Happy New Year! We are kicking off 2018 with many new and special interest topics that are sure to grab your attention and leave you with having learned something new.

In this first quarter issue, our CEO, Paul DeHerrera reflects back on 2017 and provides his outlook for 2018. In the following articles, we “throw it back” to our company’s humble beginnings and then dive into what “quality” really means to us. In each issue we like to give you a closer look into one of our departments. For this issue, we’re taking a glance at our Technical Sales team, which we find to be quite unique to our industry.

Speaking of our humble beginnings, I’d like to share the interesting background behind one of our familiar logos:

Cheers!

About

The Universal Flyer is a quarterly print publication featuring product and program announcements, company milestones, spotlights, and more. Email or call Sales & Marketing to update your subscription preferences.

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The Big Idea that Became Universal

The inside story of our humble beginnings and the tenacity of our founders.

Looking Forward

CEO Paul DeHerrera reflects back on 2017 milestones and looks forward to new opportunities in the upcoming year.

Making it Right

An enduring commitment to quality paves the way for product success.

Inside Look: Technical Sales

The team of experts makes sure your product integration is designed for optimum performance.

checkcross
Hello 2018!

This year marks two short years before the FAA Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B) Out mandate hits, but who’s counting? I’m very pleased to say that we experienced incremental increases in Flight Management System (FMS) purchases and upgrades in 2017, confirming that our customer base is making the needed changes in preparation for the January 1, 2020 mandate. Congratulations to those who have completed the upgrade and a gentle nudge to those who haven’t. I want everyone to know that our team stands ready to answer any questions you may have on the integration into your specific aircraft.

Last year marked a major milestone for Universal Avionics with the certification of our newest integrated flight deck, “Insight.” The FAA Technical Standard Order (TSO) and Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) approvals celebrated the culmination of a multi-year clean sheet design and development effort. Insight sizzles with our next generation synthetic vision, displaying high-resolution terrain ice, water, advanced airport maps, runways, and special use airspace with realism never seen before on the flight deck. As of this writing, a number of customers have signed agreements with our Authorized Dealer/Integrator Network to complete Insight upgrades in their aircraft, including a major government project.

Looking forward to 2018, data link will become more mainstream once pilots realize the benefits of CPDLC Departure Clearances (DCL), which provide the ability to receive clearances digitally. ADS-B Out compliance will remain on the forefront with our Authorized Dealers/Integrators reporting that slots are filling rapidly for completing the upgrades. We intend to add additional certification platforms to our list for possible upgrades for Insight, along with our AHS-525 Attitude Heading Reference System (AHRS). So you can see going forward, it’s going to be a bright year for Universal Avionics. I wish to take this opportunity to say thank you to all of our customers, dealers/integrators, and partners for your dedication to our products, for our continued success, and for what looks to be a terrific and successful 2018 looking out our windscreen.

Paul De Herrera
Chief Executive Officer

2017 Top Dealers

Each year, Universal Avionics recognizes top-performing dealers out of several hundred in its Authorized Dealer Network who have achieved outstanding sales performance for the year. Both of our Top Dealers for 2017 have demonstrated top-notch expertise and strategic commitment to pursuing flight deck upgrades that proved to be instrumental in their successful performance.

North & South America – Avmax

Avmax’s Avionics division is one of Canada’s largest avionics and instrument support facilities, with locations in Calgary and Vancouver. The company specializes in design and certification of modifications for avionics upgrades, along with regional airline and special mission aircraft applications. Avmax’s success for 2017 is largely related to the deliveries to airlines around the world which have purchased Avmax’s ADS-B Out solutions. In addition, other sought-after upgrades include FMS and Multi-Function Displays (MFD) with weather radar upgrades.

International – Heli-One Norway

Heli-One Norway is strategically located at the Stavanger Airport next to a major North Sea helicopter operation. The company is known for its expertise and experience in supporting helicopter operations in Europe and around the world. Key special mission programs like the S-61, S-76, and AS332L/L1, featuring FMS and Advanced Flight Display retrofit installations, were large contributors to their achievements in 2017. Heli-One Norway’s solutions allow operators to customize modifications based on their operational needs.

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At three o'clock in the morning on September 22, 1981, a Falcon business jet taxied to a ramp at the Seattle-Tacoma airport. Dim lights emanated from the cabin where an Austrian entrepreneur and a mechanical engineer-turned-businessman were mixing martinis in celebration. Just three hours earlier, they had settled a lawsuit and gained the right to start a new business. The aviation world would soon be provided with a top-notch flight management system, followed by even more innovative avionics systems.

**Passion for Aviation: A Family Affair**

In the mid-1950s, businessman Hubert Naimer and his wife Gerda began vacationing in Switzerland, where both earned civilian pilot licenses unavailable in their home country of (postwar) Austria. Hubert soon decided that company funds from his specialty switchgear company, Kraus & Naimer, were better spent on business jets than corporate suites. By 1972, he was flying a Dassault Falcon 20 around the world every year to visit his factories.

**The Vision that Launched a Company**

Navigation may have become routine in settled areas where VOR stations were established, but pilots like Hubert operating in remote locations were still mostly on their own. In 1973, Hubert bought into Global Navigation and took a seat on the board of directors with the intent of improving navigation technology for pilots like himself. The push for a new product began a short time later, one that was better suited to jet aircraft and could serve as what some were calling a “flight management system” (FMS) to solve the remote VOR issues. In late 1976, Hubert drafted an eleven-page document with the specifications for a Master Navigation System (eventually referred to as Flight Management System), which he believed should be Global’s next big product. However, things did not go as planned when in 1978, Global inked a deal with Sundstrand Corporation, essentially kicking Hubert and two associates out of the company. With the vision of making the Master Navigation System, Hubert and his associates would go on to form a company that would realize his dream – today known as “Universal Avionics Systems Corporation.”

Gathered around a kitchen table the evening after being kicked out of Global Navigation, Hubert and his two associates from Global, Dr. Karl Frudenfeld and Charles “Chuck” Edmondson, nursed a grudge and crafted a plan. They would start a company to realize Hubert’s design. They were determined for it to be “bigger than Global” and the name “Universal” seemed self-evident thereafter. On March 11, 1980, Universal Navigation was incorporated.

Over time, the company expanded with high profile forays into new ventures and the Universal Navigation name no longer made sense. On April 1, 1995, Universal Navigation became Universal Avionics Systems Corporation. The name change was designed to better represent the broader product line of avionics the company manufactured and marketed.
As a pilot operating the avionics his company built, UASC founder Huber Naimer had a vested stake in how the equipment performed. Just like our customers, Hubert didn’t have time nor patience for it to fail or underperform. This steadfast philosophy of producing high-quality avionics has endured over the decades under the leadership of Hubert’s son and UASC President J.L. “Ted” Naimer, and remains a core value of the company to this day.

Of course, simply saying we’re committed to “quality products” isn’t enough to sustain an entire business model. As our company matured, so did our idea of quality assurance and control. Recognizing that a traditional approach created a silo of quality centered around product instead of the business as a whole, we knew there had to be a better way. In 2010, we integrated the traditional Quality Management System (QMS) (e.g. AS9100) into a Business Management System (BMS) for our entire organization. The BMS guides our employees through various processes and associated requirements that must be satisfied to ensure the highest level of business performance in the interest of product safety, customer satisfaction, and continuous improvement.

Q & A With Fred Schmidt, Universal Avionics Director of Quality

Q: What does “quality” mean to Universal Avionics?
A: Quality is determined completely by our customers, and is based upon the customer’s evaluation of the entire customer experience. This experience is the aggregate of all the interactions that customers have with Universal’s products and services. Including such things as responsiveness to customer inquiries, on time delivery, product and service consistency, product reliability, and customer service.

Q: What is Universal’s quality policy?
A: “To comply with regulatory requirements, meet or exceed customer expectations, and continually improve design, production, quality, reliability, and on time delivery of products and services.”

Q: Why is having a quality policy important?
A: Our leadership developed a quality policy as a strategic item to express their directive with respect to quality and the overall management of the business.

Q: What is Universal’s business management system like?
A: We adopted AS9100 as the model for our aerospace QMS. AS9100 standardizes QMS requirements and is used at all levels of our supply chain. Our AS9100 QMS is FAA approved and certified by TUV-USA. To facilitate ownership for the achievement of quality and responsibility for customer satisfaction throughout the corporation, we refer to our QMS as the Business Management System.

“...All of our employees realize that our company exists to provide products which improve pilot safety and efficiency, and that can only be accomplished through a continuous commitment to quality. For all of us, ‘quality’ is a broad term that encompasses design, production, and support of our products and services.

– Steve Pagnucco, Universal Avionics Vice President of Operations
inside look
at In-House Technical Sales

The sales environment here at Universal Avionics is characterized by a strong team approach and collaborative philosophy. Key to the effectiveness in this area is our Technical Sales team, responsible for supporting our customers through the Sales and Support Departments. In doing so, the Technical Sales team tests new products and product changes in an integrated lab environment. Product testing often involves testing at the aircraft level for new products, new development, and new interfaces. On-site liaison support (gratis) is provided when necessary.

Third Party Interface Expertise

Our robust in-house technical capability is a result of the nature of our products, in that they are designed to interface with a wide variety of aircraft. When it comes to developing integrations with third party equipment, we are the industry expert. We work with an abundance of third party systems and provide lab/bench testing of our products in concert with other companies’ avionics products. With customer satisfaction as our number one priority, we are not shy to recommend third party avionics that will work with the overall system architecture. Our Commercial Off-The-Shelf (COTS) products, non-proprietary bus architecture, and “building block” system allow for flexible integrations. This philosophy allows for future customization and upgrades, and minimizing cost of schedule impacts and overall risk.

Technical Sales Lifecycle

From initial flight deck design, to installation/configuration, flight testing, and certification stages, we leverage best practices in support. Our Technical Sales team begins a project with our customer and dealer/integrator, supporting them throughout the project’s lifecycle.

Director of Technical Sales, Grady Dees, works closely with his team to ensure successful component integration (picture here with Kyle Price, Sr. Engineer - Technical Sales).