

SOFTWARE & HARDWARE

"I'm not bragging when I say we literally are running e-commerce out of Central Florida for the world. We are the only ones doing this, and we are right here."

— Rob Wight, CEO, Channel Intelligence, Inc.

Metro Orlando is home to some of the most progressive, talented and diverse software development companies in the U.S. Led by companies serving the financial services industry, more than 1,400 businesses specializing in software development and service, data processing and information retrieval are based in the region.

Employing approximately 15,000, these companies generate over \$1 billion in annual revenue and serve such distinct industries as banking and finance, government, education, consumer products and utilities automation. The software sector also crosses over into the well-established modeling, simulation and training and digital media clusters, which are heavily involved in developing programs for use in such applications as film and television, interactive entertainment, military exercises and transportation planning.

The sector is strengthened by a community dedicated to advancing the industry by providing supporting resources for entrepreneurs and established companies alike, bolstering technology education and working to reinforce the region's standing as a nationally-recognized hub for software development.

Overview and History

With the exception of agriculture and tourism, perhaps no other industry has made as dramatic an impact on the growth of Metro Orlando as high tech with software development companies helping form the core of the technology cluster in the region. Some of the most progressive and successful software firms got their start in the region. Today, more than 1,400 companies comprise the sector, employing nearly 15,000.

Since the 1950s, Metro Orlando has seen remarkable growth in its technology cluster with emphasis on the software industry. Founded in military defense with the presence of U.S. Navy and Army installations, the first high tech companies in the region created commercial applications for defense and space-related technologies. These initiatives helped form the strong modeling, simulation and training cluster found in Metro Orlando today.

Major players in a number of software categories can be found in Metro Orlando, but those centered on financial services form the core of the region's software development cluster. With a trend started by Metavante Banking Solutions (now FIS) in the late 1960s, the region has supported an array of software developers that represent the history of the financial services software industry. With access to companies such as FIS, Harland, Fiserv, Optria and Temenos USA, financial services organizations have ample technology options available in Metro Orlando.

Such growth in one segment has promulgated advantages in a variety of others. With a demonstrated ability to provide qualified information technology professionals, a variety of software companies from many disciplines are based in Metro Orlando. Firms specializing in automation applications in customer billing, college operations and governmental agencies have established headquarters or a large regional presence in the region and have prospered. Convergys

(formerly Cincinnati Bell Information Systems), SAP, SunGard Higher Education (formerly Collegis) and SunGard Public Sector are a sampling of the region's prominent software companies.

Meanwhile, firms providing more esoteric and client-facing software applications and Web-based tools complement the software offerings in the region. From Web page design to multi-media production, companies such as JHT, Digitec, MindComet, Sales and Marketing Technology and WebSolvers have carved a prosperous place in the market, serving both local and national clients.

Marketplace

Committed to diversifying its economy, Metro Orlando has worked diligently over the past decade to establish a foothold in the high tech industry. As a result of the community's efforts, more than 1,400 software companies operate in the region today.

Fortune Magazine consistently ranks Orlando among the top 10 cities in the country for doing business, and specifically focuses on the area's high tech industry as a key to that success. *Business Week* recognizes Metro Orlando as one of the fastest growing high tech sectors in the country, and *Entrepreneur* magazine ranks the region as among the top 10 best for startups.

The UCF Business Incubation Program is modeled to provide emerging technology companies with the enabling tools, training and infrastructure necessary to grow and prosper. Such comfort with technology firms, and commensurate development of strong supporting academic resources, has resulted in an ideal combination of affordable lifestyle and abundant employment pool. The average wage of high tech workers in Metro Orlando is higher than the average wage of American employees, but still comparatively affordable for companies hoping to find a cost of living consistent with educated, talented employees.

In addition, crossover with the established modeling, simulation and training and digital media clusters in Metro Orlando expand the breadth of the region's software cluster. Local businesses are developing software covering a range of applications such as:

- Utilities
- Billing
- Workers compensation
- Higher education
- Financial services
- Sales
- Multimedia
- Animation
- Location-based entertainment
- Military training

Workforce

The prospective employee pool in Metro Orlando is sharpened by the availability of quality educational and vocational training programs in the region. The software industry in Metro Orlando currently employs more than 15,000 people.

Leading the way in high tech education is the University of Central Florida (UCF), whose annual enrollment averages 5,000 students in undergraduate, master's and doctoral level programs. Considered one of the country's leading metropolitan research universities, UCF works in concert with Central Florida Research Park, which is located adjacent to the campus. The Research Park, considered one of the top 10 in the world, is a collaboration of academia, industry and government that pursues cooperative research and brings existing technology to the commercial marketplace.

Local community colleges and specialty technical schools also offer a breadth of computer technology courses for those seeking employment in the field or wishing to enhance their skills. Students in Metro Orlando are acquiring the knowledge needed to fill various positions in the software industry such as:

- Software engineer
- Quality assurance manager
- Software development technology analyst
- Technical writer
- Project manager
- Application support specialist

Education

Responding to the rapid rise in the software sector in Metro Orlando, local educational institutions have developed curricula to provide their students with a solid foundation in the field and the skills necessary to meet the hiring needs of technology companies. All levels of education related to software are offered in the region from high school magnet courses to doctoral programs.

The **University of Central Florida (UCF)** has emerged as one of the premier computer science universities in the country. Graduating more computer science majors than any other Florida university, UCF has developed strong partnerships with industry, world-class centers and institutes that focus on technology and software.

UCF is delivering on its promise to become one of the nation's leading partnership universities through relationships on local, national and international levels. While a significant amount of the \$66 million in sponsored research UCF generates annually is provided by industry along Florida's high tech corridor, state and federal funding is achieving record levels, and centers such as the Florida Eastern Europe Linkage Institute assist in facilitating UCF affiliations with new international partners.

UCF keeps regional, state, national and international needs in the forefront when recruiting top students, faculty and staff and developing the infrastructure to achieve global prominence in selected areas of research. Partnership with the UCF Business Incubation Program (UCFBIP) and UCF's Small Business Development Center solidifies the university's local connections and assists UCF researchers in transferring technology to the marketplace. UCFBIP is modeled to provide emerging technology companies with the enabling tools, training and infrastructure necessary to grow and prosper.

Valencia College has proven a valuable partner to UCF and area business by preparing students for vibrant IT careers. One of the top three colleges in the nation in the total number of associate's degrees awarded, Valencia is a fully accredited institution that offers degrees in areas related to software development designed with input from industry leaders. These two-year degrees combine academic learning with hands-on experience, and many include industry certifications.

Valencia also offers certification training through Valencia Institute, the center for corporate and continuing education. These courses allow students to quickly update their skills in popular areas like Oracle, MCSE and Java.

Seminole State College of Florida offers associates degrees in computer science and computer engineering associate's degrees covering such coursework as e-business technology, programming and network and electronics.

In addition, several Metro Orlando high schools offer exceptional magnet programs that combine well rounded IT instruction with real-world experience through partnerships with local businesses and post-secondary institutions. Most of these programs enable students to earn college and/or technical school credits for work completed in high school.

For example, Seminole County's Crooms Academy of Information Technology provides innovative teaching and learning in a technology-enriched environment designed to engage students in an academically challenging curriculum that prepares them for post-secondary education with advanced technology skills. Crooms Academy is a dedicated magnet school that allows students a wide range of educational choices.

Industry Organizations & Involvement

Demonstrating the community's resolve to strengthen high tech industry in Metro Orlando, a number of organizations have been formed to provide the supporting resources software companies need to thrive in the region. Following are brief overviews of a selection of these organizations:

Florida High Tech Corridor Council

The Corridor Council unites principals of top high tech, competitive companies from throughout the region with educational and economic leaders in a quest for a common goal: the attraction, retention and growth of high tech industry and workforce.

ISACA

A membership association for IT and information systems professionals, ISACA provides its diverse constituency of more than 95,000 worldwide with the tools they need to achieve individual and organizational success through professional education, training and networking opportunities.

Seminole Technology Business Incubation Center

The STBIC is dedicated to providing a nurturing environment for technology based companies in the early stages of development. The center is a joint venture of Seminole County, Seminole County Port Authority and Seminole State College of Florida and is supported by grants from NASA and the Technological Research and Development Authority.

Society for Information Management (SIM)

Since 1968, SIM has inspired the minds of the most prestigious IT leaders in the industry. Highly regarded as the premier network for IT leadership, SIM is a community of thought leaders who share experiences and rich intellectual capital, and who explore future IT direction.

University of Central Florida Business Incubation Center (UCFBIP)

The UCFBIP was formed to help early-stage technology companies flourish by providing the enabling tools, training and infrastructure necessary to create financially stable, high growth enterprises. The Incubation Program currently serves over 200 companies and has created more than 1,600 jobs in Central Florida since opening its doors in 1999. It has helped more than 160 emerging companies create over \$200 million in annual total economic output and more than 1,600 new jobs with an average salary of \$59,000.

Incentives

Metro Orlando offers attractive incentives to qualified relocating and expanding companies. This assistance is provided based on each organization's particular needs, including, but not limited to:

- Job creation
- Wage levels
- Capital investments

For more information, please visit the "Relocate & Expand/Incentives" section of the Metro Orlando EDC's website at OrlandoEDC.com, which provides a general overview of incentives offered to companies within Metro Orlando.

Company Profiles

Partially fueled by the number of prestigious software development companies located in the region, Metro Orlando is recognized as one of the leading high tech sectors in the nation. Software businesses in Metro Orlando develop applications for a vast selection of industries, with primary focus on financial services.

Additionally, crossover with the well-established modeling, simulation and training and digital media sectors in Metro Orlando adds to the strength of software development in the region. Such MS&T companies include Dynamics Research Corporation, Lockheed Martin and Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC).

Digital media companies involved in software development for such applications as animation and gaming include Electronic Arts – Tiburon and Kosmo Studios.

Following are brief overviews of a sampling of software companies based in Metro Orlando:

[Channel Intelligence](#)

Channel Intelligence is a software solution company whose primary service is to link – or create channels – between manufacturers, retailers and consumers. While transparent to the user, this company's software products are the underlying drivers that dominate the online commerce market. Channel Intelligence customers include Best Buy, Target, Neiman Marcus and hundreds of others of the world's best known brands.

[Convergys Corporation](#)

Convergys Corporation, a member of the S&P 500 and the Forbes' Platinum 400, is the global leader in integrated billing, employee care and customer care services provided through outsourcing or licensing. The company's software solutions are made up of such powerhouses as Atlys®, ICOMS and WIZARD™. Convergys serves top companies in telecommunications, Internet, cable and broadband services, technology, financial services, and other industries in more than 40 countries. Their Orlando location employs more than 1,800.

[Dynamics Research Corporation](#)

DRC has been a leader in modeling and simulation for over 20 years. A founding member of the National Center for Simulation, DRC develops dynamic models that logically represent the actions of simple electronic components, as well as large, complex human processes and organizations. DRC is also an industry leader in the development of Simulation-based Reengineering (SBR) techniques. SBR combines the most effective reengineering techniques with the latest simulation technology to bring processes alive in a dynamic environment.

[FIS](#)

Fidelity National Information Services, Inc. (NYSE: FIS), a Fortune 500 company, is a leading provider of core processing for financial institutions, card issuer and transaction processing services, and outsourcing services to financial institutions and retailers. FIS has processing and technology relationships with 40 of the top 50 global banks,

including nine of the top 10. FIS is a member of Standard and Poor's (S&P) 500(R) Index and has been ranked the number one overall financial technology provider in the world by American Banker and the research firm Financial Insights in the annual FinTech 100 rankings. FIS maintains a strong global presence, serving more than 13,000 financial institutions in more than 80 countries worldwide.

Harland Financial Solutions

Harland Financial Solutions serves as a strategic technology partner to more than 6,000 financial institutions of all sizes, including commercial banks, thrifts, credit unions and mortgage companies. The company supplies comprehensive software solutions and services that help increase institutional performance and drive profitability. Its portfolio of solutions includes branch automation, business intelligence, core processing systems, enterprise content management, financial accounting, lending & compliance, loan servicing, payments, risk management and self service solutions. Harland Financial Solutions is headquartered in Lake Mary, Florida.

Oracle Corporation

Oracle is the world's leading supplier of software for information management, and the world's second largest independent software company. With annual revenues of more than \$9.7 billion, the company offers its database, tools and application products, along with related consulting, education and support services. Oracle is the first software company to develop and deploy 100% Internet-enabled enterprise software across its entire product line: database, server, enterprise business applications, and application development, and decision support tools. The Oracle E-Business Suite the first and only set of applications able to work with a single global database allows customers to connect and automate the entire flow of business processes across the front and back office. Oracle's Orlando location employs more than 900 technology support engineers.

SunGard Public Sector Inc.

SunGard Public Sector Inc., a proven leader in government information technologies, provides a broad range of innovative software solutions to more than 2,200 government offices, agencies and utility companies throughout North America. The company's products address the computing requirements of a rapidly changing public sector market and support end-to-end delivery of e-government access to citizens and businesses.

SunGard's Total Enterprise Solution of more than 50 integrated software applications provide all the benefits of sharing information across departments without sacrificing security. Designed solely for government and utilities, the company's software applications can also stand alone or work in groups to provide a complete departmental solution.

SunGard Higher Education, also located in Orlando, provides more than 1,600 institutions with support for their digital campuses.

Symantec Corp.

Symantec is the world's leading storage software company providing data protection, storage management, high availability and disaster recovery software to 86% of the Fortune 500. All Symantec software is open, supporting all significant business applications, operating systems and storage hardware. Development of one of the company's top-selling products, Backup Exec™, a backup and recovery solution, is performed at its Orlando location.

NIIT Healthcare Technologies Inc.

NIIT is a strategic provider of application outsourcing, product development and custom software development, integration and maintenance services that links e-services with backend systems for healthcare organizations worldwide. The company has a core focus on continuity of care, patient access, physician relationship management, patient clinical information management, electronic referrals, secure messaging and data analysis. The Preferr product is a web-based, interactive, intelligent collaboration solution that allows all care providers to automate the referral process, securely exchange patient clinical and contact information, track referrals, communicate real time and forecast referral patterns. This improved communication system between providers serves to address growing needs, improve the continuity of care and foster better patient care and patient/doctor relationships.