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ON THE MOVE WITH DHS Worldwide Software



Going Mobile

DHS Worldwide Software Helps Moving Companies That Are Entering the Burgeoning Mobile Storage Business



Mobile storage is becoming a big business and many movers are cashing in on this new lucrative market.

Mobile storage takes the warehouse to the client. In short, mobile storage can be often thought of as an extension of self storage. The main difference is that the storage is transported to the source, while in the case of traditional self storage the client transports the items to the storage facility.

Convenience is the name of this game. Mobile storage can also be used as an alternative mode of moving. The client can load up a container at one site and it can be transported by the mover to another site.

Many moving companies in the mobile storage business also provide a full complement of services, including packing supplies and professionals to assist with packing/unpacking the containers.

A container also can be left at a site for an indefinite period of time, which adds to the convenience. With the container left at the client's site, the client can take as much or as little time as required to loading and/or unload the contents.

In addition, many movers today are finding that the mobile container storage business offers many positive synergies that match well with their moving operations.

As is the case for any business, good management tools are a key component of a successful mobile storage operation. DHS Worldwide is a software provider with many years of experience in the moving and storage industry that offers a comprehensive software solution for managing all aspects of a mobile storage container business.

This software is marketed under the name of Total Recall. Not only can the Total Recall software track the traditional storage crates normally associated with moving operations, DHS Worldwide said it can expand the capabilities of a mover to provide both commercial and residential mobile storage. In fact, the software can also be deployed to manage traditional stationary self storage units.

From Ordering to Billing

Among the other capabilities it provides, the Total Recall Software manages scheduling, dispatching, billing and tracking for mobile containers, DHS Worldwide noted.



One important aspect of billing in this industry is credit card processing. The DHS Worldwide software automates the process of billing customers by automatically generating invoices and can even automatically process a client's credit card at the time the customer's bill is due. These are only a few of the key features of the Total Recall software, the company pointed out.

Many people in moving and storage know of DHS Worldwide from its long history as a software provider to the commercial records management industry, a profitable segment for movers. For well over a decade DHS Worldwide Software has been a leader in the area of providing comprehensive bar code-enabled software solutions for the commercial records management industry.

Over the years, this solution has become the most complete commercial information management software solution available for managing physical records, digital images, vault media and destruction services, the company noted.

Approximately six years ago, DHS Worldwide started development on a software product for managing self-storage operations and mobile storage operations. The company said its products now have has thousands of users all over the world.

Movers find the mobile container storage business has positive synergies that match well with moving operations.

Mobile storage units come in all shapes and sizes. They range from wooden containers, such as the ones most movers store in their warehouses, to large commercial steel containers stored on large construction job sites.

There are both large consumer and large commercial markets for mobile storage. Most mobile storage companies offer to deliver the units to the client's site, pick up the units and store them in a warehouse. Frequently, they also offer a menu of other services, such as providing packing materials and loading/unloading services.

In a surprisingly short time the industry has seen explosive growth as the use

of mobile storage has burgeoned into a very large business in both the residential and commercial markets, DHS Worldwide observed.

Movers Embrace the Concept

"We have seen a significant growth in this business over the last few years. Many movers and self-storage operators are finding this to be a business that well complements their current operations," said Diane Hyman, chief executive officer of DHS Worldwide.

"This business is very similar to the operational processes currently employed by movers. It is very comparable to storing vaults or crates for clients, which has traditionally been done as a byproduct of the moving process."

Almost all movers maintain warehouse space occupied by crates filled with many of their customers' business and personal effects, which produces year-round revenue. The mobile storage industry takes this business model to the next level. It changes this business from what has tradi-

tionally been a side effect of the moving business, into a profitable, full-service endeavor.

The client does not need to be moving to utilize off-site crate storage. Often times the client simply needs off-site storage space, but does not wish to deal with inconvenience of a self-storage facility. Instead, the client wants to enjoy the advantage of having the storage container brought to them.

As a result the client doesn't need to be concerned or take the additional time required to provide its own transportation back and forth to the storage facility. Convenience and time savings are the premium – and people are willing to pay for it.

Mobile storage containers come in all shapes and sizes. Some mobile storage operators use wood crates, (often referred to as vaults in the moving industry). Others utilize metal containers that are designed specifically for this purpose. Wooden containers can only be left exposed to the elements for a limited period of time and they must be eventually stored in a warehouse environment.

The metal containers offer another dimension of mobile storage. These types of containers can weather the elements much better and therefore can be left with the client for an extended period of time. This type of storage is frequently used at construction sites, for example.

Take the example where someone wants to rebuild a structure on their land, such as a detached garage. You can temporarily store the contents of the structure in one or more mobile units during the term of the construction.

Mobile storage units also have found enthusiastic customers in homeowners who are remodeling their homes – a growing business because people are taking equity out of their homes that have increased in value during the recent real estate boom to invest in a wide variety of remodeling projects.

It's not unusual today to drive around suburban streets in neighborhoods all across America and see mobile storage units dotting the driveways and the lawns of homes that are in the process of remodeling.

Smoothing the Way to Profits

Another great benefit offered by the mobile storage business to movers is the recurring income stream it produces. Many people will store items for years, even decades.

Billing can be automated and easy. Most mobile storage

operators take credit cards. The credit card numbers can be input into the Total Recall software and the software will bill the client's credit card each month when the bill is due.

In addition, the Total Recall software manages all aspects of the business processes. When a client calls and orders a container, all applicable information is entered into software.

The scheduling functions in the program are used to schedule the delivery and pickup. This allows the operator to see all of the available days, times and resources, at a glance.

The software not only includes a complete set scheduling functions, but also tracks the allocation of resources. As deliveries and pickups are scheduled, the software monitors these factors and prevents over bookings and over allocation of resources. This is designed to keep the operations efficient and customer satisfaction high.

The software tracks the individual containers that are assigned to particular customers and where the containers are at all times. Billing for all services and monthly rent is

handled in an integrated and automated operation. DHS Worldwide said the software ensures that all operations are handled in an expedited manner.

Many moving companies that get into the mobile storage business choose to purchase a franchise. Franchises normally provide ready access to high quality steel containers that will work well for on-site storage.

They also provide a nationwide network of interconnected dealers as well as national advertising resources. In addition,

franchise companies can provide a thorough education in the mobile storage business and have built a tremendous knowledge base of information about the industry.

DHS Worldwide is also a great resource for information about this business segment. Hyman is quick to point out that, "DHS Worldwide can help you understand the mobile storage business. Our professionals work with hundreds of companies in the business, including scores of movers. It is a wonderful business and many movers are discovering how it can add revenue to their existing operations."

For more information about the mobile storage industry and the Total Recall Software, contact DHS Worldwide at 904-213-0448. ■

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