# Why Beretta Should Become the Strategic Supplier of Micro-Drones for the Italian Army (Attritable and Individual)

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In the past two years, the war in Ukraine has made one thing clear: small and numerous drones (quadcopters, micro-UAS, FPV, mini-UAS) are no longer “accessories,” but a structural component of modern combat and survival on the field. Various analyses and testimonies indicate that the drone ecosystem (rapid production, continuous adaptation, integration with electronic warfare and software) has become decisive, with enormous industrial numbers and very rapid innovation cycles.

This is not just a “Ukrainian” dynamic: even large NATO armies are planning a scale-up in the provision of drones at the tactical level, precisely to capitalize on lessons learned and reduce cost asymmetries (cheap drones vs expensive defenses).

## Italy is already moving: in planning documents, drones “descend” to the lowest operational levels

In the Multi-Year Programmatic Document (DPP) 2025-2027 (Annex), there is an explicit program for the **“Unmanned Army Component”**, with the aim of extending the use of APR and UGV **“down to the lowest operational levels”** and with requirements to operate in **“contested and congested”** environments.
In parallel, Italian policy analyses have long highlighted that nano/mini/micro-unmanned vehicles are among the priorities for the “soldier of the future.”

Translated: public demand (and thus industrial opportunity) is not theoretical. It is already within the lines of investment and modernization.

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## Why the “attritable” micro-drone is the new individual weapon

Here “attritable” is the key word: systems designed to be **numerous, relatively inexpensive, frequently upgradable, and “expendable”** without collapsing financially or operationally. It is not a unique and perfect definition (it varies for armed forces and contexts), but the concept is now consolidated in Western doctrine and industry.

Why is it the “individual weapon of the future” (or, more precisely, *decisive individual capability* )?

- **Increases perception and decision-making**: see first, understand better, choose better (situational awareness).
- **Reduces risk**: exposes the soldier less to uncertainty (immediate reconnaissance of a building, a ridge, an intersection).
- **Makes effectiveness scalable**: the impact grows with quantity and software/network integration, not just with the single platform.

10,000 drones a year for Ukraine: Germany starts industrial co-production

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## Why Beretta: not (only) to make drones, but to build a repeatable “national supply chain”

The strongest argument is not “Beretta already knows how to make drones,” but “Beretta has the characteristics to become **prime contractor** and **industrial guarantor**” of a capability that needs to be industrialized, standardized, and sustained over time.

**a) Structure and positioning in defense/institutions**

Beretta has historically operated in the Defense and Law Enforcement segment and has a dedicated organizational platform, **Beretta Defense Technologies (BDT)**, which aggregates group companies in optics, electro-optics, ammunition, equipment, and systems. To scale “attritable” micro-drones from experimentation to standard equipment, a clear public-institutional framework is needed: requirements, data/link security, volumes, and continuity of purchase. In these types of programs, political sponsorship and Defense governance are what make industrialization sustainable in Italy and accelerate times and standardization.

**c) Supply chain and “serial” production culture with controlled quality**

Reliable mass production (quality control, traceability, maintenance, spare parts, configurations) is precisely what is needed for attritable micro-drones: not “unique pieces,” but **batches**, **variants**, **continuous upgrades**. Beretta's corporate documentation places a strong emphasis on the supply chain and territory as an industrial asset.

**d) Credibility as a key supplier of the Italian Defense**

In a sensitive domain (drones = software, data, radio, cyber), institutional trust and the ability to ensure **supply security**, **compliance**, **logistical support**, and **life cycle** are important. A major “historical” supplier can make the transition from experimentation to equipment easier.

Drones: The Army is doing well with Pilot training, but where is the Industry?
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## The smart move: joint venture (Ukraine or Germany) to accelerate, without reinventing everything

To become a reference point “in useful times,” the strategic shortcut is a **joint venture** with those who already have:

- proven and field-updated platforms (Ukraine),
- advanced manufacturing capability and European supply chain (Germany),
- or both in combination.

And this model **is already happening**: a recent example tells of a joint venture between a Ukrainian start-up and the German manufacturer **Quantum Systems** to produce drones in Germany on a large scale, with a logic of European industrialization and reduction of critical dependencies.

For Beretta, the JV would make very concrete sense:

- Beretta = **national prime contractor**, integration, certifications, logistics, training, procurement.
- Partner = **platforms + drone know-how**, avionics/control, rapid iteration.
- Italy = production/assembly and “sovereignty” over critical components (radio, encryption, firmware, data-handling).

## What a “national champion” of micro-drones should offer

To win as a strategic supplier, a drone is not enough: a **system** is needed.

**Minimum credible package:**

1. **Family of micro-drones** (different sizes/roles, same philosophy of use and maintenance).
2. **Open and modular architecture** (payload, radio, software quickly upgradable).
3. **EW/cyber resilience** as a basic requirement (not as an “optional”).
4. **Training + support + spare parts** industrialized (certain times, clear contracts).
5. **Integration with digitization and C2** (because the value grows when data circulates well).

This approach is also consistent with the European direction: funds and programs (EDF and EU initiatives) are pushing on drones, anti-drone, AI, and autonomy as priority areas.
And on the NATO side, accelerators like DIANA have explicit challenges and lines on autonomy and unmanned systems.

## The (serious) objections and how to respond to them

**“Beretta is small arms: drones = electronics and software”**

True. Precisely for this reason: targeted JV/acquisition + creation of a dedicated business unit within BDT, with leadership and software/hardware engineering from a “dual-use” school.

**“There are already Italian players”**

Still true. But here the point is not to replace: it is to **organize**. Beretta could act as an integrator/prime contractor of a supply chain that includes Italian SMEs (sensors, radio, batteries, payload, AI), avoiding fragmentation and “prototyping.” The big players do not seem interested in the micro, better the medium and large for them.

**“Risk of dependence on foreign components”**

It is a central risk and must be managed contractually: component replacement roadmap, European sourcing, software control, and production/assembly in Italy.

## A concrete positioning proposal: “micro-drones as standard equipment”

If the goal is truly to make the micro-drone the “new individual weapon,” the right positioning is:

- **standardization** (few models, many quantities),
- **sustainable attritability** (costs, repairs, upgrade cycles),
- **national supply chain** (production and support in Italy),
- **interoperability** (NATO/EU) and export capability.

Here Beretta, for history, industrial scale, and relationships, has a credential that many start-ups do not have. And if it moves with the “right” JV, it can quickly bridge the specific technological gap.