

# Universal Entertainment

**Universal Entertainment Corporation**<sup>[a]</sup>, formerly known as **Aruze Corporation** (Japanese: アルゼ株式会社, Hepburn: *Aruze Kabushiki-gaisha*), is a Japanese manufacturer of pachinko, slot machines, arcade games and other gaming products, and a publisher of video games. Aruze possesses licenses to both manufacture and distribute casino machines in the American states of Nevada, Mississippi and New Jersey. The company's corporate headquarters are in Tokyo. Aruze is also the licence holder of the video game franchise *Shadow Hearts*. Up until February 18, 2012, the company owned approximately 21% of Wynn Resorts. On November 1, 2009 Aruze Corporation changed its name to Universal Entertainment Corporation due to financial crisis of 2007–2008.

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## Universal

Universal Lease Co., Ltd was established in December 1969. It later changed its name to Universal Ltd in Japan and Universal USA in America. Universal Distributing Company opened as a U.S. subsidiary to sell video games direct to operators. Universal's greatest hit game was "Mr. Do!" in 1982, which spawned three sequels in the eventual Mr. Do series: "Mr. Do's Castle," "Mr. Do's Wild Ride" and "Do Run Run." Other games include the hugely influential platform game *Space Panic* (1980) and the maze game *Lady Bug* (1981). Cashing-in on the success of laserdisc video games, Universal released *Super Don Quix-ote* in 1984, on a new standardized laserdisc video game system they called the Universal System 1. A new game was planned every six months for the Universal System 1, including an unreleased laserdisc adventure game based on *Mr. Do!*, but the company stopped producing arcade games in 1985, and *Super Don Quix-ote* ended up being the only game released for the system. Universal Distributing of Nevada (UDN) was established to begin selling Universal's first slot machines direct to the gaming industry. In

## Universal Entertainment Corporation

**UNIVERSAL**  
—ENTERTAINMENT—



Headquarters in Tokyo, Japan

<b>Native name</b>	株式会社ユニバーサルエンターテインメント
<b>Romanized name</b>	Kabushiki-gaisha Yunibāsaru Entāteimmento
<b>Formerly</b>	Universal Lease Co., Ltd. Universal Ltd. Aruze Corporation
<b>Type</b>	Public
<b>Industry</b>	Pachinko Video game
<b>Founded</b>	December 2, 1969
<b>Founder</b>	Kazuo Okada
<b>Headquarters</b>	Kōtō, Tokyo, Japan
<b>Area served</b>	Worldwide
<b>Key people</b>	Jun Fujimoto President

January 2005, the company became a wholly owned subsidiary of Aruze. Aruze Corporation changed its company name to Universal Entertainment Corporation effective November 1, 2009.

## Relationship with SNK

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In 2000, Aruze bought out SNK Corporation, maker of the Neo-Geo. In exchange for the use of SNK's popular characters on their pachinko and slot machines, and a few games for the Neo-Geo, Aruze promised financial backing for the failing SNK. Instead Aruze instituted a program to liquidate SNK's assets and cut costs. This included licensing out popular IP to other companies (Metal Slug series, The King of Fighters series, Sengoku series), closing underperforming divisions, discontinuing distribution outside Japan, ending support for the Neo Geo arcade platform and selling off warehoused inventory. By 2001 it was clear to many SNK's employees that Aruze was not planning to preserve SNK and was simply going to let the company implode after liquidating most of its useful assets. So Eikichi Kawasaki and many other executives from SNK left to form Playmore in August 2001. Over this period many rank and file employees left to join other arcade developers or form their own companies.

In October 2001, Aruze allowed SNK to file for bankruptcy and all of its assets went up for bidding. Kawasaki's Playmore stepped in and bought up most of the auctioned assets and set itself up to re-enter the video game market as the successor to SNK. Playmore also acquired some of the companies formed by ex-SNK employees, namely Brezsoft and Noise Factory, to jumpstart development of more titles for the Neo Geo arcade system. Playmore quickly went about re-establishing themselves in the market; they opened new branches in North America and Europe, announced development of new titles for the Neo Geo arcade system, started developing games for console and portable systems for the first time in years and re-established distribution channels to sell inventory for the Neo Geo home and pocket systems. To further establish themselves as a reborn SNK they officially changed their name to SNK Playmore in 2003.

In October 2002, Aruze was sued by SNK Playmore founder Eikichi Kawasaki for copyright infringement over SNK's intellectual properties, claiming their use was unauthorized by Playmore. In January 2004, a preliminary decision was handed down by the Osaka District Court favoring SNK Playmore and was awarded 5.64 billion yen (USD \$57,627,468) in damages.

## Notable games released by Universal

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- Cosmic Alien (1979)
- Space Panic (1980)
- Lady Bug (1981)
- Mr. Do! (1982)
- Mr. Do's Castle aka Mr. Do vs Unicorns (1983)
- Mr. Do's Wild Ride (1984)
- Do! Run Run (1984)
- Jumping Jack (1984)
- Super Don Quix-ote (1984)

## List of games published by Aruze

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<b>Products</b>	<u>Pachinko</u> <u>Pachislot</u> <u>Slot machines</u> <u>Video games</u>
<b>Revenue</b>	¥124 billion
<b>Number of employees</b>	988 <sup>[1]</sup> (2019)
<b>Website</b>	<u>www.universal-777.com/en/</u> ( <u>http://www.universal-777.com/en/</u> )

Title	First release	Developer(s)	Console
Pachi-Slot Aruze Oukoku	June 3, 1999	Aruze	PlayStation
Pachi-Slot Aruze Oukoku Pocket: Hanabi	October 21, 1999	Aruze	NeoGeo Pocket Color
Pachi-Slot Aruze Oukoku 2	November 25, 1999	Aruze	PlayStation
Azteca	February 10, 2000		NeoGeo Pocket Color
Pachi-Slot Aruze Oukoku 3	July 19, 2000	Aruze	PlayStation
Pachi-Slot Aruze Oukoku Porcano 2	July 20, 2000	Aruze	NeoGeo Pocket Color
Pachisuro Aruze Oogoku Ohanabi	December 14, 2000	Aruze	NeoGeo Pocket Color
Pachi-Slot Aruze Oukoku 4	December 14, 2000	Aruze	PlayStation
Pachi-Slot Aruze Oukoku Pocket: DH2	January 15, 2001	Aruze	NeoGeo Pocket Color
Pachi-Slot Aruze Oukoku 5	November 15, 2001	Aruze	PlayStation
Pachi-Slot Aruze Oukoku 6	December 13, 2001	Aruze	PlayStation 2
Pachi-Slot Aruze Oukoku 7	August 8, 2002	Aruze	PlayStation 2
<i>Shadow Hearts</i>	November 6, 2003	<i>Sacnoth</i>	PlayStation 2
<i>Shadow Hearts: Covenant</i>	February 19, 2004	<i>Nautilus</i>	PlayStation 2
Hanabi Hyakkei Advance	July 29, 2004		Game Boy Advance
Don-Chan Puzzle: Hanabi de Don! Advance	July 29, 2004		Game Boy Advance
Aleck Bordon Adventure: Tower & Shaft Advance	November 26, 2004		Game Boy Advance
Cool 104 Joker & Setline	December 2, 2004		DS
Type Tunes - Chase the Music!	2005		Arcade
Guts da!! Mori no Ishimatsu	March 31, 2005		PlayStation 2
<i>Shadow Hearts: From the New World</i>	July 28, 2005	<i>Nautilus</i>	PlayStation 2
Pachi-Slot Aruze Oukoku 8	Cancelled	Aruze	PlayStation 2
Aoi Don: Hanabi no Kiwami & Hanabi no Takumi	2010	Commseed	DS
Pachinko Aruze Oukoku	Cancelled		PlayStation
The Splizer	Cancelled		PlayStation 2

## Notes

- a. Japanese: 株式会社ユニバーサルエンターテインメント Hepburn: *Kabushiki-gaisha Yunibāsarū Entāteimmento*

## References

1. <https://www.universal-777.com/en/company/>

## External links

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- [Official website \(http://www.universal-777.com/en/\)](http://www.universal-777.com/en/)
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