CraftMark Bakery Leverages Infonaligy for Managed Security & IT Services

CraftMark Bakery, LLC is a leading supplier of frozen bakery products to the food service and in-store bakery industries. The company's state-of-the-art facility utilizes industry leading bakery technology, and supplies the market with a wide array of frozen bakery products, including bread dough, cookie dough, baked, ready-to-eat flatbread and frozen pre-deposited batters.

Launched as a "greenfield" start-up project by innovators from the commercial baking industry, CraftMark's strategy is to invest in top-quality baking equipment, personnel and IT infrastructure as it grows its business in the foodservice and retail in-store bakery industries.

The company is rapidly expanding to keep pace with a wealth of new opportunities, as its customers include some of the largest restaurant chains and retailers in North America.

CraftMark's mission, "Excellence from Start to Finish," is at the core of what they do every day. This is true across the company – and played a large part in the decision to implement a cohesive solution to support security and IT across the enterprise.

THE CHALLENGE

CraftMark was just launching their operation, and needed to effectively manage their security and IT operations. Adopting the right solution was critical to getting the company online and primed for success. CraftMark didn't have the technical expertise on staff to design the network and virtual infrastructure it needed.

Cyber security risk was also a significant concern. As a new business, CraftMark couldn't afford the risk of manufacturing downtime - uninterrupted production was critical to the bottom line. How would they maintain and protect their IT infrastructure?

THE SOLUTION

CraftMark decided that an outsourced IT approach would allow it to get up and running quickly, maintain seamless IT support and mitigate cyber security risks as it grew.

The organization realized that working with Infonaligy would help:

- **Save time** with the expertise to get started immediately

- **Lower risk** with proven experience and results in designing IT for manufacturing organizations

- **Improve efficiency** by acquiring Fortune 50 experienced IT visionaries with deep experience

- **Lower costs** by eliminating the burden of IT staff salaries

CraftMark opted to outsource all aspects of IT - from designing and implementing network, VOIP and virtual infrastructure, to providing ongoing cyber security and managed IT services. As sole technology provider, Infonaligy also continues to act as CraftMark's Virtual CIO. This approach provides CraftMark with end-to-end guidance supporting its entire IT landscape, and ensures all technologies are designed, configured and secured to meet the needs of the business.

Despite relying on outsourced services, Infonaligy's integrated model means that CraftMark IT is seamless to employees, vendors and other partners. An additional significant benefit is that Infonaligy's commitment to continuously adopting and implementing industry best practices means that CraftMark doesn't have to worry about staying current on security and IT challenges or trends.

WHY INFONALIGY

CraftMark's goal of year-over-year exponential growth can only happen with excellent food safety and quality along with speed to market – that means that Infonaligy must respond quickly to Craftmark's business needs with critical networking and infrastructure services.

CraftMark drives sales through one of two main channels: leading Quick Service and Fast Casual restaurant brands and in-store retail bakeries – all highly competitive channels. CraftMark is known in the industry for its responsiveness and consistently and quickly delivering top-quality food products to the market.

This is only possible because it uses high-tech, advanced bakery technologies that ensure food safety, quality and efficiency for every customer. Outsourcing IT operations is an ideal model because it allows CraftMark to focus on what it does best – provide

consistent, high quality food - while Infonaligy handles technology strategy and IT operations.

Infonaligy was uniquely qualified to meet CraftMark's needs. The team brings expertise and experience from Fortune 50 companies and backgrounds to create impactful solutions – versus just acting as technology implementers.

Infonaligy approaches each customer from a business perspective. It's not only about using technology to solve problems – it starts with gaining a deep understanding of the company's long-term roadmap for success. Infonaligy is committed to helping customers achieve desired business outcomes through strategic technology alignment. This is a differentiator in a highly technical field. CraftMark recognized that Infonaligy would be a true hands-on partner in driving company success.

CraftMark CEO, Ahmad Hamade explained the decision to work with Infonaligy, "They were clearly invested in what we were trying to do and they recommended a solution that was tailored to meet our specific IT needs. They even put skin in the game by offering to buy back a solution if it didn't work."

DELIVERING BUSINESS OUTCOMES

CraftMark's decision to use outsourced IT and security services has proven to be a wise investment.

"Our clients typically achieve cost savings of 30 - 60% versus an internal IT team, but the real value comes by having a technical advantage over their competitors." says Infonaligy CEO, Jason Sifford. "The trend toward outsourcing has accelerated in recent years as more and more companies realize the high costs and the challenges of recruiting and retaining quality IT staff."

Managed Security Services. Infonaligy created a robust security environment that has prevented multiple cryptolocker events and social engineering hacks that would have meant days of downtime. As a result of the cybersecurity services and the redundant infrastructure that Infonaligy designed and operates, the bakery has successfully avoided 7 days of potential downtime.

Managed IT Services. CraftMark has no IT staff on board, which effectively moves IT into the position of net contributor versus a pure business expense. While it may not have the expense, CraftMark gets the benefit of leveraging a team of highly-skilled engineers and technicians who are available for support at all times. With this expertise at their fingertips, IT issues never impact CraftMark's day-to-day operations.

Since shipping the first case of product 3 years ago, CraftMark has experienced exponential growth. As the company rapidly adds staff, workstations and capabilities, it can't afford any delay in getting resources online and must maintain an efficient IT infrastructure.

"We see Infonaligy as a true extension of our business," said CEO Ahmad Hamade. "Whether it's ensuring consistent day-to-day IT and security or supporting key growth initiatives, they are extremely responsive, apply the necessary resources and resolve any issues quickly. This approach has proven to be really beneficial in our fast-paced growth environment."

FUTURE EXPANSION PLANS

Just three years after opening a 225,000-square-foot facility in Indianapolis, CraftMark Bakery is responding to increasing demand from food service and new supermarket in-store bakeries by adding 120,000 square feet to its existing footprint. As a major supplier to some of the nation's largest food service chains, the company recently installed a fourth production line, and plans for expansion include three additional lines.

With this growth, CraftMark is also expanding its relationship with Infonaligy. As the bakery designs a multi-site manufacturing facility and implements a Manufacturing Execution System to support multiple plants, Infonaligy is expanding the IT infrastructure. Larger facilities, additional office space, and more complex operations demand scalable responsive IT.

ABOUT INFONALIGY

For over 15 years, Infonaligy Partners has facilitated companies of all sizes in aligning technology with their business objectives. The company provides clients with top-tier technology solutions, enabling them to increase security, reduce risk, and achieve greater operational value. The team has the depth of knowledge, experience and resources to ensure clients' IT environments are efficient, protected, and well maintained. Whether it's Managed IT, Unified Communications, or Managed Security Services offerings, the Infonaligy team works to bring the best possible client experience to each engagement.

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