

COMPANY PROFILE 2017

THE COMPANY

LAGO roots can be traced back to the late nineteenth century when Policarpo began his hand*craft activity as a cabinet-maker in manor houses and churches in Venice. The next generation continued the tradition and expanded production to double bedrooms and subsequently to small furniture sets for entrance halls. However, it is during the 80's that the younger generation had the idea to focus on the furniture of other areas of the house. **In 2006, at its fourth generation, the company located in Villa del Conte was transformed in a joint stock company and set out to confront the global market.** A new journey thus began full of challenges and achievements. In charge of this delicate generational transition is Daniele Lago, a young entrepreneur and designer, who, together with his brother Franco and his sister Rosanna, leads a young and dynamic team. Today, **LAGO has an annual turnover of 30 million euro and around 180 employees. LAGO has a worldwide presence with about 400 selected stores and single-brand stores in Italian and European cities, including Rome, Milan, Berlin, Madrid, Paris and London, with a store at Harrods.** The expansion is still in full swing, but the company remains firmly tied to its origins while expanding; it is open to getting to know and exchanging ideas with other cultures, partners, suppliers, consumers, bloggers and all those attending LAGO's events and sharing LAGO's path marked by the continuous interplay of influences from inside the company outwards and vice versa. A single-celled organism that becomes multicellular, which feeds itself on many different individual personalities, enhancing them and expanding far beyond its headquarters. **Participation and sharing are the keywords.**

VALUES

Lago believes in an expanded vision of design, seeing it as a discipline that produces not only objects but also meaning. A discipline that can innovate the entire product chain—from the initial concept to disposal—generating culture, an indispensable condition for producing innovation. **For LAGO, culture and profit are in continuity, not opposition.** This is why LAGO has always worked in the world of design understanding it **as a tool for social transformation.** New profits can be generated creating scenarios that can improve the quality of our lives.

LAGO believes that design bring positive change to the way we experience spaces and generate empathy between interiors and the people who use them. That is why in 2017 we unveiled the **first LAGO book, published by Rizzoli, 'Never Stop Designing Spaces'**, a journey through the quality of life in ten Italian cities chosen through Trivago's *'Global Reputation Ranking 2016'*, with the aim of celebrating and giving depth to the genius of Italy, understood as a culture of knowing how to design and knowing how to create. Network logic, where there is no single, central monolith but rather many small centres that communicate with one another, is the perfect expression of the LAGO business philosophy, where everyone can make their own contribution. Projects like LAGO INTERIOR LIFE NETWORK are demonstration of the company's commitment to influencing and being influenced. **Creativity, relationships and influences enrich the mind and everyday work and flow spontaneously into the company's products and strategies.** LAGO is not a finished text. Instead, it is an alphabet: design tools, shapes and materials are the ingredients for designing interiors that resonate with your own way of being, living and working.

LAGO DESIGN NETWORK

For LAGO, **it is important to establish an interior resonance between ourselves and the space around us.** This is **the principle at the base of the 'LAGO Interior Life' philosophy** with which the company declared, starting in 2014, its shift of perspective, focused on **defining and planning profound relationships between living spaces and our interior wellness.** With this philosophy, the company is a pioneer in its **desire to imagine and define new distribution formulas for design through an approach**

that goes beyond the confines of domestic space, leading, over the course of the year, to the creation of a concrete network of LAGO INTERIOR LIFE NETWORK spaces. **This is a widespread network of people and places**—residences, shops, offices, museums, cafés, ice cream shops, restaurants, hotels—**made unique by LAGO design, a modular LAGO alphabet that satisfies and expresses different sensibilities and needs.** Thanks to our powerful digital communication driver, each space is connected to all of the others and is an active protagonist within the network, generating new human connections and fresh business opportunities. LAGO wanted to expand the perspective of domestic space to all of the places where we spend our lives, and create a circular vision where culture generates profit and profit culture. In this context, design becomes a tool for social change through connections, culture and meaning. This project has received a major recognition from the **Osservatorio Permanente del Design ADI, which included the LAGO INTERIOR LIFE NETWORK in the ADI Design Index 2016**, an annual volume that gathers together the **projects chosen to compete for the Premio Compasso d'Oro** and that each year offers **the most official and important map of the Italian design scene.**

• APPARTAMENTO LAGO:

This is a project that redefines and reinvents the spaces reserved for contact between the company, the consumer and the product. **The LAGO Appartamento project experiments with living conditions and culture:** a real apartment - really lived-in and furnished entirely with LAGO products - in which the owner, passionate about design, commits to periodically open the doors to the world, organizing and hosting cultural events of various kinds. **Born in Milan in 2009 at the Salone del Mobile, the LAGO Appartamento project was then exported to Venice to the heart of the Rialto Market, to Bologna, Riccione, and Turin, with the next openings in Bergamo and in Alicante, Spain.** The LAGO Appartamento is proof that design today is no longer physical, because although a product or a production philosophy can be copied, the energy, relationships and situations that it generates between people cannot be replicated in any other place in the same way.

• CASA LAGO:

The synthesis of a new research and experimentation direction launched in 2009 with **Appartamento LAGO**, and still underway in the form of the **LAGO INTERIOR LIFE NETWORK**, the aim of **CASA LAGO** is to create relationships with everything that resides outside the company, projecting itself beyond furniture design and production. A place for experiencing **LAGO** design and the connections it can generate. **CASA LAGO** is an open house where design thinking and networking create connections and serve as a cultural resource for generating new meaning. A prestigious space that welcomes businesses from other industries, fostering productive encounters and creating new business opportunities. It is an Italian house in Milan, a short walk from the Cathedral, that serves the needs of business people and professionals, welcoming them in a **design-driven space that fosters encounters, life and business.** **CASA LAGO** has all of the rooms you would normally find in a private home, since LAGO's aim is to make the people who use it feel just like that, at home. **Sala da pranzo, Salotto, Studio and Biblioteca** can all be booked for events, talks, business meetings, company presentations and press days, as well as dinners and cooking demonstrations. Whereas the **Cucina room** is always open to everyone who uses CASA LAGO, and the perfect place for business breakfasts, coffee breaks and aperitifs.

• LAGO INSIDE:

This is an initiative that uses LAGO design to improve the experience and use of **temporary and permanent spaces in public and private places.** From private spaces and trade fairs to museums, restaurants and cafés, **LAGO INSIDE sites are places where LAGO products, thanks to the design plan, increase the quality of the spaces where they are found.** According to LAGO, **improving the spaces where we live our lives means generating important experiences:** from attention to detail to materials, and from planning to creation, spaces need to welcome us, give us a feeling of wellness and make us feel at home.

- **LAGO AT WORK:**

Over the course of our lives, we spend on average more time in the office than at home. And yet, while our homes are attentively planned, comfortable and welcoming, we cannot say as much for our offices. Why should this be? In answer to this question, **LAGO has come up with an innovative solution, transferring all of the experience we have acquired through the design of domestic life to workspaces and offices**, with the goal of **creating workspaces that favour individual and collective wellness**, effective reasoning and emotional intuition. The final goal is to create 'participatory' offices where the spaces have been designed in close connection to the concept of Interior Life. This process is founded on the conviction that improving conditions in workspaces and offices that are open to the public can **create relationships and favour new, interesting connections** between the people who experience the places.

- **LAGO WELCOME:**

LAGO WELCOME is an initiative dedicated to hospitality facilities. It comprises a **design project built around LAGO products combined with a communication kit and visibility.** LAGO WELCOME is based on **the idea of a multi-site hotel that takes a long-view: modern and intimate but connected to the world** through access to a vast base of travel-lovers, ensured by LAGO's powerful communication channels. **Each project is unique and developed in synergy, combining the ambitions of the person looking to rent out their home or create a B&B and the LAGO vision.** It is the success of every space that will be LAGO's best ambassador out in the world.

- **LAGO REAL ESTATE:**

LAGO REAL ESTATE is a project through which dynamic real estate entrepreneurs can furnish a model flat with LAGO products. The flat, **taking advantage of LAGO's communicative potential, then becomes a sales brochure for the entire property.** Thanks to a **customised interior design project, the value of the property will increase, also increasing sales margins.** The residential unit is **transformed into an exciting sales office**, a place for holding ad hoc events to promote the property and give potential buyers the opportunity **to experience living in the space first-hand.** Moreover, the visibility of the project is amplified on all of LAGO's communication channels, digital and otherwise.

- **LAGO COMMUNITY TABLE:**

The LAGO **Air Wildwood Table** has been renamed the Community Table and, as designed material, **puts itself in the service of the What and Who around it, becoming a stage for exchange, conviviality and socialising** and transforming itself **from a simple self-referential object into a centre of attraction for creating connections and interesting communication networks.** Already used in public spaces and places of transition, where openness to influence and sharing can generate value, the LAGO **Community Table has become a special communication format that responds to the commitment, which** has always been strongly felt by the company, **to put the individual and his or her needs at the centre of design.**

LAGO SHOP, THE DISTRIBUTION NETWORK

Cognizant that **the entire production chain needs to acquire meaning, LAGO has invested its energy in distribution, selecting more than 400 retailers in Italy and abroad** that can contribute their professionalism and gather feedback out on the field. **LAGO SHOP, the LAGO distribution network,** includes a whole range of different kinds of retail space: **the single-brand LAGO STORE; multi-brand POINT, SPACE and CAPSULE; LAGO SPECIALIST stores dedicated to a single area of the home and**

innovative retail formulas like LAGO THE OTHER STORE—a cross-selling concept and an example of which is 'Open | More than books' in Milan—and the **APPARTAMENTO LAGO / STORE**, a flat/shop where you can discover LAGO solutions in a domestic context. Through the LAGO SHOP+ project, starting in 2015, LAGO retail spaces are being designed to **create a 'Homely' atmosphere**, where customers feel at home and enjoy **an evolved purchasing experience through the imagined living experiences of LAGO INTERIOR MOOD and use of the latest technology—LAGO NFC—to put furnishings in dialogue with customers.**

TALKING FURNITURE

Aware of the enormous impact the digital is having on people's lives, LAGO has integrated it into its own DNA. The marriage between digital and design has led us to the creation of a vast community of more than one million people active on social networks and interested in interior design online. This is also the direction taken by the project **"Talking Furniture"**, the fruit of our research on the **Internet of Things**. Its aim is to establish active interaction with furniture, amplifying and improving consumers' experience innovating the paradigm for using the products, which become a vehicle for content and culture. Using **NFC technology**, a chip attached to the furniture interacts with smartphones that have the **LAGO DESIGN app** installed, making it possible to get instant product information and enjoy engaging experiences like saving your own memories in the memory specific to the product, including images, text and sound, or reading special added content, like recipes in the kitchen or fairy tales in the children's room. It is technology that changes the paradigms of the human/product relationship in a wide range of contexts, from the domestic to the public sphere.

THE PRODUCT

LAGO investigates design in a systemic way, expanding the concept and avoiding narrow focus on solely the individual product. In substance, it considers space as a system within which furnishings communicate with one another. For LAGO, designing means planning on the small scale (the product) and, at the same time, knowing how to plan on the large scale (the design system) with a comprehensive vision of living space and living that has led, in recent years, to investing in planning and partnerships with other companies, for the design of panelling, flooring, wall treatments and everything that has to do with inhabited space. More than products, the company designs alphabets and invites the end user to use them. The

product is no longer fixed, but rather in dialogue with the user, and through this dialogue it gets interpreted and acquires customised value. Through the production of alphabets, LAGO creates participatory design that gets enriched by the energies coming from the end user. But **the LAGO product is packed with other values as well: lightness, surprise and irony** permeate its entire artistic path. Simplicity of form, lightness, working by "subtraction" in wilful opposition to design as an end in itself, modularity, quality of materials, craftsmanship and affordable prices. These are other elements that make a LAGO product immediately recognizable. **The company is currently positioned to offer solutions for every area of the home** (day area – night area – kitchen – living room – study – bedroom – children's room – bathroom). Tangram, Statica, Net, AIR, 36e8, Fluttua, 30mm, LagoLinea, the NOW wardrobes and the new kitchens are just a few examples. Completing the picture are the Et Voilà storage system, AIR sofas and bathrooms, which, starting in 2011, have been developed in collaboration with leading industry partners.

LAGO products have received numerous prizes and awards, the most recent including the **Air kitchen**, winner in 2016 of the **Salone del Mobile.Milano Award** as best product in the kitchen section and the **Good Design Award**. Other iconic products have been created at the Lagostudio, the company's creative hub, which organises workshops for the best designers from Italy and beyond. These include the **Joynt chair by Harry Owen and the Huggy armchair by Brit Leissler**.

Beginning with the AIR sofas, the company became focused on a theme of critical importance for our planet's future: being Green. For the first time, LAGO approached design in a more aware way, integrating environmental parameters in the creation of its product. In order to do this, the company used LCA (Life Cycle Assessment) methodology, a tool used for obtaining a quantitative assessment of the environmental impact of a given product or service over its entire life cycle, from the choice of raw materials all the way up to its disposal. The AIR sofas were the first step of an environmental plan that the company is implementing

from a systematic perspective and with the awareness that doing this is the only way we can have a more positive impact on the environment.

THE LAGO PRODUCTION SYSTEM

The business and production organization of LAGO is founded on two pillars, both inspired by the industrial philosophy of Toyota: **Kaizen and Lean Thinking**. Kaizen is a Japanese method of continuous improvement, obtained one step at a time through the involvement of the entire company structure. **The understanding that "energy comes from below" is fundamental to Kaizen**, or rather that business results are not reached by management but instead by direct work on the product. **Lean Thinking is an approach characterized by sleek production practice aimed at minimizing waste to the point of total elimination**, achieved through business organization that rewards maximum efficiency in industrial production processes.

Through Lean Thinking, LAGO seeks - and obtains - constant productive improvement by eliminating superfluous activity, like disorganization or dead time, that the consumer is not inclined to pay for. Result: **the product is born from the mind of the designer and arrives at the customer's home without stockpiling**.

LAGO SOCIAL

In network society, the society of the web, as the one that we are now living is defined, it is no longer sufficient to simply listen to and interpret the needs of the consumer. Technology today allows us to start up dialogues with our own customers, creating a space for them to ask questions and receive answers according to their needs. In a word, today it is possible to fulfil the desires of consumers without first artificially creating them, but rather by departing from their real necessities. **Included within this sphere are the LAGO website, www.lago.it, which receives 3 million annual visits, the Instagram profile and our Facebook page, which has more than 1 million fans**. It is also through these tools that **LAGO places the individual at the centre of the productive process: it is the individual, with his or her concrete necessity, that guides the planning and it is the individual, with his or her own creativity, who provides concrete and effective answers and solutions to these needs**.

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