

STORAGE

FOR
EDUCATION

Canadian college uses mobile to store \$5 million PC inventory

Sheridan College in Oakville, Ontario, an educator in leading-edge computer graphics and animation, adopted a new mobile computing program for students. The program, which provides students access to the latest in computer technology, required that the college maintain an extensive inventory of computers on-site for student use. Because the computers had to be maintained in a small, secured vault, Sheridan selected Spacesaver mobile storage as an efficient storage solution.

"Shortly after starting the program at our Oakville campus we were experiencing a space shortage," explained Lynn Morgan, manager of client support services for information technology. "I had seen Spacesaver mobile storage used elsewhere and was aware that it would be a good solution for storing a large volume of material while optimizing the room space."

Morgan knew that she had to not only solve the immediate storage crisis but also plan for the future. "We knew that the computer program would grow to as many as 8,000 to 10,000 computers by 2004 and we were able to convince management that it was cheaper to incorporate a mobile system than to occupy additional secured areas," she said.

The Spacesaver representative worked with the user to determine the most optimal storage arrangement, including shelf design and room layout. He designed long carriages to maximize the room space and recommended that the laptops be stored vertically on the shelves rather than flat. After a call to the computer manufacturer, IBM, to determine that there would be no damage to the computers if stored vertically, Spacesaver developed a specialty support method.

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A Spacesaver mobile system allows Sheridan College to compact a growing inventory of laptops into a small locked vault behind their service desk.

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The system was designed using vertical rods to separate and support the heavy laptops. The rods run from the top of the shelf to the bottom of the lower shelf and are evenly spaced five-across each shelving section.

“The shelving and rods are very solid and strong and I don’t ever worry about it managing the weight of the laptops. Compared to industrial shelving, the mobile system is nicely finished,” Morgan added. The college selected a powered system for its ability to carry heavy loads, its safety features and its steady, smooth movement that ensures that the computers remain safe on the shelves.

Morgan emphasized that it was important that the area be highly organized and efficient. “Throughout many times of the year, such as during summer break, we have to store thousands of computers. It was important that we store them in an organized fashion to be able to assign 4,000 computers to new students in the fall,” she said. Also for ease of retrieval, each laptop’s cables and adapters are stored in a Ziploc bag and kept with the computer on the shelf.

Shortly after Sheridan’s Oakville program incorporated mobile, the Brampton, Ontario, campus also acquired a Spacesaver system to store laptops.

According to Morgan, laptop storage is a growing trend in K-12 as well as post-secondary schools. The laptop program and its storage is so successful that the college, in conjunction with IBM, holds “fly-ins” for other colleges and universities involving university executive visits to learn about Sheridan’s success story. •



The Spacesaver system’s smooth, steady carriage movement and strong vertical shelf rods ensure ultimate safety for the costly computer inventory.

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