

Logica Brings BBx[®] To Venezuela

By Jean Hendrickx and Amy Petré Hill

Combining strong technical knowledge of BBx and dedicated customer service has led to steadily increasing sales for BASIS' Venezuelan reseller, LOGICA. For more than ten years, LOGICA has driven the popularity of BBx in this Latin American country. Now businesses from the lush, green jungles to the sparkling coast of Venezuela run on BASIS. Some of the larger BBx users include the country's two leading coffee growers-Café Fama de América and Café Madrid-as well as Daewood Electronics, Fisher Grey Advertising, and the nation's premier university, Universidad Central de Venezuela.



LOGICA began as a partnership between Roberto Dangel and Enrique San Martín in 1986, expanding a few months later to include Jean Hendrickx and Juan Carlos Rodríguez. All four men were former MAI BasicFour programmers who initially came together to create administrative systems in MAI BasicFour, but realized the limitations of Business Basic on proprietary mini-computers. When the founders discovered BBx they knew they had a real solution.

According to Jean Hendrickx, LOGICA's Technology Manager, it was the combination of the file system and the ease of migration that impressed him and his fellow partners. "In 1986, we were developing administrative applications in MAI BasicFour on mini-computers, and were looking for a way to port our programs to new platforms," he says. "We found that BBx was the best solution because it offered almost transparent migration, a better price, and new functions. We were also impressed with the language's more powerful data files and easy syntax. After working with BASIS' product for awhile we realized that this was a solution we could sell to other businesses."

The fledgling company had the technical knowledge to successfully use BBx, but needed a secure product channel, some sales advice, and a few initial contacts before it could start selling BBx directly to other businesses. Jesús Alvarez and Engineering Support Systems (ESS), BASIS' Latin American distributor, came forward to help. ESS soon signed a reseller contract with LOGICA, and sales of BBx in Venezuela started to take off.

While the Business Basic community in Venezuela was receptive to BBx, there were some challenges, the largest being a lack of

Business Basic documents written in Spanish. Hendrickx remembers, "Most Business Basic programmers were self-taught people. As they developed their software they also developed their own standards and techniques. MAI BasicFour courses were scarce and there were no MAI BasicFour books available in this part of the world. So, when we started working with BBx, we knew we would have to help programmers improve their skills and give them reference resources. To meet these needs, we wrote a book in Spanish during evenings and on weekends using simple terms and an easy to follow approach that covered the essential information."

In addition to a BBx Spanish primer, LOGICA has created several utilities that speed up initial application development time while giving customers good examples of the latest code standards.

Today, LOGICA has expanded its operations, with thirty-five people working at the main office in the Venezuelan capital, Caracas, and eight people manning a newly opened Valencia office. To provide better customer service, LOGICA is hiring a new software engineer to provide more customer support, enlarging the company's technical support capabilities, improving the website, and issuing a technical newsletter to customers called *NOT/News*.