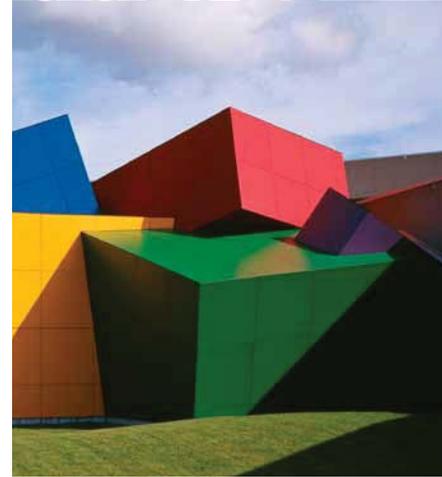


STORAGE SOLVED

THE CHALLENGE: The Strong needed to significantly improve the storage and safety of museum artifacts. With hundreds of thousands of objects to preserve and improve accessibility to, the museum had its work cut out. In addition, collection growth is expected to continue indefinitely, making the need for a system with the option for future expansion and customization a necessity.

PROTECTING THE ART OF PLAY

PRESERVING TOYS, GAMES AND THINGS THAT MAKE YOU SMILE AT THE STRONG'S NATIONAL MUSEUM OF PLAY®



The National Museum of Play® at The Strong in Rochester, NY, houses the world's most comprehensive collection of artifacts, documents and other materials that are devoted to the meaning and importance of play. There are literally hundreds of thousands of objects comprised of toys, board games, dolls, electronic games, books, photographs, documents and other historical materials all related to play. Tens of thousands are on view in the galleries of The Strong's National Museum of Play, and thousands more are accessible to the public online (<http://www.thestrong.org/online-collections/nmop/>).

A solution for The Strong's needs to improve the storage and safety of museum artifacts was taken very seriously. The sheer number of objects in the collection made finding a suitable storage solution quite a challenge. Fortunately, The Strong applied for and received a grant to dramatically improve storage for the nation's largest collection of items of play. Through a generous grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), The Strong was able to complete the entire renovation, including a building expansion, in 2006.

4-post mobile storage provides the perfect compartments for toys and games of all shapes and sizes.



(Above) Christopher Bench demonstrates the flawless functionality of a manual assist mobile storage system.

(Left) Mobile art racks hold the Strong's most precious and whimsical artwork.

"The new storage systems have allowed our team incredible flexibility as the museum's collection grows. We never know the types of new objects we are going to be gifted. We could not be happier with the quality and space optimization of Spacesaver's storage systems."

Christopher Bensch,
Vice President for Collections,
The Strong's National Museum of
Play, Rochester, NY

THE STORAGE SOLUTION

The Strong's objectives for the new storage area for collections were threefold.

- Advancing the safe storage of museum artifacts significantly;
- Enhancing artifact storage and accessibility; and,
- Improving the functionality of storage to support active museum acquisitions for the foreseeable future.

The process began with a focus on inventorying, re-housing and tagging existing museum objects in preparation for relocation to three new storage areas in the expanded building or relocation within existing storage spaces. Throughout the course of the project, more than 175,000 objects were inventoried and/or moved.

After much research, including visits to other institutions to examine installed systems and interviewing staff members from these institutions on "how successfully their storage needs have been met," The Strong team decided on the Spacesaver Corporation and its Local Area Contractor, the Henderson Johnson Company, to supply all the necessary high-density, compact storage equipment, new cabinetry and hanging art racks for the storage space in the building expansion.

STORAGE SOLVED

4-post shelving is the perfect "hangar" for pint-sized aircraft.



(Above) Vintage Barbies are safely stored under glass on shelves.

(Right) Historical dolls find a place to be displayed in the new system.



Today, some of the unique collections being stored on these systems include 1,500 classic Barbies, 450 vintage toy airplanes, 1,600 yo-yos, quilt collections dating back to the mid-1800s, and much more.

STORAGE SOLVED

The final installation included aisle after aisle of high-density, manual assisted compact storage. The systems housed shelving, cabinets, trays, and drawers from Delta Designs. The museum-grade cabinets are ideal for the collections storage of dolls, while the drawers are perfect for storing flat artwork such as quilts and smaller objects like yo-yos. Additionally, an aisle of art rack systems was installed for storing historical paintings and signage. The Spacesaver mobile art rack systems store the same amount of material as conventional pull out art racks in almost half the floor space. The hand-controlled system with its patented drive provides smooth and easy operation for the storage of the museum's art.

The storage systems put in place in the National Museum of Play were designed to allow for significant collection growth. Shelving units are highly customizable depending on the size and weight of the items that get added to the collection.



Fragile antique quilts are well-preserved in pull out drawers mounted on a mobile system.

Christopher Bensch, VP for Collections at The Strong's National Museum of Play, said, "The new storage systems have allowed our team incredible flexibility as the museum's collection grows. We never know the types of new objects we are going to be gifted. We could not be happier with the quality and space optimization of Spacesaver's storage systems."

Today, some of the unique collections being stored on these systems include 1,500 classic Barbies, 450 vintage toy airplanes, 1,600 yo-yos, quilt collections dating back to the mid-1800s, and much more.

Adjacent to the storage area are several smaller rooms where new items are cataloged, items are researched for historical accuracy, then processed and staged. As the museum's collection continues to evolve over the years, The Strong is now in a position to handle additional acquisitions and growth for generations to enjoy.

The Strong's National Museum of Play in Rochester, New York.

