

Storage

FOR COLLEGES

TULANE UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL TAKES PRIDE IN THEIR MASSIVE COMPACT LIBRARY

Tulane University Law School, located in New Orleans, Louisiana, built a new building, the John Gitten Weinmann Hall, and incorporated powered Spacesaver mobile systems throughout the law library open stack area. The twelfth oldest law school in the U.S., Tulane draws students from across the country and the world. The library offers more than 500,000 volumes, making it the 33rd in size among U.S. law school libraries.

As the law school and library expanded over the years, it outgrew its previous space on campus. "During the 25 years we were in our old building, the law school faculty, student population and library collection had more than doubled in size," explained Ray Lytle, head of public services. "If we didn't incorporate mobile storage, we would have had to discard more than 40-percent of the collection or move it off site."

Programmable Electric systems are located throughout the third-through-six-floor stack area and store more than 80-percent of the library's

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collection. The mobile systems feature striking custom wood end panels designed to match the rich interior features and furnishings of the library.

Lytle explained that although the law school building is new, it is not tremendously large. In order to make the best use of space, they used compact shelving. By compacting the stacks, there was ample room remaining for comfortable seating and study space, including over 300 carrels, a reading room, study tables and computer room. Also, because control over the collection was important to Tulane administrators, the mobile system allowed them to contain the stacks in a defined and monitored area.



Tulane used mobile systems to make the best use of space in its new law library.

Solved



Spacesaver mobile and static shelving with custom wood end panels house 80 percent of the collection.

With rail extensions installed into the library floor at the time of construction, stack areas can be easily expanded in the future by simply cutting back the carpet and installing additional mobile carriages. This creative solution offered by the Spacesaver representative, provides the University with a low-cost, flexible method for accommodating the expanding collection.

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Safety is never a concern in the open stacks, despite the 1,100 students accessing materials 17 hours a day, seven days a week. The Spacesaver Zero Force Safety System provides completely passive safety, requiring no active involvement from students for the system to detect when someone is in the aisle and prevent any carriage movement. It also senses material on the aisle floor and stops carriage movement to avoid materials damage.

“There was a lot of discussion about whether to get a mechanical or electric system,” said Lytle. “The electric systems met our needs because they are easy to operate, accommodate ADA concerns and provide safety for the students. In fact, we have not had one safety concern in seven years.”

The rare book collection, including 19th century French legal history and Roman law, is also stored on Spacesaver mobile carriages. Although the books are the most valuable in the Tulane law collection, Lytle did not hesitate putting them on Spacesaver carriages. “I feel confident storing the collection on mobile and, with limited staff access, they are kept locked and the collection is protected,” he said.