

PLEX SYSTEMS

Where: Auburn Hills, Michigan

Customers: Dan Lamb, Director of IT Services

Mike Twarozynski, Chief Financial Officer

Dealer: Office Furniture Solutions

Sales Representative: Great Lakes Contract Group

Featured Product: TrendWall®



“Trendway has service down to a science, from space planning and project management to specifying and delivery. The ease of working with the crew was not something I planned on – you can’t see it on paper when you’re making your decision. It was a welcome surprise.”

– DAN LAMB/DIRECTOR OF IT SERVICES

Mover and Shaker Meets Moveable Walls

The task: A \$2 million renovation and build-out.
The timeline: 50 days. The team: Plex Systems,
Office Furniture Solutions and Trendway.

Technology sets a rapid pace, and Plex Systems has more than hit its stride. With thousands of users at hundreds of customer sites worldwide, Plex is a technology company with manufacturing industry expertise. Originally a software developer for automotive parts manufacturers, Plex is the innovator of the Plex Online software, considered to be an industry pioneer of the Software as a Service (SaaS) solution. To say the Auburn Hills, Michigan-based company is thriving is an understatement – Plex is an optimistic enterprise in a state otherwise encumbered by economic hardship. “We’re growing at 30% a year and hiring like crazy,” notes Dan Lamb, director of IT services and self-appointed facility manager. “We filled our first building, then leased space in another and filled that up, and then were challenged to make more room – all in just a few years.” So when Plex sought to refurbish 40,000 square feet in an existing building just around the corner from its corporate headquarters, it needed a furniture solution that could match its mandate for short-term flexibility and long-term sustainability.

“Trendway made me the hero. It was a great experience, great product, no complaints.” – DAN LAMB/DIRECTOR OF IT SERVICES



More square footage, with more functionality, is a task tailored for TrendWall. “The space plan had to be conducive to our inherent need for collaboration,” explains Lamb. “We had to get our project managers and developers under one roof – they need to be together to work effectively.” Yet these very different personalities also required an environment in which they could coexist peacefully. “Our project managers are outgoing and spend much of their day communicating, while our developers are introverted and require minimal disruption while they write code.” Simply put, interruption means a loss of productivity, so the space called for a healthy balance of privacy and teaming environments that could evolve as the company did.

“Our furniture dealer, Office Furniture Solutions, introduced us to TrendWall,” remarks Lamb. “It was modular, had a great sound coefficient, was competitively priced and just looked better than the competitive product – not like a shop but professional offices.” Floor-to-ceiling TrendWall let Plex design a floorplan with project managers on one side and developers on the other, allowing for enhanced privacy and heightened aesthetics and functionality: Sophisticated wood grain panels and smart built-in white boards looked as good as they performed.

Indeed, moving from an environment of cubicles and shared offices to singular private offices had a transforming effect on the company. “We used TrendWall Sliding Door Sections so that more offices – and more people – fit comfortably within the space,” adds Lamb. “We made angles, not just rows, of offices so our floorplan wasn’t boring or ordinary. Our team loved it. It’s simple things like that, and having your own door, that made such a huge difference.”

“We’re continuously growing and committed to staying in Michigan – just like Trendway. We won’t hesitate to do business together again.”

– MIKE TWAROZYNSKI, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER



Maximizing space also leveraged floorplan creativity: With TrendWall, Plex gained enough footage – and realized enough cost savings – to incorporate amenities like an exercise room, a basketball court, a recreation room with a pinball machine and pool table, a gaming room, a craft room and, what Lamb calls, “a monster cafeteria”. “The space fills our need for creativity at work and at play. Our teams enjoy downtime doing what they love – sports, gaming, crafting, you name it – so they can better meet the demands of their work.” Plex Chief Financial Officer Mike Twarozynski agrees, adding that a unique space is uniquely suited for recruitment, “Michigan is an untapped area for good talent yet it’s difficult to attract top-notch programmers and developers to live here. With the allure of Google and Microsoft in Silicon Valley, we had to make a fun space where people want to come to work.”

Modular Means More

Current needs commanded Plex to build out two-thirds of the renovated building’s 40,000 square feet, which amounted to 100 private offices. The second phase of the project will be the build out of another 45 offices. “Because of TrendWall’s modularity, we prepped the whole building and only installed what we needed,” says Lamb. “With all standardized panels and parts, I don’t have to start at square one when it comes time to add or move offices. It’s all specified and ready to go – and installed in one month or less. All I have to do is cut a PO. Ordering what we need when we need it is easier on me and my budget.”

Further, the simplicity of TrendWall allowed Plex ultimate flexibility without compromising design consistency throughout its facilities. “As we grow, TrendWall will grow with us,” assures Lamb. “Modular walls and a common design theme frees me to reconfigure, relocate, even combine furniture from different buildings if I need to. We’re leveraging our initial investment, versus investing in a building we don’t own.” Not to mention upping the environmental quotient: “We liked that Trendway was a Green company, and TrendWall a sustainable product. It helped meet our environmental requirements.”

