

CUSTOMER

University of California
at Los Angeles (UCLA)
Distribution Center

CORPORATE PROFILE

Headquarters

Los Angeles, California

Type of Business

Distribution operations
for multi-campus university

Number of Locations

One

SYSTEM PROFILE

Computer System

- IBM PC Compatibles
- HP NetServer

Operating System

- Microsoft NT Server 4.0

MAS 200 Modules in Operation

- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- Crystal Reports
- Custom Office
- General Ledger
- Import Master
- Inventory Management
- Library Master
- Purchase Order
- Sales Order

Master Developer Enhancements in Use

- Custom EDI Processing
- FAU Billing & Tracking



MAS 200 Earns Straight A's at UCLA for Data Management Smarts

As one of the nation's top 10 research universities, UCLA prides itself on attracting the best and the brightest students and faculty from around the world. Its 34,000 undergraduate and graduate students choose from more than 100 major fields, and have included renowned astronauts, healers, creators, scientists, statesmen, Olympians, Oscar winners and Nobel Laureates.

Such a mammoth organization has a complicated procurement process. So UCLA maintains a dedicated Distribution Center for acquiring goods and services. The Distribution Center acts as a service unit for more than 10,000 university

departmental "clients." It provides campus-related forms, chemicals for research, laboratory gasses, storage space, and express package delivery services. Until a recent downsizing, the center handled more than \$10 million in commodities and services every year.

THE CHALLENGE

The Distribution Center was running its operations with an outdated mid-range IBM System 38 computer. The system was not Y2K compliant, demanded three full-time programmer/analysts, and was very costly to maintain. When the group

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*Ismael Haro
Programmer/Analyst
UCLA Distribution Center*

was restructured and plans were made to relocate to smaller quarters, a key action item was migrating to a new system — hopefully one that would take up less space, handle all management and accounting functions, and require little or no staffing.

Ismael Haro, programmer/analyst, took on the task of finding a new accounting system. He wanted it all: an off-the-shelf application that had a cleaner user interface and push-button efficiency, was fast and easy to install, and could be easily customized. MAS 200 was the clear winner.

THE SOLUTION

After selecting MAS 200, Haro had his new system operational in less than a month. “Then we had to step back and really learn what the product could do,” he says. “With the help of my reseller, we tailored many of the package’s capabilities to UCLA’s environment. It took about three months to get it just the way we wanted.”

The new MAS 200 system interfaces with UCLA’s mainframe to receive and input financial information. It imports and exports data files, recharges individual customer units, handles recurring orders for rentals, and bills for express package deliveries. Best of all, according to Haro, is the fact that the system practically runs itself.

Customization was essential given UCLA’s diverse departmental needs. For instance, research groups receive specialized funding, and purchases against grants must be tracked carefully. If a lab orders a cylinder of oxygen, the Distribution Center must not only sell the gas contained in the tank, but also rent the tank itself and record its location until returned. A rental might be for days or years, depending on the department involved, and tracking had previously been a huge headache for the group. Now MAS 200 manages the entire cylinder tracking process.

Another tricky component involved working with express delivery vendors like Federal Express and UPS. Using electronic data interchange (EDI), the Distribution Center receives data from its service

providers, inputs it to MAS 200, and bills the appropriate department, all without having to re-key information. The center’s customers like this feature, as it streamlines package delivery, and also gives them accurate information for bookkeeping.

“I can sleep at night now,” says Haro. “Before, I never knew if the system was going to work or not. And we didn’t have the resources to go in and check every line of code. But MAS 200 brought us into the new millennium with flying colors, and everything’s going smoothly. What a relief!”

Haro’s group is now producing many more reports than before, thanks to the capabilities of MAS 200’s Crystal Reports. “We can give monthly summary statements to our customers, and put pertinent data online for them,” he explains. “This eliminates a lot of phone calls, where customers had questions about their account activity. Now they can just go to the intranet and get the data they need.”

He praises his reseller for professionalism throughout the entire implementation process. “I really have to tip my hat to him,” Haro said. “Every time I needed him, he was there for me. It was just him and me, and we pulled this whole migration off together. That’s really something, given the complexity and size of operation we’re talking about.”

Bottom-line savings have been a dramatic benefit of the move to MAS 200. “We’ve saved more than \$100,000 a year,” Haro says. “That’s a lot of money for a nonprofit group like ours, where our goal is not to bring in revenue but rather to be of service — so our customers can continue their world-class teaching and research.”

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