Also in 1980, SSI released Computer Ambush, Computer Napoleonics, Computer Conflict and Computer Air Combat (after which SSI felt secure enough in the marketplace to drop the "Computer" from future product titles). Sales for SSI in 1980 topped $300,000, then shot up to $897,000 the next year, probably making it the largest producer of wargames (board or computer) at the time. SSI's all-time best selling wargame was Roger Daumon's Wargame Construction Set, which moved over 53,000 units after its 1986 release.

At about that time, military historian Dr. Edward Exner teamed up with the now legendary Sid Meier at MicroProse to produce the Command Series of microcomputer wargames. Starting with Crusade in Europe, released in 1985, they went on to jointly write Decision in the Desert (same year) and Conflict in Vietnam (1986). The Command Series was, and is, unique in its multi-meb and flow of simulated battlefield management.

While commercial microcomputer wargaming was taking off, the academicians with their mainframes were also creating wargames. Walter Bright at Caltech began writing Empire (Interspace) in FORTRAN-10 in 1976. In 1984 it was rewritten in C for the IBM PC, after which Mark Baldwin did a major revision v.2.0 for the Atari ST and Amiga.

It was during that time that I began work, while still in college, on the original Universal Military Simulator (UMS) for the Apple II. Though that version was never released, it led to a contract with Firebird Licensees to produce an Atari ST version. Eventually, the original UMS would be released for the IBM PC, Amiga, Macintosh and Apple IGOS as well. Over 100,000 program and scenario disks have been sold since 1987. That probably makes UMS the best selling computer wargame of all time.

According to the January 1992 issue of PC Computing, war games comprise the largest segment (30%) of the home software market. And, as home computers become faster and have more memory, programmers and developers are being pushed by the public to make even more detailed simulations. Among this latest generation of computer wargames are the naval simulation Harpoon (from SSI), Mark Baldwin's The Perfect General (published by Quantum Quality Productions, Inc.), and our UMS II: Nations at War. One thing is certain: the future will see greater advances in the complexity and accuracy of computer wargames.