

## Collections care at an off-site facility

Federal agency in the D.C. area



A federal agency based in Washington, D.C. maintains on-site museums in every state, where a variety of cultural artifacts are preserved and displayed. In the past, individual museums were responsible for caring for and storing their own collections on site, but that model is gradually fading away in favor of larger collections care facilities that serve various regions around the United States. As more museums send their collections to these regional facilities, the facility managers need to find ways to save space while still adhering to the highest standards of collections care.

### THE CHALLENGE: CONSOLIDATING COLLECTIONS

One of the largest regional collections facilities, located in suburban Maryland, supports a variety of collections care functions: curation, collections storage for regional museums, artifact preparation and restoration, emergency response, and temporary storage of collections threatened by flooding and other natural disasters. "A big part of my job is to make sure that this space optimizes our storage capacity," said a manager at the facility.

"We're not building on to this facility, and we're not getting any more space inside it. So we have to take advantage of what we have."

In order to develop the most efficient plan for one small area of the building dedicated to textile and artifact storage, the manager worked with his staff, visited other museum collections care facilities, and talked with his local Spacesaver consultant, who had worked on other museum projects at the facility and around the D.C. area.

### THE SOLUTION: COMPACTING SYSTEM FOR CABINETS AND TEXTILE RACKS

Because the collection consisted of a large number of three-dimensional artifacts as well as flags and other textiles, the planning team decided to purchase Spacesaver cabinets and textile racks and install them on Spacesaver compacting carriages.



Large Viking by Spacesaver cabinets were fitted with shallow drawers to maximize vertical space within the cabinets, and the cabinets were mounted on carriages and rails to eliminate wasted space in the aisles. The cabinets hold a variety of smaller artifacts, from historic dishware to medals and belt buckles.

Spacesaver cantilever textile racks were placed end-to-end along adjacent carriages, allowing staff to adjust the cantilever arms to precisely the right length and spacing. Base covers and canopy tops create a sleek, finished appearance and offer additional protection to stored items. "The cantilever carries an incredible amount of weight," the manager said. "We were actually sort of dumbfounded at how much weight they carry."

*"We needed a combination of the standard cabinetry on rails and a way to store textiles. It's a great combination because it provides us a great deal of high-density storage in terms of the cabinetry, and we also really like the textile storage capacity."*

— Government Manager

#### **THE RESULT: COMPACT STORAGE, WITH ROOM TO GROW**

This creative solution has resulted in a clean, compact preservation environment that's organized and accessible. "We needed a combination of the standard cabinetry on rails and a way to store textiles," the manager said. "It's a great combination because

it provides us a great deal of high-density storage in terms of the cabinetry, and we also really like the textile storage capacity."

The system has room for future growth, and additional rails and storage furniture can be added when the existing cabinets and textile racks are full. **To learn more about Spacesaver's collections care solutions and how your local Spacesaver consultant can help you overcome your storage challenges, please visit [www.spacesaver.com](http://www.spacesaver.com) or call 1-800-492-3434.**



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