

Made in the Mid-Willamette Valley: Universal Forest Products

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Company name: Universal Forest Products (UFP Western Division, Inc.)

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Business description: Universal is the leading producer of pressure-treated wood and North America's largest manufacturer of engineered roof systems for manufactured housing and site-built construction. The company is America's leading buyer of solid-sawn lumber and the largest customer of North America's largest mills. That translates into exceptional purchasing power, which is just one of the many benefits Universal customers enjoy.

Employees: Woodburn plant employs 52; Universal family of companies employs 7,500 nationwide (more than 80 facilities)

Business specialties: Universal's national presence allows our companies to serve retailers, builders and manufacturers who are growing as a result of industry consolidation, and who seek strong national partners to meet multiple needs. Because the company has locations coast-to-coast, it also serves smaller, independent businesses and helps grow their success.

As the nation's leading manufacturer and distributor of wood and wood-alternative products, Universal Forest Products sells in truckload quantities to the following markets: retail/do-it-yourself, industrial, site-built construction and manufactured housing. The company's subsidiaries also provide framing services for the site-built market and forms for concrete. Whether you're building a home or a container to protect your valuable cargo, Universal Forest Products is your best resource for building success. Universal does not sell directly to consumers.

-Specific to Woodburn plant: Woodburn serves the manufactured housing, DIY/retail and industrial markets.

-Main products manufactured: Crates, boxes, pallets, skids, cut and grooved lumber stock, cut OSB/plywood, engineering wood, furring strips, MH trusses, pattern lumber, vinyl and wood



Special to the Statesman Journal

Universal Forest Products produces pressure-treated wood and is North America's largest manufacturer of engineered roof systems for manufactured housing and site-built construction.

SEDCOR, the lead economic development agency for Marion and Polk counties, is pleased to offer you a glimpse of the multitude of products and services being manufactured and provided by local area companies. SEDCOR's membership is composed of more than 500 business and community leaders who support our mission to enhance and diversify the economy of the Mid-Willamette Valley.

fencing, wood lattice

-Retail/Do-It-Yourself

-Manufacturing and distributing wood and wood-alternative products to national home centers, regional chains and independent lumber retailers.

-Manufactured Housing

-Providing innovative, high-quality wood components specially designed for the manufactured housing market.

-Site-Built Construction

-Engineering and manufacturing building components including roof trusses, wall panels and floor systems for single- and multi-family residential and commercial construction.

-Industrial

-Engineering packaging and manufacturing products for specialized applications.

Business history: Go to <http://www.ufpi.com/about/time2.htm>

Founded in 1955. From a single sales office serving the manufactured housing industry to a multibillion-dollar corporation that is a leading supplier to the industries it serves, Universal Forest Products has grown to become the nation's leading supplier of wood and wood-alternative products.

What is biggest advantage of doing business in the Mid-Willamette Valley: Close proximity to the lumber mills.

Essential business philosophy: Do what we say and take care of the customer. Our role as a supplier goes much deeper than delivering a quality product that is on time and competitively priced. UFP prides itself in offering solutions and alternatives that help our customers grow and help them meet their company's objectives. The customer is our true boss.

Best way to stay competitive: Continuous improvement (CI) has drastically changed our culture and processes. CI translates into a leaner company that is able to react to the changes in our market and is able to meet our customer's expectations. Without CI, we would not be in the position we are today.

What is most challenging in work? The business climate itself has been very taxing on everyone in business. Uncertainty for our customers and suppliers has made everyone proceed more cautiously. Business patterns and costs change swiftly, making the easy duties and responsibilities more challenging than in the past.

Best business decision: Right-sizing the company and staying focused on CI. Both have translated into UFP becoming a healthier company with a razor-sharp focus.

Toughest business decision: Along with cutting expenses and right-sizing came the unpleasant responsibility of cutting jobs. A lot of good people in our company and other companies have lost their jobs.

What trends do you see happening in your industry? Several years ago most companies were able to project and see into the future farther than six to eight months. Today they are unsure

what the future brings, which causes people to proceed with caution.

Major clients: ASC Profiles Inc., Champion Homes, Clayton Homes, Fleetwood Enterprises Inc., Headwaters Inc., The Home Depot, Homebuilders Northwest Inc., Kit Home Builders, Nashua Homes of Idaho Inc., Palm Harbor Homes, Skyline Corp., Thor Industries Inc., Tuff Shed Inc., Darr Lumber Company, Tomkins Industries

For additional information, contact SEDCOR at (503) 584-7303 or e-mail sappleby@sedcor.com.