

Gardner Publications

Gardner Publications helps its readers make good decisions about durable goods manufacturing. Logicalis helps Gardner make good decisions about IT.

Gardner Publications, founded in 1928 with *Modern Machine Shop* magazine (www.gardnerweb.com), is North America’s leading publisher of integrated media for durable goods manufacturing with titles serving metalworking, plastics processing, mold making, finishing, and automotive product development and manufacturing.

Gardner has been able to succeed by providing its readers the information they need to know to make good decisions in their respective markets through its publications, websites, research and in-person events. When Gardner needs information to make good decisions about the technology that supports its integrated operations, it turns to Logicalis.

Long-Term Goals — Short-Term Demands

Gardner was first introduced to Logicalis on a small programming project, but Gardner’s Alan Monaghan was so impressed by the quality of the work and the attention to detail that he began a dialogue with Logicalis account executive Gerald Smith about Gardner’s long-term goals and the IT strategy needed to realize them.

As is often the case, the development and implementation of a long-term IT strategy has been interrupted by a series of short-term requirements that demanded immediate attention. In each case, Logicalis helped Gardner address its short-term needs in a way that served longer-term objectives.

For example: The purchase of a book through one of Gardner’s online services by a buyer at a European trade show who happened to be Iranian triggered a red flag at the U.S. State Department and Gardner had to provide a email audit to show that it had acted in good faith.

Already struggling with the huge volume of email associated with its publishing business, this was not a small project for Gardner. "This was not something you just throw on a server with a big RAID 5 hard drive," Monaghan recalls. It was a two stage project. In the first stage, Logicalis designed an enterprise vault solution specifying the number and configuration of the necessary drives and servers. Then, in a second phase, Logicalis flew a specialist to Gardner headquarters who stayed an entire week.

The resulting solution not only enabled Gardner to complete the audit for the State Department, but also established an email archiving solution that will meet its needs in the foreseeable future. As Monaghan notes, the same engineer returned at a later time to make sure a required upgrade was seamless for the end users.

The next significant project for Gardner addressed a backup backlog. Backups on tape had begun to take 48 hours to complete. "Logicalis brought in two vendors for us to consider," says Monaghan. "They didn’t stand to gain at all. They just let them present what was available. Once we decided on a product, Logicalis helped us design a backup server strategy so we can keep two years of data online and the spin rest off on tape."

Trusted Advisor

"Every project Logicalis has done for us has gone very well, and each one has gotten bigger and more important to us," Monaghan says. "At this point, Logicalis has earned our respect as a trusted advisor. The level of expertise has been phenomenal and the decisions they have helped us arrive at have been wonderful."

Gardner has recently been enjoying booming success with its latest online offering: Map Your Show. Originally developed for the International Manufacturing Technology Show (IMTS) in Chicago, Map Your Show uses innovative mapping and floor plan technology to enable a trade show visitor to develop a detailed, personalized itinerary to get the most from his or her trade show experience. Map Your Show now provides services to over 130 shows of all sizes and industries, including 35 of the top 200 shows in the world. Over the years Map Your Show has been expanded to include directory maintenance applications, onsite product locator kiosks and printed map products.

Network Core Migration

The success of Map Your Show has strained the underlying IT infrastructure, and Gardner is currently working with Logicalis on a major upgrade that includes everything from virtualization in the data center to a complete network core migration from Nortel to HP Networking.

"The HP price/performance ratio won the sale for HP," Monaghan says. "The HP Networking switch is guaranteed for life. That’s a huge thing. The new switch will pay for itself in seven to ten years just from the savings on maintenance fees.

"As always," Monaghan says, "Logicalis outlined our options and let us make the final choice. That’s been a nice part of our relationship. They want to make sure we buy what’s right for us. I feel very lucky to have Logicalis on our side."

“ At this point, Logicalis has earned our respect as a trusted advisor. The level of expertise has been phenomenal and the decisions they have helped us arrive at have been wonderful. ”

Alan Monaghan, Gardner Publications