



It's all about harmony

Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control rethinks materials management, ActivRAC™ mobilized storage system makes storage space work smarter

CHALLENGES:

Material Center Operations, the group responsible for materials management at Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control (MFC) manufacturing facility in Orlando, Fla., strives for continuous improvement as it aims to help boost the plant's overall efficiency. Toward that end, the department implemented a new strategy to ensure fast- and slow-moving production materials came together harmoniously as dictated by its Materials Handling Requirements system.

The success of the new approach hinged on the ability to make space for storing slow-moving materials work with the flow, not against it. In turn, that drove the need to bring all slow-moving materials closer to the point of use rather than storing a portion of them off site. A solid concept to be sure, except the already inadequate footprint for storing slow-moving items on site went from 4,000 to 3,000 square feet based on additional uses for the space. And building an addition was out of the question. It all pointed to the need to make the remaining storage space work smarter.



An ActivRAC 16 system increases storage capacity within the existing footprint at MFC by 70 percent – and contributes to a 15 percent increase in efficiencies.



The patent-pending carriage and rail design allows for sufficient flexing and articulation so that a system can be installed on reasonably uneven floor – streamlining installation and minimizing cost.

SOLUTION:

Greg Shorter of Curlin Inc., an authorized Spacesaver® Industrial™ distributor based in Tampa, Fla., worked with MFC Material Center Operations Senior Manager Sam Cox and his team to design an ActivRAC™ mobilized storage system to match the group's strategic goals.



ActivRAC systems are specially designed for safe operation. The PhotoSweep® is an infrared and visible red light beam projected along the length of the carriage base. It stops the system's movement when broken by a person's foot or another object.

for an open aisle between rows of racking or shelving. That means there's no wasted space. Instead, users decide which aisle to open to easily access stored materials while remaining aisles stay closed.

MFC's powered ActivRAC system replaced five static racking units used to store slow-moving production components, which arrive at the facility in palletized boxes. The ActivRAC system also accommodates pallets of large plastic shipment containers. Each of the system's four mobilized carriages has three levels to capitalize on 16 vertical feet of available storage space. To save costs, the 65-foot-long carriages were built with existing and new pallet racking.

Team members use a pallet stacker to access stored materials. A user simply pushes a button on the front of the ActivRAC carriage to open the desired aisle. Materials can be accessed from either side of the aisle, which expands to a full 12 feet for ample room to maneuver. The ActivRAC system's rails are recessed in the floor, ensuring a smooth transition as the stacker moves in and out of the aisles. Additionally, the patent-pending design eliminated the need for costly structural footings and leveling.

The ActivRAC system, manufactured by Spacesaver Industrial, makes more efficient use of limited storage space when compared with static systems because of the way it works. With the ActivRAC unit, industrial-grade carriages can be equipped with existing or new pallet racking, shelving and cabinets. Yet the carriages move side to side on wheels mated to a rail system. In so doing it eliminates the need



A user pushes a button on the ActiveRAC control panel to open the desired aisle and gain access to any one of the three levels of pallet racking that make up each 65-foot-long carriage. Items can be accessed from either side of an open aisle.

RESULTS:

MFC increased its capacity for storing slow-moving materials on site by 70 percent, despite the substantially smaller footprint for storage. The result is the ability to put slow-moving materials closer to the point of use – a practice that contributes to 15 percent gain in efficiencies as measured by minutes per transaction. And since it's easier to track production materials on site, inventory control has also improved. All that, plus more space at on- and off-site locations has allowed the Material Center Operations to support additional functions as planned. Slow- and fast-moving materials are now in total sync at MFC, adding to an already stellar reputation for operational excellence.

“The ActivRAC system gives you the opportunity to take existing space and do more with it. We've seen how it can improve efficiencies for relatively low cost.”

Sam Cox, Senior Manager,
Material Center Operations
Lockheed Martin Missiles
and Fire Control,
Orlando, Fla.

To learn more about the ActivRAC Mobilized Storage System and how a Spacesaver Industrial Storage Specialist can help you overcome your storage challenges, please visit www.spacesaverindustrial.com or call 1-866-767-1888.