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Q&A with Mario Proietti, Founder and CEO of LocationSmart



Mario Proietti
 Founder and CEO

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Interview conducted by:
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CEO CFO Magazine

CEO CFO: *What was the vision when you founded LocationSmart?*

Mr. Proietti: The vision for LocationSmart was to enable services that improve safety and security for mobile users and business operators through [cloud-based location solutions](#) avoiding the need for mobile application development and support.

Masoud Motamedi and I co-founded TechnoCom Corporation in 1995 to help wireless carriers and technology providers implement E911 location service. Our unique expertise from years of experience with wireless and location systems, enabled us to assist in the deployment of new technologies to enable public safety dispatch operators to locate people calling 911 from mobile phones.

Starting around ten years ago, we began working with wireless carriers to enable other applications of these technologies for other services such as roadside assistance, safety, security and transportation and logistics. We envisioned that enabling business applications through cloud-based location technologies would help solve challenges that could not be addressed by other solutions based on mobile applications or dedicated location devices. It was this vision that enabled us to launch the [services LocationSmart now provides](#).

CEO CFO: *How has your vision played out over time? What is the focus today?*

Mr. Proietti: The company has provided its cloud-based location services to companies that protect the safety and security of people on the roads or online. Those services include roadside assistance, transportation and logistics, online transaction security and compliance and personal safety and security applications.

Over time the company expanded the capabilities of its platform with a comprehensive set of cloud-based location solutions that include wireless network-based location, IP geolocation, HTML5 browser location, cell site ID and Wi-Fi access point ID methods as well as geofencing and device profiling capabilities. This broad range of services represents the most comprehensive set of cloud-based location capabilities anywhere.

CEO CFO: *With so many types of enterprises in need of the services you provide, how do you decide where to focus?*

Mr. Proietti: Our focus has always tied back to our founding vision of enabling services that aid in safety and security of consumers and the businesses that provide them mobile services. This has allowed the company to focus on several key vertical areas including roadside assistance, transportation and logistics, online gaming and lottery compliance, personal safety and security, and financial services.

CEO CFO: *Can you talk to some of the guiding principles of LocationSmart?*

Mr. Proietti: Some of our guiding principles include putting the customer and their end users first and maintaining the highest level of service integrity that those customers depend on. This is manifested in the operational robustness of our platform, best practices for location services and attention to privacy and data security.

CEOCFO: *What does a typical day look like for you?*

Mr. Proietti: I generally start my day at 6 a.m. I'll catch up on industry news and emails over coffee, then walk my dog before heading into the office. I also make sure to prioritize my day. I will flag the two or three most important items on my day's agenda, and I'll block off time to deal with those specifically, without interruption.

I also block off time to go through my email and pull out the ones that can be dealt with immediately, which I then handle. The others are set aside on my task list for the next day. It's like a kind of email triage. The rest of my day is spent reviewing company systems reports and engaging in lead follow-up, sales, customer support and just generally working with other team members on whatever is the central focus of the day.

CEOCFO: *What has helped you most to become a successful entrepreneur?*

Mr. Proietti: On a personal level, I feel it is very important to challenge the accepted thinking on key industry topics. By that I mean my own thinking, as well as the thinking of others. I feel it is very valuable to play devil's advocate, regardless of whether my or someone else's position changes. This approach has a good chance of finding better solutions and new perspectives.

As a company, our best strategy over the years has been to keep all our options open at all times. Of course, we have to have the team working together to move the company forward, but it is also important to keep an eye on the horizon, so to speak. This allows us to get an idea of what might be coming along, and it allows us to be prepared for change and alter course if needed.

"We see the Internet of Things (IoT) and the protection of the connected devices and the transactions people and systems conduct with them as key drivers for location services. LocationSmart's mission continues to be helping our customers and their users manage and secure those critical assets and services."- Mario Proietti

CEOCFO: *What is one failure you have experienced as an entrepreneur and how did you rise above it?*

Mr. Proietti: The failure that comes to mind is when we launched an advertisement-funded navigation app called SpotOnGPS. This was about six months before free navigation became available on smartphones and it became evident that we didn't have the resources necessary to compete successfully in that environment. When it happened, we accepted the failure and immediately pulled the program. It's important to do this. Failures happen. When they do, recognize and acknowledge them. Then learn from them and pivot in a new direction.

CEOCFO: *How do you approach the development of new ideas?*

Mr. Proietti: I think the seed of any idea is a problem that needs to be solved or a question that needs to be answered. When a customer, employee, or partner brings up a question or an issue, I take it to our team and let them share their perspective and experience on the matter. Then we can brainstorm on potential solutions.

We will look at similar situations from the past. Sometimes, I will even propose an off-the-wall solution, something that may not be obvious, to stimulate the team's thinking. This often helps us really work out potential solutions. And I have no problem going back and reviewing a solution we came up with when new information makes itself available. It's always good to have a fresh look after some time has passed.

CEOCFO: *What are some of the biggest challenges your industry faces?*

Mr. Proietti: Some of the biggest challenges are in the evolution of technologies that requires continual adaptation to assure the broadest reach across network types, device types and geography. Additionally, with most of our customers operating at national or even global scale, the evolving rules and regulation around user privacy and data protection requires on-going review of best practices and implementations to stay ahead of the changing landscape. Fortunately, the core principal of putting the customers and their end users first makes this a natural part of the company's practices.

CEOCFO: *Is there one trend that excites you? And how does LocationSmart adapt to trends in the industry?*

Mr. Proietti: For me personally, I am excited by the incredible development and application of sensor technologies, particularly in the health care sector. We are starting to see them being used in mobility aids and prosthetics, and for

dispensing medications, monitoring body functions, and diagnosing symptoms. These sensor technologies are accelerating the advancement of treatments at an amazing pace that we have never witnessed before.

When it comes to this trend and others in the industry, LocationSmart adapts through incremental evolution of its platform and operations to minimize the gap between our current capabilities and those on the horizon. Thanks to our cloud-based operating model, our customers are able to access new technologies as soon as they become available and can be supported at scale without disruption to their existing implementations. This operating model allows them to seamlessly have access to new capabilities essentially on-demand.

CEOCFO: *What is ahead for LocationSmart?*

Mr. Proietti: We continue to focus and expand our capabilities in areas that are driven by the massive proliferation of [mobile and connected devices](#) and growth in the use of online services by end users from those devices. We see the Internet of Things (IoT) and the protection of the connected devices and the transactions people and systems conduct with them as key drivers for location services. LocationSmart’s mission continues to be helping our customers and their users manage and secure those critical assets and services.

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