accelerated, and where the most costly mistake is not “not having the latest system,” but **continuing to train for an idea of conflict that no longer exists**.

The year 2025, in the narrative of the article, is when the Marine Corps tries to demonstrate that **modernization is not a PowerPoint presentation**. It is a daily discipline. It is an organizational effort. It is a change of habits. And above all, it is a choice of method: **Force Design** not as a “one-time” reform, but as a **continuous campaign of learning and adaptation**.

Modernizing is a Present Tense Verb

The word “reinvented” is cumbersome: it seems to promise revolutions, clean cuts, rewritten identities. Yet what emerges is more subtle and, for this reason, more serious. To reinvent themselves, for the Marines, means to address three things that normally change slowly: **formations, technologies, training**. Not “as a slogan,” but “at the squad and battery level,” that is, where war becomes maintenance, shifts, procedures, discipline.

It is a crucial difference: when modernization remains at the slide level, operational life continues to behave as before. But when the questions reach the units — “what changes tomorrow in my training?”, “what changes in my maintenance?”, “what changes in how I deploy?” — modernization becomes real. And it is there that leadership is measured: in making change readable and practicable.

US Marine Corps: Key Elements for the Innovation of the Italian Army

US Marine Corps: Key Elements for the Innovation of the Italian Army

The Data War: When Information Becomes Combat Power

The conceptual heart of the story is **Project Dynamis**: the idea that superiority does not depend only on “more platforms,” but on an advantage in **decision-making**. Shortening the time between identification and engagement, uniting different sensors, fusing data, making human and machine work together: all this is presented as a way to break the rigidity of old “kill chains” and pursue “decision dominance.”

Here there is an awareness: in modern conflict, often the winner is not the one who sees first, but the one who **understands first what they are seeing** and acts before the information expires. And if time is the new currency, then data, models, fusion capabilities, and procedures become a form of armament. “Data-driven decision-making” is not a technological whim: it is a way to try to survive in an environment where ambiguity is constant and windows of opportunity last minutes.

The question a military leader should carry is uncomfortable and concrete: if data is a combat resource, **who governs it operationally?** Not IT, not administration: the chain of command. And if there is no widespread culture of data quality and the use of decision tools, the most

advanced system ends up being an expensive radio.

Training for the Worst as the New Normal

The article insists on a point that, if read carefully, is more “revolutionary” than any drone: the 2025 training pushes to go beyond traditional standards to include what was previously an exception. Contested logistics, resupply without guaranteed ports or airports, maneuvering without certain GPS, communications under jamming, exercises where air support is not assured.

And then a symbolic detail: the emphasis on being able to identify targets with **analog** methods when digital networks collapse. It is the paradox of serious innovation: it does not mean depending on technology, but **becoming resilient even when technology is denied**. One can be modern and, at the same time, trained for loss.

US Marine Corps: Key Elements for the Innovation of the Italian Army

US Marine Corps: Key Elements for the Innovation of the Italian Army

There is a cultural lesson: readiness is no longer “how well I perform under ideal conditions,” but “how much I can do when the context betrays me.” It is a change of mindset. And it requires courage, because training for the worst exposes limits, highlights weaknesses, increases friction. But it is precisely this friction that accelerates learning.

Drones and Pervasive Observation: The Battle of Invisibility

If there is a constant enemy in the Marines' 2025, it is the idea that there are no more “shadow zones.” Drones overhead, sensors everywhere, the possibility of being tracked in real-time. In this scenario, the fundamentals change: rapid repositioning, deception, camouflage, speed over mass.

Here enters a concept worth more than a thousand acronyms: the **management of the electromagnetic footprint**. It is not enough to “have communications”; one must know how to use them without becoming a beacon. It is not enough to “emit”; one must know how to remain silent. It is not enough to “connect”; one must know how to operate when connecting is a risk.

The reflection is simple and ruthless: if the adversary can always see you, your survival depends on how you manage what you leave in the air — signals, emissions, habits. Technology, here, is not meant to make you noticeable: it is meant to **avoid being hit**.

Interoperability: Not Presence, but Meaning

This shifts **interoperability from the “diplomatic” realm to the “operational” one**: it is not a label, it is a capability. And it produces an often underestimated effect: it creates a generation of non-commissioned officers and young leaders who do not discover the theater “on day one” of a crisis, because they have already worked there, measured it, internalized it.

There is also another thread: **integration with partners and allies** is not described as “presence for presence’s sake,” but as rotations linked to mission profiles. Coastal radars calibrated with local units, force protection exercises, cyber-recovery rehearsals, expeditionary medical capabilities: a mosaic of activities that builds skills, not postcards.

US Marine Corps: Key Elements for the Innovation of the Italian Army

The Rough Side of Reinvention: Risks, Incidents, Infrastructure

The article does not avoid the shadows. It talks about training incidents and the consequent safety reviews. It talks about the difficulties in improving accommodations and infrastructure, amid delays, inspections, and budget constraints. In other words: modernizing systems without modernizing what supports them can create a bottleneck.

It is a lesson that applies universally: **transformation does not live only in armaments, it also lives in hangars, workshops, secure spaces for classified networks, adequate depots for autonomous systems**. The “data war” demands infrastructure. The “distributed force” demands logistics. “Readiness” demands **living conditions that retain rare skills**.

2026 as a Stress Test: Reality Does Not Forgive

Finally, the horizon that opens is that of 2026: budgets under scrutiny, **wargames as operational audits**, after-action reports that will say if the theory holds. The question will not

be “did we buy?”, but “**can we transfer fuel, ammunition, and data fast enough, safely enough, when someone is actively trying to prevent it?**”. It is there that a “learning campaign” proves to be more than a formula.

If an Armed Force observes this path, the temptation is to take note of the platforms, the programs, the acronyms. But the most important idea, in the background, is another:

modernization is a method of governing complexity.

Perhaps this is the most useful reflection: in the Marines' 2025, reinvention does not appear as a race for novelty, but as the construction of an **organization that accepts to change *always*, because the context changes *always***. And in an era where war is also the speed of learning, true superiority is not having one more system: it is being able to quickly transform what you are — without losing what you are.

News link: <https://www.military.com/daily-news/headlines/2025/12/30/marines-2025-reinvented-future-and-ready-fight.html>