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RICO LUCIA

By Andrew King

It hasn't taken Rico Lucia long to rise the ranks within TOA Canada Corporation. At the beginning of the summer, Lucia was named as the first-ever director of TOA Canada, becoming one of only five international directors within TOA Corporation and the youngest ever appointed after only a decade with the commercial and professional audio and security giant.



Lucia first arrived at TOA Canada close to 10 years ago, boasting an extensive background in security and sales. "My first job, at 14, was telemarketing, and then I was doing door-to-door sales for many years, so that's where a lot of my core sales experience came from," he tells *Professional Sound*. It was after high-school that his interest on the security side solidified, enrolling to study law and security in college and getting both his security guard and private investigator licenses

the day of his 18th birthday.

"I'd gone to a security company when I was 16 or 17 to apply for a job, and they said, 'You're too young; we can't hire you until you're 18,'" Lucia recalls, adding with a laugh, "and I don't think they expected to see me a couple of years later, when I walked right back in."

Lucia worked as a security guard for a few years while also conducting private investigations, eventually going to work for a security system dealer. "And that's when I started to learn about alarms and private security systems on all facets," he shares, "from guard services to emergency response to retail investigations to private investigations, insurance fraud..."

He spent another decade or so in the security market, working with everything from CCTV to access control to intrusion systems, all while audiovisual technologies increasingly seeped into that sector.

That's ultimately what led him to TOA Canada close to 10 years ago. "We were really growing the security side of our business around that time," Lucia explains, now from the perspective of a TOA Canada executive. "We were well known for our AV technologies, so I was brought in as they were starting to really expand that vertical market."

Interestingly, almost a decade later, those two worlds are still merging. "It's become a big melting pot now," Lucia asserts, "with telecom and security companies coming into AV and vice versa, so that's something we've always got top of mind at TOA."

In fact, that continual coming together of various industries is one of the things he enjoys most about his job. "We're constantly getting to work with new people on new projects, as many of our customers are also expanding their service offerings, so we enjoy working with them on their growth," he says. "We consider ourselves an extension of their companies, and try to help them find new solutions and new ways to drive their sales."

Considering his background in sales, it's no surprise that many of Lucia's professional highlights with TOA Canada to date are sales-related. Really, who wouldn't boast a bit about consistently breaking sales records year-to-year?

"We've had ups and downs, but have been consistently growing since I joined the team," he says proudly. "And thanks to the support of our entire staff, since 2015, sales have really catapulted."

Lucia always enjoyed his time on the road with the sales team, visiting end users and customers and attending many trade events. Since his promotion to general manager in early 2016 and now with his most recent appointment, though, he's been on the road less frequently; instead, he's sticking close to HQ and overseeing all operations of the company, from marketing strategies to customer support.

That said, he still has the opportunity to travel, having recently returned from training for his new position in Japan, where he's set to return later this fall for more meetings.

Outside of work, Lucia is a longtime martial arts enthusiast, having practiced his art for over 25 years. What's more, it's an interest that he now shares with his three children. "They constantly keep us on our toes," Lucia says, also speaking on behalf of his wife. "After work and on the weekends, it's anything from Girl Guides to Scouts to swimming lessons to martial arts... The last five to 10 years, that's what life has morphed into for us, and we're having a lot of fun."

Lucia is still getting acquainted with his new role and all of the responsibilities it carries, but he's eager to get to work. "First and foremost, we want to continue our recent growth," he says on behalf of his team, whom he credits a great deal for his own success and that of the company. And those efforts don't stop with TOA Canada; Lucia sees the value in strengthening the industry nationwide, and knows his company can be a leader in that regard.

Relatively speaking, it hasn't taken Rico Lucia long to advance his career to this point, and it shouldn't take him long to start making an impact in his new post.

Andrew King is the Editor-in-Chief of Professional Sound.