

✦ For Lakeland computer services company, reinvention is a common theme



Sometimes, the path to success – or even to survival – requires a course correction that changes your whole business model. That's especially true in the technology business.

For Pinckney-based [Computer Asset Management Corp.](#), also known as CAM Corp., reinventing the business has been a recurring theme ever since Dave Brownlee Sr. (pictured) launched the business in 1974 to lease IBM mainframe computers in partnership with Ford Credit, the automaker's financial services division.

Today, the company is a much different enterprise, which focuses on helping customers fully understand the often hidden costs of producing a seemingly endless number of documents. It's part of an evolutionary process that started in the late 1970s, when weak auto sales prompted Ford to focus on that part of the financing business.

Brownlee, who had graduated as an industrial engineer from Michigan State University before joining the Coast Guard, where he served as an electronics officer, retooled CAM Corp. as a hardware company, selling disk drives that were mated to mainframe computers.

And when personal computers effectively killed that market, Brownlee looked to software as a new opportunity, linking CAM Corp. with AutoGraph International, based in Copenhagen, which had come up with a system for capturing information on computer screens for storage.

Today CAM Corp., a family owned business with 10 employees and \$2 million - \$3 million in annual sales, provides color printing software and hardware in both the Unix and NT computing environments. CAM is the exclusive North American distributor of AutoGraph's EasyCopy software, which automotive clients use to manage the massive amounts of documents typical of the industry. CAM also sells a variety of printers, storage devices and other equipment.