

Brothers Carlos (left) and Eddie Lara lead the team at E. Lara Construction.



STRUCTURALLY SOUND

Brothers Carlos and Eddie Lara set
E. Lara Construction on firm foundation

by Jamie Knodel

Although brothers Carlos and Eddie Lara may not have started at their company at the same time, they share the same laser-focused goal for *E. Lara Construction* (E. Lara): executing and delivering outstanding service and results on structural projects for its California clients.

For Eddie Lara, it all began in 2001 when he started E. Lara Construction and first began operating as a small mobile welding outfit, and it “took off from there.” And about five years ago, the brothers joined forces and Carlos Lara got involved for a relaunch.

Eddie first started the company on his own in the early part of the century, but when the economy soured, he closed and went to work for contractors. Meanwhile, Carlos was building a professional resume with software experience and was tired of racking up miles traveling for business and being away from home so much.

When the construction industry began to rebound, the brothers spotted an opportunity and went into business together. “I helped finance the startup, we reconnected with Eddie’s previous customers, and we were off,” Carlos says.

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Though their professional backgrounds are different, the brothers are on the same page on most things, especially when it comes to keeping customers happy.

"We just really get along," older brother Eddie, 43, says of his relationship with Carlos, 42. "We trust each other and see eye to eye."

Eddie says his role is primarily in the field and on job sites, while Carlos manages the business and customers from the headquarters in San Diego. When Carlos joined as Vice President, his role was to oversee internal and field operations, strengthen relationships, maximize operating performance and find ways to achieve the firm's financial goals.

STRUCTURAL SPECIALTIES

While the company's ownership has evolved to become a partnership between the brothers, so has the focus of E. Lara's work. Today, the duo perceives their firm as a solution-driven leader for structural steel and concrete work and framing.

The work has E. Lara's team establishing and shoring up the undercarriages of buildings across California.

"When you walk into a building, you see walls and windows; but underneath that is the structure and the framing to support it. That is our specialty," Carlos says.

The focus happened organically, he says. "It's just the areas where we developed our expertise." Eddie took his background in welding and expanded it to have a broader, deeper knowledge of structural work.

"We're capable of—and do complete—all kinds of work, but we know that when it comes to structural steel, concrete and framing work, we stand out," Eddie says. "I've been doing this type of work for so long and have enough experience with it, that it's just become second nature."

EASIER FOR CLIENTS

The brothers say the company's mastery of structural projects is a benefit to customers. "It's hard to find someone who specializes in structural concrete and steel as well as framing the way that we do," Carlos says. "But because we do all of them, it means fewer issues for contractors to manage. Our main differentiator is having the agility and expertise to execute multiple trades in-house. This ability provides

that one-stop-shop feeling to our clients, minimizing their need to manage more trade partners on job sites."

The brothers say that clients are satisfied with E. Lara Construction's performance and continue to choose their company again and again.

"We have a good reputation with the larger contractors we work with, and we've become their go-to for structural work," says Carlos, who estimates that 80% of overall business is with customers who have used E. Lara Construction for previous projects. He notes that he's drawn on skills he developed from his career in software to build and manage strong and lasting relationships and partnerships within the construction industry.



The Lara brothers say that with specialties in structural steel and concrete work as well as framing, the company is better able to serve clients by minimizing the need for more trade contractors on a job.