



CLIENT SUCCESS STORY



CUSTOMER BACKGROUND

Ball Horticultural is coloring the world. What started as a wholesale cut flower operation in 1905 has grown into an international “floriculture” dynasty. The 4th-generation, family-run business specializes in developing and distributing innovative commercial horticulture products, such as new colors, drought tolerant plants and advanced seed technologies.

Ball is dedicated to “feed[ing] the soul and brighten[ing] the lives of people around the globe” through horticulture. Running parallel to that goal is the desire to lead the industry in the production, sales and distribution of ornamental crops. With an operation and objective this massive—yet customer focused and personal—it’s vital to have a scalable digital foundation and a reliable partner to help manage it.

One of Ball’s “Seeds of Success” reads, “Never sacrifice the long-term for the short-term.” They planted that seed when investing in more streamlined, future-proof IT solutions that could effectively evolve with them. Ball opted out of a quick fix, instead choosing a **strategic infrastructure overhaul with the help of experts** and trusted partners, American Digital.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

A host of challenges led to the Ball Horticultural and American Digital collaboration. Ball was experiencing increased technical debt and difficulty finding IT talent. In light of this and their aging infrastructure, Ball required a total hardware refresh.

While they understood the importance of their infrastructure refresh, they became increasingly concerned about system performance and wanted to be sure that any investment in their refresh must be able to support future business needs and growth. They needed a partner to manage their **digital transformation with expertise and empathy**.

To kick off the project, Ball brought our team in for a proof of concept and to assess their current environment. They sought a faster, more sustainable, custom storage solution to drive their long-term business objectives and support their SAP S/4HANA move and other applications such as the ecommerce platform WebTrack. As the need for overall application and infrastructure performance became clear, and a storage refresh alone wouldn’t solve the issues, the project team began to rethink more strategically toward a higher level of transformation.

Ball adopted a cloud first strategy. After migrating to Office 365 and Sharepoint online, they migrated their SAP environment to Azure while simultaneously upgrading SAP ECC to SAP S/4HANA. They installed Agriware and Business Central at the farms, as well as Power BI and Databricks. Ball also employed new development tools and testing automation.

THE RESULTS

Following the successful migration of SAP S/4, we also began providing managed services to support Ball's entire infrastructure. Our team's **day-to-day monitoring and expertise in compliance, security, and integration** have provided high application availability. Our flexible capabilities allow them to scale up or down as additional cloud resources are needed.

Ball found their final solution to be affordable and scalable. We were thrilled to help the horticulture leaders manage a solution that directly resolved their initial challenges—and then some. We continue to support them, ensuring their environment runs smoothly. Both companies consider the partnership and project to be a mutual success.

THE PARTNERSHIP

Digital environments require an expert team to manage them—especially those fresh off such a significant transformation. Enter American Digital. We first engaged with Ball Horticultural in 2020 during a proof of concept. Our thorough assessment of their infrastructure and acute understanding of their needs at the project's start set us up for ongoing collaboration and consultation.

Ball sought to streamline its ecosystem with an infrastructure solution for all applications including SAP S/4.

Throughout this IT journey, Ball trusted American Digital with managed services and, by extension, their peace of mind. Mark Morris, CIO of Ball, claims “choosing your partners wisely” is more than a cliché. He shared that American Digital was by Ball's side from the outset, mitigating any concerns through reliable and client-first support.

ABOUT AMERICAN DIGITAL

Although companies work with companies, our ethos is that “people work with people”. We see our clients as long-term partners and reinforce that relationship daily through consistency, reliability, and accountability. The American Digital team is focused on designing and implementing a custom environment that addresses each client's specific needs and exact vision. We take pride in being the partner our clients can always count on. Our almost 40 years of expertise include long-standing partnerships with HPE, Azure, Equinix, SAP, Aruba, and more. Our fast-growing SAP and Managed Services practice is built on customizable solutions that support mission-critical business applications safely and securely. We're proud of our 98% customer satisfaction rating and proven track record of over 300 successful migrations.

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