



THE BOTTOM LINE

IN ASSOCIATION WITH CSL DUALCOM

The interview that gets the facts from the top

This month Simon Banks talks to Lawrence Gregory, MD of Saturn Security Installations Limited, one of the North West's leading independent companies. Lawrence is known to many as Chairman of the North West and North Wales NSI Gold Regional Scheme. Located in Liverpool and formed in 1987, Saturn's contract base has over 4000 installations of which a third are monitored.



■ What's your advice to anyone starting out in the Security Industry?

Installing systems to the correct standard and highest quality will go a long way with regards to credibility and will set your stall out from day one. Your place of work should be away from your domestic property. Take advice and learn from others in business and bodies such as chambers of commerce, business link or attend business forums. Advice on tax laws, employee legislation etc. can be second to none. Sheer determination, hard work, ambition and drive are the seeds to growth. Listen to your customers – they are most influential to your business. Finally, recognition and approval from a National Inspectorate such as NSI will increase the scope and quality of work. Above all, believe in yourself and remain positive. Follow the correct procedures, apply a sound business ethic, work hard and enjoy the success. If I can do it, so can you.

■ If you could have changed anything in business along the way, what would it have been?

My only regret is I should have taken the leap in starting my company sooner rather than later. Having thrived in the Industry for 21 years, and with continuing success, I am proud of what I have achieved and enjoy what I do. There have been times when I would have preferred debtors to pay more quickly, jobs to go more smoothly and engineers to be more efficient. But it's through the hard times lessons are learnt and goals realised. Invaluable experience is what has made my business what it is today...a success.

■ Has your growth been organic or have you relied on an

acquisition strategy?

Our growth has been solely organic; a natural progression, increased through word of mouth, quality improvements, advertising and customer loyalty. We have embarked on a couple of acquisitions and will be doing more so in the future. Where competitors are concerned, we have a sound business ethic and good working relationships with other Industry members.

■ Do you think that the changing economic climate will affect the Fire and Security Industry?

I think business will increase and become stronger over the next five years. To a certain extent, this industry tends to maintain a healthy influx of work regardless of economic climate. In a recession, security is a necessity as trends for burglary and crime increase, prompting people to protect their homes and valuables. Throughout a boom, where more disposable income becomes available, people still purchase security but perhaps opt for that new 'all singing, dancing system'. The Fire Industry differs as a recession may cause a downturn in sales. If the fire regulatory bodies make certification a must and not an option, then companies will be bound by law to protect premises and employees.

■ Will CCTV, Access and Intruder fully converge in the coming years?

I feel integrated systems are the future for commercial premises. They will be easier to use, more cost effective to the end user and hence more profitable for installers and will one day be regarded as a standard product offering. In general, we are finding more people wanting and expecting ARC monitoring

included in quotations. Even in small domestic properties, Keyholder monitoring is now essential, gone are the days of the bells only system. Systems are now more accessible and affordable e.g. DualCom now comes tailor-made for premises which are without a telephone line, re-enforcing customer protection through the use of GPRS signalling.

■ What makes your business stand out from the crowd?

We have a great customer base that's growing daily with loyal customers who have been with Saturn from the beginning. This reflects our dedication to excellent service and quality of workmanship. We listen to our customers. Reputation is very important and is what allows us to compete on another level. Saturn's great team, admin staff and engineers alike have the skill and knowledge to provide the definitive system for any type of premises. Clients include Tranmere Rovers F.C., Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral and other numerous customers in the Public, Commercial and Domestic Sector. In the last 12 months we have installed a Mentor Management system and issued PDA's to diminish almost all paperwork from our ever growing database. The future looks strong, as we continue to grow and expand our empire!

Did you know...?

We have always found DualCom GPRS to be more reliable, quicker and easier to fit than other forms of signalling. The help desk have been extremely helpful. A very good product.

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