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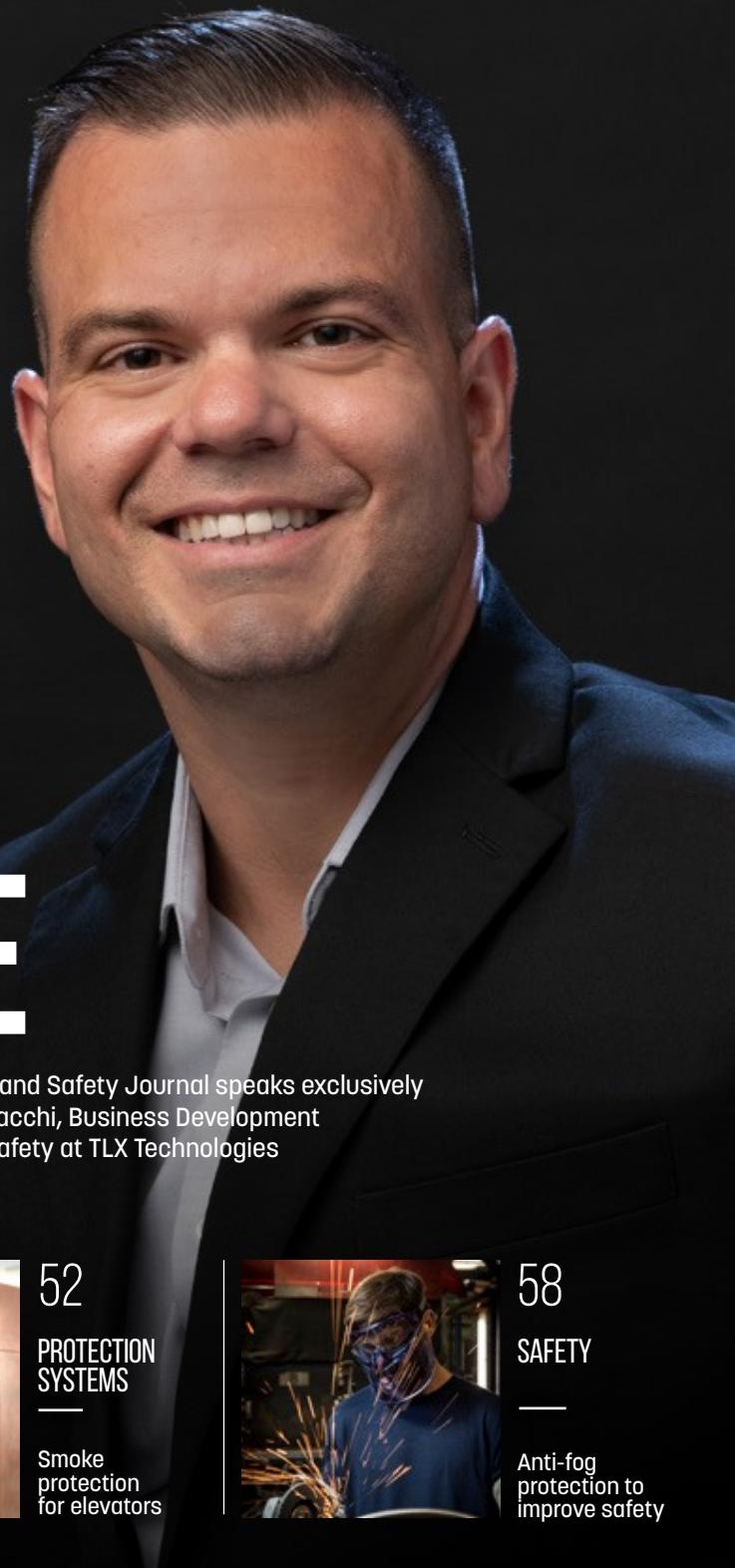
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HEAD TO HEAD EXCLUSIVE

FACING THE FUTURE

International Fire and Safety Journal speaks exclusively with Jason Busalacchi Business Development Manager, Fire & Safety at TLX Technologies

There has been a massive shift this year, in some part due to the pandemic, in how companies are working in the fire industry. Of course, we all know that many have been working from home, and a new era of flexible working has been ushered in. However, these are some of the more obvious changes that those outside of the sector will notice. For those in the industry, they have seen more change, change that has been on the horizon for quite some time.

To gain better insight into the changes shaping the industry, as well as some of the biggest challenges that companies are being faced with, International Fire and Safety Journal caught up with Jason Busalacchi Business Development Manager, Fire & Safety at TLX Technologies.

Customer focused solutions

There is perhaps no one better within TLX Technologies to give insight into the current challenges that the fire industry, and more specifically, the suppression industry faces than

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Jason Busalacchi. Having spent five years working within fire suppression, he has seen the changes develop over time. One change that has developed is that COVID has seemingly created

more opportunities for monitoring, remote monitoring and the sharing of data between systems and agencies. However, this is something Busalacchi has seen developing over a longer period of time: “I think the industry was going this way anyway, no matter what. IoT has become a huge thing in the last ten years or so, and there is going to be more of this, but COVID has certainly accelerated it much faster than anticipated. A lot of that was due to people not having or not wanting to be in contact with others, and then also just being able to do everything remotely.”

“Additionally, the Internet of Things and remote monitoring allows for statuses of systems to be understood in hard to reach locations such as oil rigs that are in the ocean, data centres, areas where you need security clearance to get into. You don’t need to necessarily



have the personnel that has those credentials all the time, because of the fact that you are monitoring these systems remotely, and then only deploying resources to see what is wrong when necessary.

Demonstrating this level of knowledge is vital for companies like TLX, as they can easily adapt their products and services to reflect these changes. On his role within the company, Busalacchi reveals how customer relations helps keep their solutions effective and up to date with those changes. He comments: "My role involves some product management as well as sales. It's a combination of roles in which the liaison between our engineering and managerial groups helps to identify the needs of our customers and then to provide a

"Right now, we are looking into some significant breakthroughs in technology that we feel are going to be very useful for the industry as a whole moving forward."

solution for the problems they have with their applications.

"Specifically, my role as business development manager is within our fire and safety division. I oversee the product line in that division. Throughout my time here, I have helped to develop effective actuation solutions for our customers' fire suppression systems, and I've also helped identify how we can better make those system components."

Looking to the future at the right time

As the innovation and technology that is bringing the industry forward continues, more companies are looking to shift their focus towards developing new products. Of course, much of this will be born out of the needs of the customer such as



operating systems remotely, and Busalacchi believes that although TLX are looking to achieve this in the future, it is also something they have always done, and are doing so at the right time: "We are going to focus on the industry needs as we always have. Right now, we are looking into some significant breakthroughs in technology that we feel are going to be very useful for the industry as a whole moving forward, with the remote monitoring, and inter connectivity and data collection of multiple facets of the system to be fed remotely to a platform that our customers can see."

"There are a few things such as the status of the actuators themselves, the liquid level sensors, their statuses, along with a few other key metrics that can all be fed back to the same place, and then provided remotely, regardless of where you are to check the status of those systems. We are working with some key customers to help catapult TLX and those platforms to the market. It's something we are very excited about because I think that we

are poised to get into these new technologies at the right time. We are working to be at the forefront, leading the charge to bring these new solutions to the market."

Solving key challenges

For 20 years TLX Technologies have been manufacturing fire suppression system actuation technologies for some of the biggest names in the



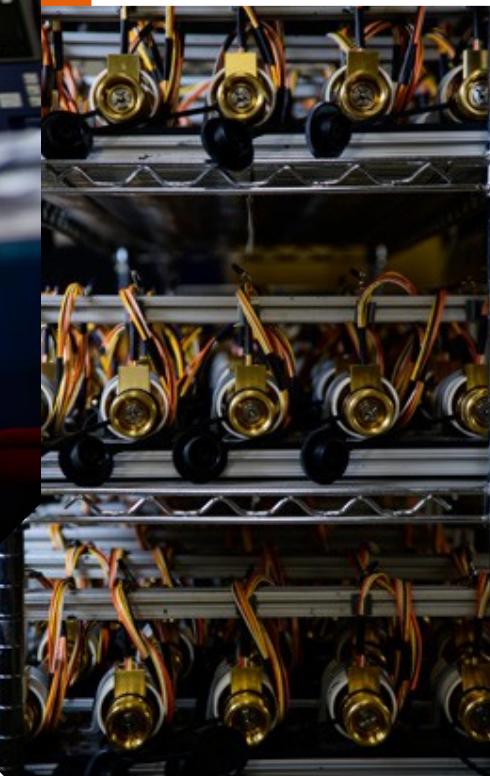


industry. As time has gone by, the company have continued to keep up with the latest changes in the industry and are still looking to innovate. Despite the obvious challenges the fire sector has faced, TLX have managed to manufacture two new products that will be launched at Intersec in January. Busalacchi is confident that these products will help solve key issues and offer revolutionary solutions to common challenges: "One of our

"One of our new products is going to be fairly revolutionary in the fact that it will allow our customers to have easy access to what the industry calls explosion proof actuators."

new products is going to be fairly revolutionary in the fact that it will allow our customers to have easy access to what the industry calls

explosion proof actuators. Right now, it's very hard to find actuation technologies that comply with certain specifications to make an explosion proof fire suppression system. What that means is if you have a special hazards environment with ignitable contents in the air and an



electrical signal from a control panel is provided to release the actuator, it could potentially spark any intrusive content present in the device. Consequently, this could then propagate externally and ignite the entire room. Our explosion proof actuator prevents that propagation from happening. Furthermore, the device is designed for Class I environments, and we are working on furthering our certifications for Class II and III.

"The second product that we will be introducing is our electronic liquid level sensor, which effectively is a way for our customers to have a digital readout without manually having to check the amount of content that is inside of the fire suppression tank. What they are currently doing is taking a manual reading by pulling up a ruler that is in a tank, that's magnetic, when it feels

a bit of a tug on that magnetic area, that is their readout.

"What our product is effectively going to do is allow maintenance personnel to walk up to the device, push a button, and it can be a digital display. If they don't want a digital display, a signal can be sent back to a digital platform remotely that can provide the maintenance personnel with the information necessary to show the status of that system and whether that tank needs to be serviced, without having to actually go to the site and manually take that reading."

As we continue to adapt working practices, it seems that the way forward for the industry is to continue its adoption of remote working through the use of technology. In the last two years one thing there has been a big change is a lack of personnel to be able to maintain some systems, and it's going to change further and faster into being able to gauge the status of the system without having to always have somebody on site to check it.

Remote feedback, and only requiring personnel to be deployed in the event of a hazard or a mishap on the system, is going to save companies that carry out maintenance work a lot of time, and a lot of money, and also require them to live with reduced staff because of the times that we live in. In the past, the fire industry has been known for taking its time with adapting to new technology. The events of the last couple of years may be the push it needs to take advantage of the benefits of IoT, AI and Machine Learning.

