

A JOURNEY OF 25 YEARS THAT STARTED WITH A SINGLE DOOR KNOCKER

25 years ago, equipped with little more than a phone, a PC and a little black book of useful contacts, I set out with one goal: to provide high quality, affordable hardware products.

A story that began once upon a time with a door knocker and aspirations to shake up the sector, has become a narrative of investment, expansion and innovation. It has seen us grow to a £22 million business, with a team of 180 people, 6000 SKUs across six brands, and 100,000 sq ft of warehousing space.

Our scale and capabilities have changed, but our ethos hasn't. We're still passionate about providing high quality, value for money, innovative products that meet the needs of our customers. Every market, every customer and every interaction matters to us: we are driven to be the very best we can be.

We have put people at the heart of our business. We value our customers, our supply chain partners and our team, helping us to retain both talent and relationships. We also invest in giving back, with charity initiatives and community support activities.

Over the past 25 years, we have adjusted to changes in tastes, technologies and compliance. We've ridden the waves of recessions and construction booms, and we have now adapted during a pandemic too, emerging even stronger than ever.

This booklet celebrates where we've come from, who we are and where we're going, with thanks to everyone who has been part of the journey so far.

David Jennings, CEO





“From the very beginning, it was the culture of the business that attracted me and gave me an opportunity to rise through the ranks.”

“I caught the bus to my interview in the pouring rain, got hopelessly lost and, wringing wet though, I knocked on the door of a random building to ask directions. It turned out to be the right place and David Jennings welcomed me in, handed me a towel and made me a cup of tea. What David saw was a resilient, determined person with bags of enthusiasm. It’s been that ability to look for potential and create opportunity that’s helped the business grow and thrive over the past 25 years.”

Wendy Rushton

Operations Director, UAP Ltd

“UAP is much more than a supplier; they are a valued supply partner and we can rely on them to be an integral part of our product development process.”

“When we are undergoing extensive product testing, they provide us with full sets of ironmongery, so that our doorsets are tested as a certified complete product.”

Tim Fairley

Director of PDS Doorsets



“Since its acquisition by UAP, Locking Systems has gone from strength to strength because we have been able to invest in new equipment, in our people and in our stock holding.”

“Creating a great place to work brings out the best in people and the bitesize training that UAP offers to staff every Friday has really helped to bring the team together and motivate everyone.”

Bill Murray

General Manager, Locking Systems

OUR 25-YEAR JOURNEY



We moved from a small office to our first HQ at Bank House in Bury.



We achieved the ISO 9001 quality management standard for the first time; a certification we have held ever since. We gained our first BSi Kitemark the same year.



1996

The company was established as Universal Imports, working directly with factories to become the UK's first supplier of installation-ready, pre-finished door knockers.

1999



2000

The company changed its name after visiting a supplier in India called Akhil, where the owner had erected a sign that read Universal Akhil Partnership.

2003

2007

We bought our first warehouse in Whitefield and also became involved in fundraising for communities in Nepal the same year, raising the funds to build the first of five schools in Bhimpedi.

In our 25th anniversary year we are still innovating with the launch of the Fullex Kinetica+ K4 cylinder and the TS 008 Soterian Slim letterplate.



Our share save scheme was offered to all employees, giving every member of the team a financial stake in the success and profitability of the company.

2021

2020

2020

2019



We responded quickly to the pandemic, protecting staff and using our connections in the Far East to procure high quality PPE to supply UK businesses.

After acquiring Intelligent Hardware in 2019, we acquired Locking Systems in 2020.





2008

We developed the Genuine Lishi brand in collaboration with locksmith, Martin Pink.



2009

We launched the Tradelocks brand for locksmith tools and equipment.

2011

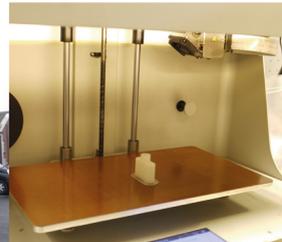
We bought a second warehouse in Whitefield and moved our HQ there too.

2013

After buying our first product testing machines we set up our in-house testing facility and, as the company continued to expand, so did our sales team.



We added two more warehouses to our portfolio, bringing the total to five.



2018

We completed a £20 million management buy-out and strengthened our leadership team with several new appointments.



2016

In a year of significant growth we acquired Fullex Locks.

2014

To aid product development, we bought our first 3D printing machine. We now have five, making it faster and more cost effective to produce prototypes.



CONSTANT EVOLUTION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The needs of our customers and their customers are constantly evolving. That's why UAP is focused on anticipating change and delivering beyond expectations at every touchpoint.

Our acquisitions over the past five years have brought new products, expertise and innovation into our portfolio, enabling us to offer greater choice and joined-up solutions from trusted brands. From the market leading door locks and cylinders offered by Fullex, to the stylish Intelligent Hardware range, the fire-rated door hardware provided by Firemongery and the locking cylinder solutions and bespoke masterkeying services delivered by Locking Systems, we are growing strategically and adding best in class products.

But not all of our growth is through acquisition. Our investment in product development, new technologies, sales and marketing, and operational improvements are all contributing to a multi-tiered, product offering, effective customer communication and an efficient, reliable service.

We have developed our marketing activity to provide multi-channel communication, including emails and e-newsletters, along with social media. We're also creating podcasts, webcasts and videos, writing informative content for trade publications and, of course, updating our website regularly. As the risks presented by COVID-19 subside, we hope to get back to face-to-face events and sales visits soon too.

Operationally, we are constantly looking at new ways to maintain high standards of order fulfilment accuracy and rapid response. We have invested in warehouse capacity and equipment, along with systems and personnel, to ensure our logistics operations are scalable as we grow. We now also offer online ordering, enabling customers to order from us in the way they find most convenient.

Ours is a fast-paced business with an experienced and dynamic leadership team driving continuous improvement that motivates our team and inspires our industry.

"I love working in an environment that's constantly evolving. As customer experience manager, it's really important to me that we don't just look at how we interact with customers, but also use those insights to keep improving."

"I started my career at UAP as a marketing assistant and have moved through different departments before being appointed to my current role. Throughout my 10 years with the company, I have felt supported and listened to, and that's an ethos I like to think we share with the way we work with customers too."

Mandy Ferguson

Customer Experience Manager, UAP Ltd



"Working at UAP is my first job after completing my degree and Master's in product design, and I couldn't have chosen a more progressive and supportive environment to begin my career."

"I am able to leverage my digital design skills and knowledge of 3D printing while learning so much from senior, experienced designers and working collaboratively with colleagues across different departments. It's the people at UAP that make it a great place to work, because everyone is so encouraging and we're all able to bring our own skills to the table while learning from those around us."

Jamaine Kome

Design & Development Engineer, UAP Ltd

RISING TO CHALLENGES IN A TIME OF CRISIS



500k PPE Donations in Manchester area.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been the biggest challenge most of us have ever faced, at work and at home. At UAP, our close relationships with supply chain partners in China meant we had early insights into the impact of the virus, prompting us to act urgently.

We began by stopping all visitors from coming to site and enabling our team to work from home. To protect those still on site, we created work bubbles, implemented social distancing and created one-way systems, weeks before the national lockdown. And as soon as tests became available, we rolled out regular testing for all on-site personnel too.

But we knew that looking after our team during the pandemic was about much more than protecting them from the virus. We also focused on our team's mental health. From online yoga sessions and quizzes, to reaching out to those coping with financial hardship or caring responsibilities, we helped our work community get through it.

We also took steps to help our wider community. We used our contacts in the Far East to procure high quality PPE, creating an additional business within the UAP brand. As well as providing a trusted supply for businesses, donated PPE to a wide range of frontline organisations.

And, of course, we also focused on our customers' needs. We ordered additional stock to ensure we could continue to respond quickly and efficiently to orders. By the end of 2020 we had £9 million of stock in the UK, enabling us to help fenestration, ironmongery and construction customers overcome supply chain challenges.

The pandemic has tested us all, but it has also highlighted our strengths and resilience. We are very proud of how our team has pulled together and continued to support each other and our customers during this difficult time.

"We were committed to supporting our team as much as possible during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We wanted to ensure that no-one felt the need to put themselves at risk for their job by making it clear that anyone with symptoms should stay at home and would still be paid. We're certain that having an employer that cared took a lot of stress out of the situation for a lot of employees."



Bonnie Hodson
CFO at UAP Ltd



"I am extremely grateful to the team at UAP Limited for their generous donation of PPE. As the concepts of solidarity and helping other people and groups in need are central to the Emmaus ethos, we shared the donation with five neighbouring Emmaus communities supporting formerly homeless people across the North West, so it will benefit so many of our team and those we work with."

Mark Booth,
Local Champion for Emmaus South Manchester

"When the pandemic began we were concerned about how supply chain uncertainty would affect our ability to deliver projects but UAP were ahead of the game from the outset. They were brilliant at communicating with us and had made sure they increased their stockholding, so we were able to simply pull off items as and when we needed them."



**Miles Architectural
Ironmongery Ltd**

Mark Read,
Miles Architectural

OUR COMMITMENT TO PEOPLE, THE ENVIRONMENT AND DOING THE RIGHT THING



First of five schools in Nepal.



Zara at the UAP Doggy Daycare.

Our commercial success affects our bottom line, but our success in reducing our environmental impact and supporting people has immeasurable benefits far beyond the realms of profit and loss. That's why setting and achieving goals for sustainability, wellbeing and training is so important to us.

Acting responsibly to reduce waste and minimise our carbon footprint has been embedded in UAP's business since our earliest days. We generate virtually all the energy we use from renewable sources on site and send no waste to landfill. We have invested in equipment to help us reduce the use of plastic packaging and are working towards being 100% virgin plastics free by choosing biodegradable or marine reclaim materials where possible. We actively source recycled and recyclable materials too, shredding old packaging as infill material. We are even planting trees to aid carbon lock-up – 50,000 of them at the last count!

Our approach to looking after people also helps us to be a sustainable business. We have high ethical standards across all our operations, including implementing strict policies on child labour and monitoring these across our supply chain.

We have innovative programmes to ensure our people feel valued, including wellbeing initiatives such as yoga sessions for staff, and our new onsite doggy daycare facility to enable them to bring their pets to work.

We are very proud of our achievements in raising money for charity too. We raised funds to build five schools and a hospital in Nepal, regularly contribute to numerous charities and have given away £500K worth of PPE to local healthcare providers, charities and faith groups.



UAP door viewers range.

“I am one of the many people on the senior team at UAP who has been promoted from within the business and, after 8 years with the company, I can really see the value in that approach. It leverages the experience within the team, encourages everyone to do their best and places value on the right approach and attitude, as well as skills and experience.”

“A key part of my role is responsibility for our CSR goals, achievements and reporting. I love working for an organisation with a long-standing commitment to sustainability and social value.”

Kamila Kasperowicz
Marketing Director, UAP Ltd



THE NEXT CHAPTER STARTS HERE

Consistency is important for any business, but that doesn't mean that things should stay the same.

For us, consistency is not about an if-it-ain't-broke-don't-fix-it approach to maintaining the status quo; it's about building on what we've always done well, so that we can do even better.

At UAP, consistency means continuous improvement, constant investment and taking an agile approach to seizing opportunities.

Over the past five years, we have grown significantly by investing in people, equipment and resources. Our acquisition trail continues and we are committed to seeking out companies that will offer our customers high quality standards, excellent customer service and competitive pricing.

By investing in training and recruitment alongside both organic growth and acquisitions, we are ensuring that we have the scalability and expertise to maintain our quality and service commitments as we grow.

New product development is also a key element of our commercial strategy. With a dedicated team of product designers and an in-house testing facility, we are leveraging the patented innovations that have already put UAP at the forefront of the sector, as well as embracing new ideas and technologies.

Above all, we are continuing to prioritise people. We serve our customers and work collaboratively with them to understand their changing needs, offering the right products at the right price and driving innovation across everything we do.



“Because UAP has such a wide range of products, we have plenty of options to choose from and can be confident that all of them offer us and our clients excellent quality at a good price.”

“UAP is constantly refreshing its range with new products too, and the team provides us expert advice to help us make the best choices for each individual project.”

Steve May

Elite Architectural Ironmongery

“We are constantly combining customer feedback, market insights and the expertise of our own team to pioneer product development and innovation that keeps people safer and offers robust, easy-to-install and value for money solutions for our customers.”

Continuous improvement sits at the heart of UAP’s business model and we apply that philosophy across everything we do, including how we serve customers and operate sustainably, as well as new product development.”

Barry Halpin

National Sales Director, UAP Ltd



INNOVATION CONTINUES AT UAP LTD



IONIC Electronic lock from Fullex-ai.

After 25 years of growth and innovation, we have an enviable product portfolio that is known for both quality and value, and we're continuing to develop new products as technology, compliance and customer requirements evolve. Here are just a few of our recent launches:

Kinetica+ K4 : Combining several of UAP's patented innovations in a single Secured by Design, British Kitemarked and Sold Secure Diamond Standard, 3* cylinder, the Fullex Kinetica+ K4 is a game changer for both the trade and for homeowners. Designed with no ring on the cam and a single sacrificial cut-line on the outside of the cylinder, Kinetica+ K4 offers a robust and durable lock that is easier to install and provides improved protection from moisture and dust ingress, while offering smooth operation and protection

from all break-in methods, including bumping, picking, drilling and fishing. Each cylinder is provided with three Bio+ keys, which have been impregnated with a biocidal substance that protects the user from bacteria and viruses.

TS 008 Soterian Slim Letterplate: The slimmest TS 008 letterplate on the market, our Soterian Slim range has an internal flap projection of just 14mm and an elegant design with no external fixings. BSI Kitemarked, Secured by Design certified and patent pending, the unique design builds on the popularity of our existing TS 008 Soterian range, which includes the only Certifire certified fire rated letterplates on the UK market.

Firemongery Range: Our new Firemongery offering has been designed as a pick-and-go range for builder's merchants, trade counters and wholesalers with eight different packs available. A fully-stocked point of sale unit, featuring a unique 'Pack Selector' decision tree, helps customers select the right items in store, and our interactive Pack Selector tool provides the same confidence in choosing the correct items online.

Intelligent Hardware Retail Range: The new pick-and-go Intelligent Hardware range has new packaging and graphics to help customers select and fit the right products for their project. With more than 100 products in the range, including internal door hardware, external door hardware and window safety, the products are stamped with the Intelligent Hardware 'Best by Design' seal of approval and every item is supplied with full fitting instructions.

Locking Systems Milos 100: The latest product to be added to the Locking Systems range is Milos; a high-security and high-performance cylinder. Made with a sacrificial cut on each side as standard, the cylinder is designed to remain operational, with the locking mechanism intact, if force is applied to either end because the cylinder will break away for the sacrificial cut line. Fitted with our unique, patented anti-bump system which does not use trap pins, along with anti-drill, anti-pick protection, Milos 100 offers an unrestricted key section for ease of local key duplication, with 800,000 differs, and six pins as standard. A comprehensive range of offset sizes is available, along with Scandinavian, rim and threaded cylinders.



TS008 Letterplate - The Soterian Slim.



MILOS range from Locking Systems.



A NOTE OF THANKS

25 years have passed in the blink of an eye. Not even I, with my bellyful of ambition and my passion for making good things happen, could have imagined at the beginning what we would have built by now.

As the saying goes, 'it takes a village to raise a child'. Though UAP may have begun as my baby, it has grown thanks to the community of customers, employees and supply chain partners that have nurtured and supported it.

Every product bought, every new idea, every hard day's work and every ounce of commitment has helped UAP continue to grow.

So this anniversary booklet not only celebrates what, collectively, we have achieved, but also what, collaboratively, every individual has contributed. Over the past couple of years, more than ever, we have learned the importance of community and this booklet has been produced with thanks to everyone in our extended community for being part of our success.

David Jennings, CEO

