

## Universal Data, Inc. Company Overview



Universal Data, Inc. (UDI) was founded in 1973 as a provider of software to major data processing organizations. Recognizing the need for a lightweight, portable computer terminal, UDI began research and development work in the area of handheld microprocessors. By 1979, UDI was producing handheld terminals on an exclusive and private label basis. The success of the early models led to the development of a family of portable, handheld terminals and associated software, designed to meet a wide range of data collection needs. Their ability to withstand harsh industrial and environmental conditions led UDI terminals to become known as the "Sherman Tank" of handheld computers.

UDI's products were so rugged and functional that they, even today, stand as the solution-set cornerstone of the largest retail inventory taking company on the planet, which has purchased in excess of 800,000 handheld terminals and related equipment from UDI for global deployment. Even after 30 years, UDI continues to sell and support their inventory technology. In the technology world, any time a company can maintain a customer for 30 years, it shows a true sign of success and customer satisfaction.

As the automatic data collection landscape changed in the 80's from one of hardware-centric "scan guns" to one of a broader "systems level" approach centered about software, so too did UDI's product suite. We wrote and implemented data collection interfaces to many stand-alone application software packages, and ultimately developed our own WMS package called *Analyst*, specifically designed for the manufacturing industry.

Most recently, enterprise resource planning (ERP) software has left the exclusive domain of the Fortune 1000, and has become priced within reach

of the small to mid-market sized companies comprising UDI's traditional customer base. To provide our customers with an IT infrastructure that seamlessly supports all elements of business & manufacturing operations, we have established and maintained reseller partnerships with leading ERP developers in this space.

Further, in recognition of the oft disastrous consequences companies face in trying to fit their business around prepackaged software (for that matter, hardware too), we have developed a robust, comprehensive, and repeatable methodology that removes risk from IT initiatives: Our Design System Analysis. How has the company benefited from its innovations and investments? Today, Universal Data, Inc. employs some 125 dedicated professionals in engineering, software development, manufacturing, consulting, and administration. With its headquarters on its own 27 acre complex north of Detroit, Universal Data, Inc. is firmly positioned to expand its role in delivering enterprise solutions to companies in the Midwest, and across the country.

### **Elevator of Services**

Solutions from UDI typically span multiple disciplines. Like floors in an office building, though, multiple "floors" are often required components of an effective IT strategy that supports the diverse needs of the enterprise – today and tomorrow:

#### **\* Workshops (Customer Education)**

UDI maintains an aggressive calendar of educational forums, delivered at no cost, to current and prospective customers. Recent topics include Implementing ERP Systems, Selecting Software for Batch Manufacturing Applications, and Using Customer Relationship Management Tools in Your Business.

#### **\* Services**

##### Software

For those requirements that cannot be fulfilled by means of a *canned* software solution, UDI offers custom software design and programming services. Whether it is a customized data collection interface to an existing system or a complete standalone solution, UDI has the expertise to deliver professional results.

### Project Management

Once a solution has been purchased (or built), the real work begins and UDI is there every step of the way. Implementation begins with good project management. UDI's project management professionals can keep even the most sophisticated project on track.

### Implementation

Enterprise software solutions are highly flexible tools. Without the right support to navigate the myriad of configuration options, even the best product can become an operational disaster. UDI's software experts know all the nuances of the products that we support, so that our client's can focus on running their businesses. Our ability to deliver a guided approach to software integration means that any solution will deliver its full functionality.

### Training

A great system is worthless unless it is used properly. That's why UDI's training professionals are available to provide either train-the-trainer or full end-user training. Ensuring that people know how to use the technology is only one aspect of our training. We also ensure that users understand the whole process as defined by work done to prepare for technology implementation.

### \* **Products (handhelds, touch screens, printers, servers, switches, custom software)**

Universal Data Inc. manufactures some of the most versatile handheld data collection terminals and software solutions available – and we do it right here in Holly, Michigan. All of our products are expandable, and include software utilities to make them useable for data collection in a matter of hours and days...rather than weeks or months. Most important, Universal Data's unparalleled commitment to personalized customer support ensures reliability and service for the lifetime of the products and beyond.

UDI not only manufactures our own hardware, but also partners with global leaders - companies like Symbol, DataMax, Zebra, PSC, and IBM to name but a few. You can be confident that the hardware we propose is the very best hardware for your application.

### \* **Document Imaging**

Many processes require paper documents. As the demand for speed and accuracy increase, UDI can help manage paper-originated documents by providing software/hardware solutions that converts them to electronic format and indexes them for fast, flexible retrieval and distribution. This system can also be integrated with legacy systems to make retrieval of document images an integrated part of the system.

### \* **Networking – Wireless & Connected (Design Engineering, Installation)**

#### **Wireless**

From RF site surveys to small and large-scale wireless networks, UDI has thousands of design, engineering, and implementation hours of experience upon which to draw. Here again, we work with the leaders in the industry: Cisco, Symbol, Proxim, Maxrad, and others dedicated to 802.11 industry standards. Today's wireless systems range in speed from 2 Mbps to 1 Gigabit, and some systems will provide a data pipe plus T1 lines to link your phones systems wirelessly without any recurring monthly cost.

Need a wireless network for a small warehouse or office? No problem – one call. Need to implement voice and data connectivity between two plants 15 miles apart? No problem – one call. We even install and climb the towers to ensure it all works reliably.

#### **Network Services**

Our staff of certified professionals can manage your network through one of our Network Service Provider contracts. These contracts are flexible, and can be a cost conscious alternative to hiring an IT staff or a convenient way to supplement them. The benefits of using UDI as your NSP include:

#### Current Documentation of Network Layout, Cabling System and Current Workstations

Takes the guessing game out of future technology development. UDI will recommend the right solution for your company based on personalized analysis.

### Server Configuration and Security

Ensure that your data stays your data. UDI's Network Specialists will recommend and design infrastructure with a sound balance between security and efficiency.

### Support Requirements and Planning

UDI can help find the exact responsibilities needed to maintain technology. We can provide a complete cost analysis to maximize technology return on investment.

### Migration Planning

When upgrading to newer technology, it is critical to understand and follow a well-planned timeline. UDI will map the entire process up front in order to ensure a smooth transition.

### Software Licensing Status through System Documentation

Avoid costly licensing violation penalties as UDI documents and assists with usage metering of current network applications.

## \* Consulting

We are driven by the tenet that to successfully design and implement *tomorrow*, one must first understand *today*. Our Design System Analysis:

- a) Meticulously analyzes our customer's current business processes, along with their corresponding cost components ("as-is scenario").
- b) Juxtaposes state of the art hardware, software, and services against the pure business model to create a "should be" scenario that retains the unique and desirable characteristics of the enterprise, while removing activities that are wasteful, redundant, or error-prone.
- c) Assesses the in-place IT infrastructure as to its functionality, version- "currentness", and ability to support recommended improvements to technology and processes.
- d) Provides the metrics to ensure that the return on any technology investments can be effectively measured and managed.

## \* Enterprise Software

UDI maintains reseller/integrator partnerships with leading developers of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software. Exemplary are Microsoft, Plexus Online, ROI Systems, Vicinity Manufacturing, and others. Our selection means broad choices for our clients, which allow us to ensure a "best fit" scenario. Typical functionality

includes financial, warehouse, manufacturing, customer relationship, supply chain and logistics management.

While we are not an exclusive provider of these software packages, we are exclusively the provider that brings unparalleled domain knowledge of our other "floors" – technology and process expertise that virtually guarantees a successful implementation.

## \* Application Service Provider (ASP)

Enjoy all the benefits of enterprise software without any of the headaches or expense of maintaining the hardware or network infrastructure in-house. With software ranging from a robust warehouse management system (WMS) to a sophisticated ERP suite, Universal Data, Inc. can provide a secure, high-performance, highly available infrastructure to remotely maintain and manage your application for one monthly fee. Securely get to your software as easily as you get to Google, with the comfort that unwanted "guests" won't be doing so.

## Summary

In today's fast-moving world of hardware and software providers, a 30 year legacy is clearly noteworthy as you look backward and consider what it took to get here. Perhaps even more important, though, is its implication as to what you can expect from us in the future. Couple that with an unrivaled array of services and solutions, as well as some of the most gifted professionals in the industry, and you truly have a *complete* enterprise solution provider: Universal Data, Inc.



---

*Contact:*

Charles E. Phyle II  
Vice President  
Universal Data, Inc.  
4150 Grange Hall Road,  
Holly, MI 48442

(248) 634-4000, X248  
[cphyleii@udisolutions.com](mailto:cphyleii@udisolutions.com)