

Network Marketing

The Phenomenal Building Block for Ultimate Business Success



An Interview with
Dan Andersson,
Founder and CEO
of LEO Ltd.

Most businesses, once started up, take many years to reach the maturity stage in their life cycle, when shareholders can comfortably sit back and say that the market has almost reached full saturation. There is a new business in "town" and in just six short months, has speedily gone from the introduction stage to rapid growth having thus far penetrated into 43 countries!

Learning Enterprises Organization Ltd (LEO) is this new company and it was founded by Dan Andersson who is the current CEO. Atif Kamran is also a co-founder and is the Global Marketing Director and David Bosley is its Commercial Director.

As a result of the economic global recession, with the subsequent result of millions of unemployed, many of them youth below the age of 35, several governments across the globe are turning towards entrepreneurship development as the answer to the creation of new jobs. Dan, who has been self-employed since the early age of 21, could not agree more. He believes that entrepreneurship is indeed the key and states that "By being in business for yourself you learn everything you need to be successful. It is more fun, more fulfilling and more rewarding."

During his working life, network marketing played a very significant part which taught him that true success is achieved by working for, with and through other people. In a recent interview with OBTAINER, he has even more to say:

OBTAINER: Your new company LEO, is now six months old. Share with our readers your experience in network marketing? What led you to decide to open LEO and which particular needs do you hope to fulfill?

DAN ANDERSSON: I joined the industry in 1989 as a distributor of NSA. In 1993 I was top distributor in Europe for a company called Quorum which made a pretty big splash back in the day. Upon the demise of that company, I was somewhat disillusioned about the direct selling industry – the main problem being that no matter how much due diligence you did, it was very hard to really work out if the company leadership had a genuine long term vision and integrity, unless you got involved and six months later...

But life goes in circles, so after creating a very successful management consultancy working for a number of Fortune 500s, I found myself back in the industry, this time on the corporate side. I became Sales Director for a European Telecoms company called Euphony. I then joined the Chinese Multinational TIENS and served as European Vice President responsible for 26 markets (including at one stage USA and Canada), was made an offer I couldn't refuse, to be CEO and President for a start-up social networking and direct selling hybrid. After some disappointing differences of opinion with the major shareholders of the direction the business had to go in, I re-signed in Oct 2011.

In the end I decided that to deliver on the inherent potential of direct selling, I would have to do this as the major shareholder and executive decision maker. I have been most fortunate to attract a team of world class talent as well.

The real business of direct selling, the fundamental value it gives lays in the personal and professional development members gain. In my world there could be nothing more timely and exciting than creating a business where real-world, real-value training was the core proposition. And with the develop-

ment of Internet coverage together with bandwidth development... it is not an accident that e-learning is the fastest growing content bar none on the web!

OBTAINER: What challenges and rewards have you experienced so far by deciding to go global right from the very start?

DAN ANDERSSON: Our vision from the start was very clear – we wanted to build a multicultural global business. Through the growth of the internet, through globalization, distributors are living and breathing a world that recognizes no boundaries. In terms of business vision in LEO we believe very strongly that a business model that connects people, in our times especially, a Good Thing™! We believe that LEO can make a real difference.

Interestingly, the feedback and response we have had has been amazing! People are really resonating with this and it feels like we have tapped into a real gold vein.

Having been involved in multi million member organizations, I did not underestimate the challenges: you have to have industrial strength online platforms from the start; platforms and products have to be multilingual; time zones and distances create their own challenges; and inevitably it is very very easy to stretch yourself too thin. But the challenges also force you to think big, think scalable and think systems. In direct selling terms, the scope of our ambition has forced us to drive simple duplicatable systems from day one!

Also, it's not enough to be online. Anyone can launch a website and claim to have a "Global Business" (and haven't we seen enough of those!?) but you also have to develop market presence, both for reasons of high touch marketing and relationship building, but also to ensure that you can manage compliance and logistics. I think that a long term business has to be a mix of 'old school' and 'new school', i.e. online systems and local presence. To that end we have a business plan that includes developing geographical hubs and local offices to serve the markets. We have hubs now in the UK, in Dubai and Hong Kong, and during 2013 will develop a number of local market offices: Egypt, Nigeria, Hungary, Turkey, to name a few that are close to implementation.

OBTAINER: Share with our readers the various products and services that you shall be offering. What is the largest benefit that learners can expect?

DAN ANDERSSON: Our products are in four categories: e-Learning, we are developing an e-Tutoring platform (eBay meets eLance), we do live seminars and finally technology products, like memory-sticks, tablets and smartphones. Infinitely scalable products, innovative new developments, time-tested and sexy!

But of course, the connecting red thread is entrepreneurship training. Richard Berry, the former chairman of the UK DSA, and I were once in Nairobi, Kenya. At a TIENS event we were just about the only westerners there and many deep conversations were had! One of the things he said was one of those things that stayed with me, which was his view that direct selling was one of the world's foremost creators of entrepreneurship. People come into the industry, stay around for a few years, get kind of churned around, some make money and some not so much – then they go back to 'ordinary life', start a business and are successful beyond anything they would have believed possible before their direct selling experience.

You ask any audience of a hundred people: would you like to have your own successful business? And 100% of them will say 'Yes.' Yet maybe only 10-15% have actually started to take steps in that direction. Why? Because they lack knowledge – it seems complicated – or they lack courage, or they lack capital. And LEO provides solutions in these three areas.

In terms of the learning and the topics, we are not just talking motivation or yet another training on goal setting! Think what a successful entrepreneur needs: presentation skills, selling, manag-



ing people, doing a business plan, managing a budget, computer skills, fiscality, accounts, business proposals, online marketing – the list is endless because everyone comes from a different place.

Additional to that core-line, we have partnerships with people operating in the areas of e-learning – that's how we can localize our product sets in terms of language so quickly. We currently have over 100 different titles, rapidly growing to several hundred.

OBTAINER: What does the LION Code mean and what is its significance personally?

DAN ANDERSSON: Our product strategy is a LEO core-line of products that take a would-be entrepreneur through all the key skills a successful self-employed person would need. The LION Code is the first module in that series, helping you to 'Unleash the Lion Within.' For me personally, it is the culmination of over twenty years experience, inspired by the work of some of the giants in the arena of self-development, from the late Jim Rohn, of course, but also George Zalucki who was my sponsor in Quorum, and Richard Bandler whom I studied NLP with, and many others. I have to say that I am very proud of it and proud to be offering it as a high-production value course right at the outset of our members' LEO journey!

OBTAINER: In three sentences, how would you define your compensation plan?

DAN ANDERSSON: Our plan is designed to reward the three categories of participants that we believe you have to: the new entrant, the part time team builder and the big leader. Easier said than done and many have tried. But by drawing on collective experience of many years and many companies, we have a plan that is lucrative, fair, drives teamwork and rewards product sales – it's a Big Plan, seamless, Global, huge upside potential but plenty of micro rewards for the new people.

OBTAINER: In how many countries do you already have distributors and how many are they in total?

DAN ANDERSSON: We have sign ups in 43 countries, developing good teams in 10 or eleven markets, and a modest 4,500 in some nine months of pre launch.

OBTAINER: Where shall you be based in Dubai, United Arab Emirates and what is your exact start up date there?

DAN ANDERSSON: We have set up Dubai as an executive regional hub, serving the Middle East, Africa and South Asia. We have an office in one of the free-zones since July 2012, housing IT, customer service and legal compliance. It is not an operational office as we don't see Dubai as a market we intend to develop sales in. Of



course it is a great 'feeder' place, with so many ex-patriots and international inhabitants. You can obviously network the world from Dubai alone!

OBTAINER: How much will it cost to start a business and what other requirements will be needed?

DAN ANDERSSON: We decided on a free membership model and our product packs start at GB£10. Basically, buy a product and you are a member in LEO with full access to an industrial strength back-office, no sneaky autoships, no standing orders, no renewal fees. All we make money on is product sales and of course it is nice to be able to say that 100% of our members are products of the product!

OBTAINER: What does each distributor need to do to maintain their business?

DAN ANDERSSON: No maintenance requirements, no active status requirements, no fine print that comes and bites you later.

OBTAINER: Where do you see the LEO business within the next three years?

DAN ANDERSSON: We are a top tier direct selling company. In three years time we will have complete global coverage, we will have created tens of thousands of successful entrepreneurs with a business outside of their LEO distributorship fully owned by them. This is the real measure of our success – not to tie people in to the company but to set them free.

We want to be known as the transparent company, the ethical one, a flagship company within the DSA community, the company you want to get into your country because LEO helps your people become innovative entrepreneurs.

Learning Enterprises Organization Ltd is scheduled to officially launch its hub office in Dubai, United Arab Emirates on April 23, 2013 and their office will be located in Dubai Knowledge Village.