

Our Industry

"Shelf Files have become the new standard for the most efficient and cost effective filing systems"

- Dr. Mark Langemo, CRM

Every organization receives and creates paper records and must maintain and manage them. Its a fact of business life that **records are the memory of organizations competitiveness, profitability and overall success.**

Even though new storage mediums have evolved, paper remains the most widely used business records media. Paper documents typically include 80% to 90% of all recorded information in most companies. Files of information are assets, but only if you know where they are and how to make them instantly available for use.

Filing Equipment & Systems:

Equipment available for paper filing systems (and multimedia-integrated filing systems) include traditional pull-drawers filing cabinets, lateral roll-out cabinets, lateral suspension cabinets, mechanical files, mobile files and open shelf files. Each type has advantages and disadvantages and most appropriate and effective applications. The major manufacturers of filing systems can be consulted regarding equipment and systems options and for assistance in planning file-system development and improvement.

Self-based filing systems are strongly recommended and have become the new standard for the most efficient and cost effective filing systems. These files are produced by several manufacturers and are available either as basic units with or without covers; as self contained units with locks; as "data box" units, which may be easily expanded; and as units that can be easily assembled on tracks for mobility. **The major reasons why conversions should be made to shelf based filing systems include:**

- Visual access to records and typically result in the lowest personnel salary costs for the volume of records stored. Shelf based systems are the fastest and most convenient filing systems to use.
- Readily adaptable to storage, retrieval and management of paper records, CD-ROMS, optical disks, magnetic media, microforms and all records media.
- Adaptable for use with color coding, bar coding, computer based file-tracking systems and evolving records management technologies.
- Typically cost approximately one third less (on a per-linear-inch capacity basis) than traditional pull-drawer filing cabinets.
- Conserve floor space while making use of comfortable high space frequently wasted in many offices.
- Aesthetically pleasing and complement the decor and other modern information systems in progressive organizations.

The greatest volume of recorded information in most organizations continues to be paper documents. As a result, "getting control of the paper and the filing systems" needs to be a major priority. **Also, as more organizations seek ways to be competitive and give more responsibilities to fewer people, rapid access to paper filing systems is becoming more important.**

--Article contributed by Dr. Mark Langemo, CRM

Dr. Langemo is a professor of records management and information systems courses at the University of North Dakota. He received the 1993 Emmett Leahy Award from the Institute of Certified Records Managers, the highest international award in the field of records management.

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