

Ecological

Corporate UK's inefficient storage systems are having an impact on the environment. Customers who are relocating offer an opportunity to reduce this damage by reassessing storage needs and taking appropriate action. This green approach can also be a deal winner says Andrew Jackson, chief executive officer at Triumph Business Systems

Despite talk that we have entered the digital age paper usage is on the rise, says Jackson. A significant percentage of this growth is due to the large volumes of emails that are received and printed. The average office worker in Britain throws away about 2.4kg of paper each week, or nearly 115kg per year, most of which is high quality paper, suitable for recycling. With paper volumes on the rise there is a greater demand for efficient filing and storage solutions. Yet when it comes to relocating, storage is all too often an afterthought rather than an integral part of the move. Inevitably this can lead to inefficiency, poor access to data and costly misuse of space. It is up to the office furniture supplier to educate customers about the alternatives.

Far from reducing the amount of paper used, technology has actually increased it. Although much of the information is now being stored electronically, a quick walk through any office reveals the paper hot spots that spring up around printers, copiers, faxes and scanners. Most of your customers still like paper and machines let them use even more of it.

Relocating office premises offers dealers the ideal opportunity to reassess storage solutions and the ways in which they can be improved. The use of information must be controlled, encouraged, prioritised and managed. Documents can be copied so easily that most workers spend lots of time finding the latest version of a document they are collaborating on. More efficient filing systems are said to result in up to 50 per cent faster retrieval times and anything from a 30-60 per cent reduction in floor space. With floor space costing anything from £100 to £500 per square metre, savings can be considerable. Office space is now the second largest expense for businesses after salaries and other staff costs, therefore serious consideration needs to be given to finding the best storage solution.

An intelligent approach to storage specification when relocating can help businesses to manage information and define space more efficiently while helping staff do their jobs better. By taking a more focused approach to storage, planning ahead and looking at the life cycle of storage, it is possible to make customers real savings both in terms of space and costs. It's a winning argument. In addition to these factors, the ecological implications of paper usage and wastage call for more progressive storage management systems.



Organisations need to take a holistic approach to the issue. They need to train staff to better understand the way information works, when to print something off, when to send, delete or respond to an e-mail, what to file and where and how. Staff should be encouraged to talk to each other rather than simply sending emails. By raising awareness of the environmental problems caused by the wasteful proliferation of paper and developing a corporate culture of recycling, a sense of joint responsibility can be achieved.

Simple measures

Well over 50 per cent of the UK's workforce is now office based, making the combined environmental impact of office workers considerable. The introduction of environmentally friendly practices and products need not be difficult or time consuming, simple changes to current practices can save company time and money while leading to an improved motivation amongst staff. Measures to save, reuse and recycle paper include:

- Archive email messages electronically rather than printing them out
- Perform a quick spell check prior to printing to avoid costly reprinting
- Use both sides of the sheet of paper
- Fit more on the page. Where possible use the smallest paper size for the job e.g. reduce
- Turn two A4 sheets into one when photocopying using the reduce function. Adjust the

Infocus

Storage and the environment



margins on your PC documents to increase the numbers of characters on a line. This will enable you to include more on a page

- Use smaller font sizes to enable more information to be included on a page
- Keep a tray on each desk for storing scrap

paper printed on one side. You can then use the other side for writing on, printing on or photocopying.

- Use scrap paper for desk-top notepads.
- Once the paper has been fully used on both sides, your waste paper can then be recycled. Make sure that collection bins are put in high-trafficked areas including conference rooms and kitchens as well as by the photocopier.
- Ask your wholesaler/supplier for recycled products such as printer paper.

Storage needs

For most businesses information needs to be accessible to a large number of staff. Typically people use three recognised levels of storage: personal, intermediate and archive. Personal storage includes current work kept on the desk or

Furniture protection

A new policy that protects furniture manufacturers and retailers against problems caused by fire, theft or accidents has been launched by specialist insurance broker furnisire. furnisire's policy concentrates on delivering pro-active risk management, health and safety best practice and continuity planning. This is then supported by insurance cover from the world renowned Lloyd's of London insurance market. The company says well managed furniture providers that embrace this approach will be able to save money by buying less insurance.

furnisire has been providing insurance to the furniture market for over 15 years. The Stevenage based broker has now joined forces with Lloyd's insurer Fusion to create a new specialist insurance scheme for the UK furniture market. Cover is available for many sectors including domestic, contract and office furniture suppliers. Pete Checketts at RHG cited the need to reward those furniture providers who implement good risk management and health and safety programmes behind the need for specialist cover:

"For far too long all UK furniture

manufacturers, suppliers and retailers have been treated the same by insurers irrespective of whether they implement good risk management and health and safety programmes. A new bespoke approach focusing on prevention and continuity recovery rather than on compensation was definitely required.

"By joining forces with Fusion we are able to provide a combination of risk management, business continuity and insurance to match our clients' needs. We will offer an upfront assessed and tailored policy which, if required, will cover any losses incurred and help to find alternative ways of delivering orders on time."

furnisire's key offerings include risk assessment, insurance design, insurance placing, programme servicing and claims settlement. The main elements of cover are: public liability, employer liability, buildings cover, theft, marine, business interruption and loss of profits. Rewards for a pro-active risk management strategy will also be offered as well as a web-based disaster recovery planning service, full legal expenses cover, health & safety support, no 'average' clause, low cost finance and highly competitive premiums.

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in a nearby pedestal and is easily retrieved. Intermediate storage is that which is shared with others and is used regularly. While the final level, archive, includes information that is rarely used but kept for reference. By completing a storage audit it is possible to gain a comprehensive understanding of individual and group information storage needs. An audit can also forecast likely requirements for the future.

By looking ahead at the ways office needs may change and develop in the coming years you

can help your customers put into place procedures and best practices with regards to filing and storage. Equally they can save on the incurred costs of having to replace or buy additional storage systems at a later date.

Careful consideration of storage needs can also be used to facilitate and support strategic organisational changes that take place during relocation. Although the move may prompt the initial changes to filing systems, it is important that companies continually look for ways to improve and update procedures. Staff should be in constant consultation about their storage needs and encouraged to follow an environmentally friendly policy before the volume of paper stored gets out of hand. ■

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