



Lisden Technology

A small business with big ambitions

A 'small business' from Chester is proving that its size is no barrier to big achievements and global ambitions.

For the last three years, Kelvin Lawson and Sara Evans have been running the software development consultancy Lisden Technology and it has been a momentous period.

It won an Emmy last year for designing a camera used on the BBC's Blue Planet II, and this month it is one of the 'Small Biz 100' companies being showcased ahead of this year's Small Business Saturday on 7 December.

Lisden Technology writes software and builds electronic devices for companies in America, Germany and Australia, in addition to supporting clients closer to home.

The business, which has received marketing and business support from the Council's economic growth team, launched unexpectedly after Kelvin posted online what he thought was an innocuous blog.

Kelvin said: "A man from Germany had found the blog and the software was exactly what he needed. I never thought when I was writing the blog post that it would turn into a business."

The blog mentioned some clever new software Kelvin had invented which enabled video cameras to start recording at the instant sensors detect movement, an action which had previously taken cameras 15 seconds to carry out.

The software enabled television production companies to film the movements of animals, safe in the knowledge that they will capture everything. The camera can be left attached to the animal for weeks on end without draining its battery and then start in the instant the animal moves.

Fans of nature programmes on television and particularly Blue Planet II will have seen the camera in action in amazing footage of underwater sea creatures. The invention caught filmmakers' attention and Lisden travelled to LA last year to pick up an Emmy award.

Sara, Lidsen's development manager, said: "Kelvin is always been tinkering around with computers for fun. He would be doing it anyway even if it wasn't his job."

Kelvin added: "My burglar alarm used to tweet me if it went off and I did that 12 years ago before anyone else was connecting their house to twitter. We design all kinds of different things. We develop mobile app and electronics for our clients. For example, we worked for a big burglar alarm manufacturer and developed a mobile app people can use to disarm and arm their home."

Small Business Saturday is a national campaign to promote small businesses across the UK and 100 companies are being showcased daily. Lidsen was chosen to be among this prestigious group, the only one in the Cheshire West borough.

Sara said: "When people think of small businesses they think of retail or making a product; I don't think people would think about software development when they think about small businesses. I thought it would be a good platform to show the diversity of small businesses.

"Even though you are small, you might be involved with really big projects. With tech, size is not a barrier to competing because if you have got niche expertise then you have got niche expertise."

Lidsen plans to grow by becoming a manufacturer of electronic devices, in addition to advising others. The plan is to set up a factory where their technological expertise can be used to make their own products, and they have very ambitious plans for the future.

Kelvin said: "One of the goals is we would like to add a manufacturing strand to the business. I am running a project alongside our main work to start making electronic products. We are designing a camera product which we think could be worldwide success."



Sara Evans and Kelvin Lawson