



UCG Associate Success Stories

As UCG approaches its 29-year anniversary in December, we've taken a look back at the people who helped shape and grow the company, and have gotten to know them through a series of interviews titled [UCG Alumni Success Stories](#).

In this article, we are switching gears to highlight our longtime associate, Mike Powall. Many of you know Mike and have worked closely with him over the years. If you've not yet met, we are pleased to introduce **Michael D. Powall, Vice President of UCG**. Mike has been with the company since July 1993 when he was hired as a Systems Consultant. Twenty-two years later, he remains a major contributor to the success and growth of UCG.

A little background.

This story begins with two friends from [Wickliffe, Ohio](#) who went their separate ways after high school. Mike Powall went to Bluffton University, while Jim Kandrac attended Cleveland State University. Jim graduated in 1983 with a Bachelor's degree in marketing; Mike graduated in 1986 with a Bachelors degree in Business.

In 1987 at 26 years old, Jim founded UCG Technologies (formerly United Computer Group, Inc.). Before long, this startup technology company began to take shape. As it gained momentum, Jim needed help and began to build his team. At the time, Mike was working for a UCG competitor, and he and Jim reunited while competing for a deal! Jim was impressed by Mike's competitive spirit, extensive computer sales and leasing experience, can-do attitude, and admirable work ethic. Jim knew he would be a great fit and offered him an opportunity.

Fast-forward twenty-two years.

"Mike is truly a thoroughbred racehorse. He wins the short sprints and has always been it for the long haul. He is dedicated to UCG and handles authority and his responsibilities like a true gentleman. Mike can be counted on 100% and has been a true friend and valued business associate for over 22 years." – Jim Kandrac

Mike Powall

"I have truly been blessed to be part of the UCG team for the past 22 years. The company and I have grown tremendously throughout my tenure. It would not have happened without the support of Jim Kandrac. Jim has provided me with the tools and environment required to thrive and succeed."

Mike, where were you working prior to joining UCG, and what type of work were you doing?

I worked for five years with Leasing Dynamics Inc. in Cleveland, Ohio. I was responsible for leasing and selling IBM Systems Hardware and Software.

Can you describe how everything came together back in 1993 when you began discussions and joined Jim at UCG?

Jim and I actually became reacquainted competing against each other on a large System deal with a local Cleveland company. It was a very intense and challenging transaction with many players. Jim observed the way I competed and frequently asked if I would like to work for him. As fate would have it, after the deal was complete I ended up joining UCG.

What was it like to work for UCG in those early years when the company was just six years old, but beginning to grow?

I had to start over in the business which was not easy. I was fortunate to have a great support staff at UCG plus valuable experience that was gained at Leasing Dynamics, thanks to my cousin Bob Delaney who introduced me to the successful Cleveland Company. With that great combination I was able to hit the ground running.

Please tell me about some of the responsibilities and tasks you were involved with initially as a Systems Consultant, and how your role evolved over the years.

I started out consulting and selling in specific accounts locally and in the surrounding Ohio states. I started small, selling computer peripheral products to my accounts. Eventually that led to Installation and sales of large systems.

And some of your greatest challenges?

The toughest challenge when I first came to UCG was starting over. I was not able to call on existing customers because of a non-compete agreement. With a lot of faith, the support of my wife, and hard work I was able to succeed.

What skills and experiences would an individual need to enter and excel in your specific industry?

A college education, hard work, and humility.

What do you envision for the company over the next five years?

I see our company continuing to grow. Since we began offering our VAULT 400 cloud backup and disaster recovery solution many years ago, we have proven that we can grow exponentially while adding resources as required.



Mike Powell, VP, UCG

What person/people, living or dead, do you admire most, and why?

I admire my Mother and Father the most because they brought me into this world. They provided me the personality, faith and work ethic to succeed in all facets of life.

Last but not least, can you share some of your most memorable moments at UCG over the past 22 years?

My most memorable moments at UCG happen with every transaction we complete with a new or existing client. It thrills me to offer a service, a system, software, or a solution that helps their company, and in turn helps UCG and enables me provide a very nice lifestyle for my family.

"I grew up in Wickliffe, Ohio in a family of nine; my parents, four brothers and two sisters.

Without a clear objective yet in mind, I went to Lakeland Community College after graduating from Wickliffe High School in 1981. While working at my Father's bar (Sonny's Side of the Street), I graduated with an Associate degree in Applied Business and a Minor in Communications. I realized I still desired a higher education and wanted to play college football at any level.

After visiting multiple colleges in Ohio, I chose Bluffton College (now Bluffton University). I played football in my Junior and Senior year on a successful NAIA Division II football team. I credit the university, the football program, and the Head Coach, Carlin Carpenter, for believing in me and giving me a wonderful experience and most importantly, a quality faith-based education.

I reside in Highland Heights, Ohio with my beautiful wife Connie and my three children, Jake, Danielle and Hannah. Without them my life would not be complete." – Mike Powall

Learn more about [Mike Powall](#) and [Jim Kandrac](#).

Interview conducted by [Francine Ciaccia](#), MoMo Companies Ltd.