



# STORAGE FOR BUSINESS

## World-famous Sotheby's auction house consolidates property storage

Sotheby's, the world's largest art auctioneers, and one of the oldest, underwent a major expansion project in its New York City York avenue offices, one of the largest Sotheby's locations. The expansion allowed the famous auction house to consolidate some of its New York satellite office and warehouse locations under one roof and provided increased exhibition space.

Management at Sotheby's knew the importance of maintaining the original Manhattan site so, rather than moving their New York offices, they made the decision to add six floors to the top of the building and remodeled the lower four floors to accommodate the consolidation. The building remodel considered the property storage areas and designed them with extended ceiling heights to maximize storage capacities.

"It was important to bring people and things together to specifically address the needs of our clients," said Chantal Lakatos, assistant vice president. "The consolidation saves on transporting of property and logistically organizes storage areas. In Manhattan, space is not only limited, but also at a premium and that's why high-density has worked well to conserve space."

The new construction and remodel design of the building and the use of high-density storage allowed Sotheby's to bring the property closer to the specialists. The specialists, each expert in a particular area such as American paintings or Asian art, work with the property daily to catalogue, review or prepare pieces to show clients. "Our challenge was to properly store excessive amounts of property and place it in one building where it is safe and most conducive to managing it prior to a sale," Lakatos said.

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High-density storage allows property consolidation closer to where it is managed.

# SOLVED

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Major property sales are seasonal – spring and fall – and Sotheby’s has to manage extensive amounts of incoming property throughout the year to gear up for its seasonal sales. “Each object can range in price from \$1,000 to hundreds of millions of dollars and being able to manage the flow of property coming in is very important,” she explained. “Each piece that comes in for consignment goes through processing for a specific sale.”

American paintings and old masters are stored on art racks and in carpeted bins and condensed on mobile carriages. The art rack systems were designed for hanging framed pieces; the bins are designated for small and medium sized paintings.

The art racks, designed by Spacesaver, feature double mesh design to maximize hanging capacity and for high-density storage. They provide easily viewing without having to handle the heavier artwork.

For smaller lightweight framed art, specially designed painting bins provide protection and safety. Each steel bin is lined with carpet to protect the property from scratches when pulling items out for viewing.

Flat files provide safe storage for unframed prints, small Asian objects and other pieces of property. Asian and pre-Columbian collections are stored on high-density four-post, wide span shelving. •



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800-492-3434

Spacesaver Corporation, Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin 53538-2798  
800/492-3434 www.spacesaver.com



Art racks and carpeted bins on mobile systems safely store all sizes of framed artwork.