

Meet the installer

Security life with Sean McPartland of Logic Fire and Security

What would be a typical project for you?

We have a wide range of projects from large design, supply, install and commission to national maintenance contracts with lots of small and remedial works. Most of our work is predominantly fire but ever increasing security and fire risk assessments.

What is the best thing about working in security?

Working in both security and fire brings a lot of satisfaction that we are looking out for and taking care of companies' statutory requirements, something that is often overlooked or put to the back of the agenda.

It is not just about providing a service to maintain a fire or security system, it is much more; it is about providing a fully inclusive service, highlighting and advising the customer what their obligations are and the technological advances that are continually available to further increase protection for all their "people and property".

Is third party accreditation beneficial to your company?

Third party accreditation is vital in our industry, not only to provide the customer with the confidence and satisfaction that they are using a reputable company which is regularly checked. It is also there to ensure that as our company expands, systems continue to be in place ensuring we are complying and performing to the highest standards protecting our customers and our own people.

Do you think there is a skills shortage in the industry? Any trouble recruiting?

Recruitment is the single biggest challenge in this industry, not only for us but all fire and security companies. There is a severe lack of skilled labour in the industry, which is getting worse year after year. The industry as a whole needs to entice the younger generation into what is a very rewarding and satisfying industry with many opportunities across the board.

We often see adverts on TV or in the papers from the British Army when they are on a recruitment drive. We, as an industry, need to work together and follow a similar model. We also need apprenticeships for all the specialist fire and security needs including security, CCTV, fire, extinguishers etc.

The ideal engineer would be multi-disciplined with specialities in one area.



Name: Sean McPartland

Job title: Managing Director

Time in security/fire: 20 years

Company: Logic Fire and Security

Location: Knaresborough, North Yorkshire

Areas of expertise: Design, installation and maintenance of all fire and security systems

Accreditations: ISO9001:2015, NSI Gold for fire alarms, fire extinguishers, emergency lighting, access control, CCTV and intruder alarms, BAFE Gold for fire alarms and emergency lights, NICEIC, Constructionline Gold, Safe Contractor

Are there any common requests from customers that give you problems?

The most common awkward request from customers is from callouts coming in which we know have nothing to do with our systems that we maintain. For example, their fire alarm is going off and we maintain the security or vice versa.

What is the industry's biggest myth?

The biggest myth we find is that customers, especially property owners, think it is acceptable for themselves or anyone to provide a specialist service - like a Fire Risk Assessment - and that it will satisfy their statutory requirements. This is not satisfactory and will affect their due diligence should something go wrong. It is vital that customers use third party accredited companies and take all the responsibility off themselves and on to the supplier.

What will be the impact of smart/home automation on the security sector?

The main impact of smart home automation is that most products are "buy off the shelf", "plug and play" or even with battery technology just "play". The significant effect companies such as Amazon have, ➔

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affects purchasing across the globe meaning that the manufacturers, including blue chip companies have a direct link to the consumer and can develop and distribute these products direct. However, this will only affect the lower end domestic market. I do not see the high end and commercial markets being affected by these products as there is the requirement for design and third party accreditation to satisfy insurance and legal obligations.

Are you concerned about Brexit?

Brexit has several concerns, from the disruption in supplies from Europe and even the rest of the world if we can't get deals in place in time, to the lack of technical labour coming into the country. I have already talked about the skill shortage, is Brexit going to make it worse? Having said that, we need to move along in a positive way get the deal done - one way or the other - and move on.

There is no use dwelling on the past, it is about planning, moving forward and dealing with the challenges as they come. Those companies and people who do that will ultimately be stronger for it.

What would make your job easier?

A reduction in the bombardment of unnecessary emails that I receive each day! It is sad, but with the introduction of emails there has been a severe decline in interpersonal interaction. An email is not replacement from picking up the phone and actually speaking to a person. We need to speak, meet, interact, and share ideas, this is lost through email and, might I add, social media. All of these platforms have their place, but getting the balance is critical.

What is your ultimate/fantasy electronic security product?

Probably the ultimate product would be a fully IP

rated system which did everything; security, fire, lights and is voice controlled - including making a cup of fresh coffee on demand!

What advice would you give to a younger version of yourself?

One thing I did when I was younger was to try to learn as I went along whilst working on the job. It was only later in life that I realised formal training gives that solid platform to develop my skills. I would, therefore, urge any youngster coming into the industry to find a good company that is willing and able to support your training needs; both in-house and via formal courses by colleges and manufacturers.

Will England ever win the football World Cup again?

Of course they will (ever the optimist)! In my lifetime? Sometime miracles do happen.

If you won £25,000 what would you do with the money?

I am a great believer that in earning money it has much more value, in fact, I do believe I have only done the National Lottery once (when it first started).

Having said that I wouldn't turn a £25k win down! What would I do with it? I would probably split it. Half would go to Alzheimer's research UK, a charity I have been supporting over the past three years in my cycle challenge Arctic to Africa. I have already raised over £16k and I would not only donate the money to the charity direct, but use some of it to support some of the fundraising events to raise even more funds.

The other half would be invested into a training initiative to entice and train young people into the fire and security industry.

I think it would only be too right to treat all the staff as well so some would be left for that!

