

Interview: Future automation

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In 2005, Laura Lazzerini (pictured) started Studio LGL with the intention of realising some of home automation's latent potential in the Italian market. Six years later, her business is flourishing and she has been honoured with a 2011 CEDIA award for Best Technician of the Year. Speaking to **David Davies**, Lazzerini reflects on increasing activity levels in the residential and marine market, and the importance of effective collaboration with architects and designers.

After extensive training in home automation with the Italian Center of Research (CNR), you established your own venture, Studio LGL. What was the starting point for the company?

I knew that I wanted to follow each project all the way through – from initial conversations to technical design to implementation. Initially, I was involved with projects primarily in terms of the technical aspects – integration, programming, software, etc – but over time I have also taken more interest in project management. In 2011, I am very active in both the marine and residential market, where the quality of an installation is becoming [increasingly] important and where I think there will be [further growth] in the future.

Studio LGL provides development, project management and consultancy/surveying services. How do you approach working on larger-scale projects?

It very much depends on the nature of the project. For instance, we might be brought onboard to develop an individual component or functionality of a system. On the other hand, there are also projects where the customer has a lot of very specific requirements, requiring us to coordinate and cooperate with other companies. There is a great deal of this sort of customisation these days. But whatever the situation, the onus is on doing your best for the management of the project and the development and programming of the final system, as well as on advising the customer regarding the best technical solution.

At this year's CEDIA Awards in London, you received the Best Technician of the Year for Region 1 Award in recognition of your "comprehensive commitment to self-improvement through extensive education, as well as a dedication to mentoring within the company, particularly in the specialist areas of residential and marine." What was your response to the award?

Great pleasure and satisfaction! I had not expected to receive this award, so it was a very pleasant surprise! It was very satisfying for my work to be recognised in this way. Prior to receiving this award, I had started to cooperate with CEDIA anyway because I share their approach to good quality in design and installation, and ensuring strong relationships with all parties involved in a project.

What are your priorities as regards the future development of Studio LGL?

I want to continue to invest in all of the technical and project management aspects of my business. I also want to carry on the good relationships that Studio LGL has with engineers, designers and architects. Interaction with architects is very important. I have witnessed projects with good and limited interaction between technical staff and architects, and it isn't too hard to tell the difference in terms of results!

What can be done to encourage the further growth of the CI market in Italy and beyond?

It is important that everyone involved in the industry makes themselves clear to their customers. There has to be clarity of explanation in

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conveying the benefits of home automation systems over traditional ones. In addition, there needs to be more investment in open [platforms] because a lot of existing systems involve [proprietary] protocols; these can often be integrated, but sometimes with great difficulty.

Delivering an open system that can be upgraded easily is probably the best way of convincing customers about the benefits of home automation. If we don't do this, we run the risk that customers will simply stick with traditional systems – a development that would not be in the interests of anyone in our industry.

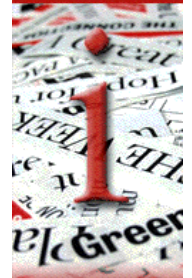
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