



## DETROIT METROPOLITAN WAYNE COUNTY AIRPORT RETAIL CONCESSIONS PLANNING STUDY

### Company profile

- Established in 1989, as Unison Consulting Group
- Became UNISON-MAXIMUS, a wholly owned subsidiary of Maximus 1999
- Acquired in 2008 by UCG Associates now doing business as Unison Consulting
- More than 100 airport clients have benefited from our firm's consultant expertise
- Experienced senior staff with more than 150 years of industry experience
- Firm's senior staff have held management positions with airports, airlines, the FAA, government consulting firms and other national aviation consulting firms
- Professional consultants are experts in economics, finance, retail concessions, airport planning, information technology, and airport management

### Challenge

Unison Consulting (Unison), formerly UNISON-MAXIMUS, was tasked with providing retail planning services for the Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport to design a comprehensive retail program for the new 97-gate, \$1.2 billion Midfield Terminal dedicated to Northwest Airlines, which opened in February 2002.

### Solution

Unison's role was to design an innovative and financially productive concessions program for this terminal. The project was challenging in terms of concession space constraints and terminal configuration limitations. Unison worked to reconcile the objectives of all stakeholders in the terminal design including Northwest Airlines, the County, and the design team.

In support of Unison's recommended programming and to maximize the efficiency of the planned Terminal configuration, Unison proposed alternative retail schemes at varying program sizes. Unison presented detailed layout drawings of each scheme, all within the basic footprint of the building. The selected scheme was modified to permit clustering and to yield a critical mass of retail at specific highly visible areas within the building. Unison's efforts were instrumental in the planning and merchandising for a central concessions zone with maximum exposure near the central security checkpoint.



Unison was also involved in the planning and development of storage and support requirements and the review of a proposed centralized distribution system. We conducted a needs assessment of tenant storage and distribution requirements.

Following the planning and design phase of the project, Unison has been an integral partner in the implementation of the retail program from development of the final merchandising plan and leasing packages to the preparation and evaluation of all retail RFPs. As part of tenant solicitations, Unison developed an industry-leading local outreach campaign involving direct mail, community meetings, extensive advertising and ICSC conferences.

### **Results**

Unison' outreach efforts proved tremendously successful – we assisted the County's evaluation of more than 100 responses to the RFPs. The new program successfully opened in 2002 with a 60% increase in effective rental rates and 150% in airport revenues. We have achieved DBE/MBE/WBE participation of over 50%.

#### Industry Awards:

- 2006 *ACI* Best Food & Beverage Program (large airport category)
- 2007 *ACI* Best Convenience Retail Program (large airport category)