

Global Leader for Cross-Platform M2M Integration Prefers Lamorinda

The IT company that didn't want to go to Palo Alto

By Sophie Braccini



From left: Ever Aro Maya, Jo Springer, Peter Naulls, Steve Raschke and Mike Anderson.

Photo Sophie Braccini

Candi Controls is on top of what many see as the new tech market of the coming decade: the Internet of Things. IoT is about integrating and automating inanimate objects over the Internet such as meters, thermostats, cars, appliances, and health care devices. The problem is that all these machines use different protocols or languages to communicate. What the young Lafayette firm has developed is a Tower of Babel in a cloud where all these machines can understand each other and interact.

Innovative and integrative, Candi could have been lured by the sirens of Silicon Valley where many start-ups grow large egos, but instead, Candi's owners decided to stay in Lafayette – close enough to the nexus of innovation, but far enough away to preserve their sanity and quality of life.

Over the past five years, through a million and a half lines of code, Candi Controls president Steve Raschke and partner Mike Anderson created machine to machine (M2M) applications that control all kinds of machinery remotely over the Internet.

"There is no common protocol because this is how companies do it," says Raschke, "they want you to stay in their proprietary bubble. GE wants everything in your house to be GE, and Samsung wants everything in this building to be Samsung. So the next biggest opportunity is not about people, it is machine to machine. But the problem is that those machines don't talk to each other, and that's what we've solved with Candi."

What they have created is a platform that a

company can access to build the applications they need, without having to take into account the different 'languages' that are spoken by the machines they need to integrate. "We are 'plug-and-play' for the web of things," adds Raschke.

One of Candi's clients is the Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency, which wanted to develop a plan to minimize peak demand and improve energy efficiency at its plant to qualify for lower rates from its electricity provider. A study showed that granular monitoring and control of 19 specific pumps, aeration motors, blowers and lighting processes could further reduce energy costs by many thousands of dollars per year. However, MRWPCA's existing systems were not capable of communicating with or handling the massive amount of data generated from all those new real-time meters and load controls.

MRWPCA's solution was to use Candi's cloud-based platform to integrate low-cost, off-the-shelf commercial meters and controls that could be easily installed by local personnel. Candi provided a secure, web-standard platform for real-time data acquisition and control of virtually any networked device, allowing MRWPCA to measure, fine-tune and realize significant energy savings.

Another recent example, closer to everyday use, was the agreement signed last January by San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) and Candi Controls for the creation of the PowerTools app that customers download on their mobile phone or tablet to check recent energy use, set and

manage energy saving goals, and track weather patterns related to energy use.

At this time, Raschke believes that there is no equivalent in the market place for what Candi Controls offers. "Our platform as a service is unique," says Raschke. "We also provide professional services to customize mobile and web apps and user interfaces. We have a free open API (application-programming interface) for customers and third-party developers to create their own apps and solutions on our platform."

Raschke describes himself as a serial entrepreneur. His background is in network devices and control. He started in the 1980s as a rock musician who fixed consoles and wiring in studios. The studio owners invited him to their homes to wire sound systems and design video systems. In the '90s he worked in the control industry for homes, then started a company that networked homes for homebuilders to accommodate the Internet and broadcast systems. He went on to develop a digital living-room product, streaming audio, video and files to TVs for Seagate. "Five years ago it seemed to me that the world was about to change and that there would be this problem of things not talking to each other," he says.

Candi (an acronym for Cloud-Assisted Network Device Integration) was a logical step for him and he called on his longtime partner Mike Anderson to join him, but in Lafayette, not in Silicon Valley.

"There is a formula for Silicon Valley companies," says Anderson. "You need to be located and funded there, and there is a pecking order depending on who you're funded by, where you're located and how much money you spend on marketing." The two were less excited about the thrill of becoming Silicon Valley darlings, as about the software they created, and the possibilities they opened in people's lives. "And we like the lifestyle here, the schools for our kids; we like the people, the pace, the weather."

The two men now employ 15 people in the profitable business office at LaFiesta Square. They get a convenient place to work, close to their homes – they both live in Moraga – where everything is on a human scale.

Candi Controls is now ready for its next growth spurt and is looking for investors. Hopefully they'll be able to grow in place.

Lamorinda Weekly business articles are intended to inform the community about local business activities, not to endorse a particular company, product or service.

business briefs

Threading Salon Opens in Lafayette

3370 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette

(510) 918-4325, www.kalpanathreading.com

Kalpana Gurung, who used to work at the Threading Place in Broadway Plaza in Walnut Creek, has just opened her own place in Lafayette on Mt. Diablo Boulevard, right next to Ruby Chen of Design 4 You. "Threading is an ancient method of hair removal originating in the Middle East," says the young business owner. "Threading is more precise and the hair grows back finer and slower. There is no burning, peeling, irritation and it's a great remedy for ingrown hair, and good for sensitive skin." The process involves a thin cotton thread specially designed for threading that is doubled, then twisted. It is then rolled over areas of unwanted hair, plucking the hair at the follicle level. Unlike tweezing, where single hairs are pulled out one at a time, threading can remove short lines of hair. Threading is also much more precise than waxing. Gurung offers to remove any type of facial hair.



Kalpana Gurung at the Threading Place

Photo Sophie Braccini

Sugar Rush Guaranteed - See's Candies Opening in Lafayette

3518 Mt Diablo Blvd., Lafayette

www.sees.com

See's Candies will celebrate the opening of its new shop in Lafayette on June 21. Located in the Lafayette Shopping Center next to Peet's Coffee & Tea and a few stores down from Whole Foods, See's will offer its usual selection of some 100 different varieties of candies. Opening day will feature free lollipops and hats for kids as well as a prize wheel that guests can spin to win. See's historical vehicles will also be on display.

Beauty Starts With the Right Products and Tools, Now In Lamorinda

3606 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette

(925) 284-8600, www.Lafayette-Beauty.com

The new Lafayette Beauty Store located on Mt. Diablo Boulevard opens with an offering of a full line of professional salon-only beauty supplies, hair and skin care products, bath and body care, cosmetics, nail care, styling tools, hair accessories, and much more. Clients can find many of their favorite brands in the store that boasts a selection of professional-only high-end, hard to find products. Owner Peter Schamoni says that he is always adding new products to keep up with the latest trends in the beauty industry. "There isn't a better beauty store around," he says. Staff will help customers choose the right products to fit their hair care or skin care needs and to answer questions. The store also carries a variety of professional styling tools such as dryers made of porcelain ceramic with nano titanium. There is a skin care room with an esthetician who specializes in facials as

well as makeup artistry. The selection of polishes and colors is very impressive. In addition, clients will find bath and body care products as well as candles and massage oils to top-off their pampering spree.

News from the three chambers of commerce

Seven Chambers Mega Mixer!

Super Mixer with the Lafayette, Moraga, Orinda, Walnut Creek, Hispanic, Pleasant Hill, and Concord chambers from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 10 at the Veteran's Memorial Building in Lafayette, 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Each chamber will present a restaurant from their constituency. The Foodie Fare Favorites will be selected by the attendees. Cost: \$5 per person. All proceeds will be donated to the Lafayette Veterans for our troops.

Lafayette

Entrepreneur's Club Mixer at 8:30 a.m. Thursday, June 20 in the Chamber Conference Room.

Rock the Plaza featuring The Floorshakers starting at 6:30 p.m. Friday, June 21 at Plaza Park.

Green Committee open meeting at noon Tuesday, June 25 in the Chamber Conference Room.

Business Issues Committee open meeting at 8 a.m. Friday, June 28 in the Chamber Conference Room.

Moraga

Membership business meeting starting at 7:30 a.m. Friday, June 28 at the Hacienda de las Flores. Planning Director Shawna Brekke-Read will update the business community on future developments of interest to them.

Second Annual Moraga Chamber Golf Tournament and Dinner Party on Monday July 22; check-in from 10:30 to 11:45 a.m., shotgun starts at noon. This is the chamber's largest fundraising event of the year. The party includes fun and prizes including foursomes at local golf courses, dinners at local restaurants, wine baskets and much more. Space is limited to the first 100 golfers, cost for golfers \$175. Non-golfers can come for dinner for \$60. Contact Kathe Nelson at (925) 323.6524 or kathe@moragachamber.org to register.

Orinda

Orinda 4th of July Parade & Events

Since 1984, July 4th is an Orinda tradition started by the Orinda Association as a way to celebrate not only Independence Day, but also to celebrate "community." Thousands of citizens gather on this special day to not only watch or participate in the parade, but also attend the numerous other events available throughout the day. On July 4 there are events for every age group starting with the annual pancake breakfast, flag raising ceremony, fun run, parade, live music, food, games and booths in the park following the parade. Everyone is invited to participate in the parade, host a booth in the park, or just come and enjoy the events. Don't miss the chamber's hot dog booth, known for its tasty hot dog treats in true Independence Day fashion. The deadline for submitting an application to be in the parade is June 21. For details, visit orindaassociation.org.

If you have a business brief to share, please contact **Sophie Braccini** at sophie@lamorindaweekly.com

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