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2025

## THE ORGANIC ROUTE TO CEO WITH MATEJA LAMPE RUPNIK

Mateja Lampe Rupnik never set out to become the CEO of a technology company, yet today, she leads Red Pitaya, a test and measurement (T&M) company that grew from a niche initiative into a global success.

*By Sheryl Miles,  
Associate Editor*



In fact, her career began a million miles away from the world of electronics. “I studied the history of art, so nothing to do with technology at all,” she explains. But it was her talent for languages and gift in logistics that led her into supply chain roles, the first of which was in the automotive sector and then later at Instrumentation Technologies, the company from which Red Pitaya spun out.

### Aiming high

Lampe Rupnik’s introduction to the tech industry was daunting at first. She noted that her husband showed her a job listing at Instrumentation Technologies and encouraged her to apply: “I said, ‘But these guys are some high-end physicists,’ and then I said, ‘OK, let’s try it. Let’s send the application.’” The interview was a success and once she started her role, she found a wealth of support among her colleagues. “If you have colleagues who are willing to explain things to you in a way that you’re able to understand, you start getting some base on which you can grow.”

### Red Pitaya: an open-source approach to T&M

Red Pitaya emerged from Instrumentation Technologies in 2013, when founder Rok Uršič and his team decided to develop a product for a broader audience beyond the niche market of particle accelerators. The result was an open-source test and measurement tool that found popularity among radio amateurs, researchers, and industry professionals.

“When I first joined Red Pitaya, I was very proud to be part of this very successful story,” says Lampe Rupnik. Initially, her role was still within supply chain management, but as the company evolved, so did her responsibilities, and it seemed her talent was not missed. “In 2020, I was brought in, in an advisory role on the supply chain level. But when I was involved in discussions, the co-founder of Red Pitaya noticed my ideas. We started discussing strategies, and at a certain point, he offered me the position of CEO.”





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## Growing through partnerships

A defining part of Red Pitaya's success is its partnerships with industry giants such as AMD, Analog Devices, Texas Instruments, and Arduino, of which Red Pitaya are extremely proud. These collaborations have provided instrumental insights into both technology and business operations.

"Because we are still a smaller company, it's fantastic to see how other companies work," Lampe Rupnik explains. "The fact that we're small makes us agile and fast-moving, but working closely with larger companies helps us build the kind of operational discipline and strategic foresight that's crucial for sustainable growth."

## Evolving Red Pitaya

One of the biggest challenges Lampe Rupnik faced as CEO was navigating the company's transition from a product aimed at enthusiasts to one that also serves industrial markets. "This was a big

leap of faith because you can do a lot of damage with this kind of transition," she admits. "This doesn't mean that we are not supporting enthusiasts. We are still working with radio amateurs and academia, but industry also needs our product."

Keeping Red Pitaya's identity while expanding its target market has been a delicate balance. "You don't know where you are stepping, and you have to make sure you're not damaging the brand," she says. "But I saw that this was necessary for the company's future." This strategic mindset has proved correct, with the company winning four awards in 2025 alone for: Engineering for Environment (gold) at the Engineering Matters Awards; Champion for Innovation, and Champion for Diversity (both silver) at the Engineering Matters Awards; and Learning Technologies Award (gold) at the Learning Awards. Lampe Rupnik believes these are confirmation that Red Pitaya is going in the right direction.

Not only is Red Pitaya a multi-award-winning company, but it has also opened up its US office, further expanding its reach and collaboration opportunities.

## Lifelong allies for career longevity

Throughout her career, Lampe Rupnik has had strong support from male colleagues, mentors, and even family members. "All the engineers I worked with when I was starting out were men, and they were really supportive," she says.

She credits Uršič, with giving her opportunities despite the fact that she was not an engineer. "Now, I have great support from my colleagues, the CEO of Instrumentation Technologies, Elvis Janežič, and from my CTO, Črt Valentinčič, who helps me on the technological side," she adds. "As a CEO, you sometimes feel very alone, so it's really great to have another CEO to trust and discuss issues with."

Her experience is a reinforcement of the

importance of men supporting women in technology, and proof that every day actions matter. “Companies are still mostly led by men, and if they create a supportive environment for women, then in the long term, we can see real progress,” she says.

## The future of open-source T&M

The myth that open-source test and measurement tools are less secure is one that Lampe Rupnik wishes to dispel. “We hear critics say that when you make designs public, you expose your process to vulnerabilities. But in reality, open-source security works differently. The code is continuously inspected, tested, and improved by a huge community,” she explains. “This ‘many eyes’ approach allows mistakes to be found and fixed much faster than in proprietary systems.”

She believes that transparency, rather than secrecy, is key to the future of test and measurement. “The future is in open source,” she states.

## Leading with a different perspective

For Lampe Rupnik, she sees not having an engineering background as an advantage rather than a hinderance. “Sometimes, not being an engineer makes you look at things

from a different perspective, and that’s actually appreciated by my engineering colleagues,” she says.

Her leadership style is based on collaboration and adaptability, lessons that have been reinforced by her experiences in partnerships and business strategy. “Every day, I learn something new, and that’s what motivates me,” she says. “It’s a big learning experience, and I love it.”

## An organic blossoming

Lampe Rupnik’s journey paints a powerful picture of how careers can grow naturally when someone’s potential is recognised early on, regardless of their background. For Lampe Rupnik, her start in art history to becoming the CEO of a test and measurement company, shows how curiosity and being given a voice can make a real difference to an industry.

Lampe Rupnik’s story is one that demonstrates that listening to diverse perspectives and offering mentorship – from both men and women – can open the door to global opportunities.

As Red Pitaya evolves, Lampe Rupnik remains focused on staying true to its open-source roots while moving into new markets. “We have an exciting journey ahead,” she says. “And I look forward to seeing where it takes us.”



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