



**Business Solutions**

Your Profit Improvement Partner

## **WAREHOUSING IN THE MOVING & STORAGE INDUSTRY**

Warehousing and Inventory Control Systems are a major area of challenge to any business. This paper deals with the specific issues in the Moving and Storage Industry.

### **Challenges:**

The Moving and Storage Industry faces some unique challenges. In addition to maximizing space utilization and minimizing labor expense, Moving and Storage warehouse systems may also need to:

- Manage systems, furniture, boxes, files and customer inventories
- Provide detailed piece level tracking
- Retrieve and create customer and management reports, & initiate work orders.
- Manage time sensitive shipments and high value inventory
- Receive, consolidate and ship customer product,
- Control pack and ship material
- Track OS, vaults and contents
- Process Claim Information
- Scan customer's and/or OEM bar codes.
- Track Quantity Counts
- Print bar code labels
- Provide Storage Invoicing

Accomplishing the above often requires multiple systems and/or manual processes. As a result, many of the Moving and Storage companies are spending a great deal of time and effort, managing customer information and item location data.

### **Locating and Retrieving Items**

The ability to quickly locate, retrieve and deliver customer items is the essence of all Moving and Storage companies. Companies must be able to determine where customer's items are stored, at any given time, and exactly what quantity, and how long each have been there.

Location problems are usually the result of an ineffective warehousing system that does not update location data when items are moved and inaccurate data entry. Whether manual or semi-automated, procedural or training related, incomplete and inaccurate data is extremely costly and can render any system almost useless. The implementation of a location plan, labeling, rack locations, cages, rooms, floor spaces, etc, and the use of bar-coded labels and scanners, will improve data accuracy and help warehouse personnel quickly locate and retrieve customer items. Training and Information Systems support may also be required.

## **Managing Customer Information**

Customer required information in the Moving and Storage industry varies greatly. In addition to the standard customer profile information, specific customer item information, such as description, height, width, model number, serial number and color may also be required. Customers may also want to track shipments or moving and storage activities. When choosing a business system, companies in the Moving and Storage industry should seek flexibility first and foremost. The system must have the ability to accept many user definable fields and link, validate and verify all critical customer information. The system should also allow customers at any time, to access inventory information, place orders and retrieve reports. This will reduce staff requirements and improve customer service.

## **Space Utilization and Storage**

In most cases, items are stored in warehouses operated by the Moving and Storage Company. Items can be stored short or long term. Poor space utilization costs money and results in lost profits. When items can't be retrieved quickly enough who pays for the inefficiency? Imagine the following customer scenario:

"Why should I pay for Tuesday and Wednesday? I called last Friday to have the item sent to my new site by Monday ... and you agreed to do so."

The company should have visibility of available space (three-dimensional) within each of their warehouses and any associated restrictions (elevators, stairs, etc).

Billing for storage should interface with the warehouse system and accommodate a number of different billing methods:

- By Activity (access, moves)
- By Location (Square footage and cost)
- BY Piece (class, quantity, square/cube foot, weight)
- Time (hour, day, month)

The above short descriptions represent some of the challenges encountered by today's Moving and Storage companies and may exist in varying degrees, depending on the company's size, growth, and customer requirements.

## Solution

Determining the right solution for a given Moving and Storage company involves a thorough review and understanding of how the company operates and what specific objectives the company is trying to meet. The solution can take the forms of:

- Simple changes to the current systems and/or procedural methods utilized
- Personnel training in proper system utilization
- Implementation of a new system, along with procedures, training, etc.
- Three-dimensional warehouse location data and the ability to rapidly record movements and control not only location, but also item identification numbers, quantities, etc.
- Handling of billing, monthly charges, project data, grace periods, charge back capabilities, data entry of pre-advice, trucking movements, container management, and a host of other features
- Other integrated Accounting features
- RF Wireless communications
- EDI transactions

Contact CEO Business Solutions for a no obligation consultation on improving your bottom line.

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