

### Two Industries Are Better Than One The Convergence of Moving and Storage

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The moving industry and the storage industry have long been considered quite different from one another. One business moves goods and the other stores goods. The emergence of the portable storage and the moving industry over the past ten years has definitely increased competition among all three industries. Add in the impact of the recent economic recession and you begin to formulate a new recipe for competition and interactions amongst these industries. I believe that these industries have more in common than one might imagine. Currently they are headed down a path of convergence with the eventual meeting place in the very near future vis-à-vis the storage container.

These industries all share the same basic tenets: convenience of space, quality in service, and innovative vehicles. A moving company helps people or businesses move their goods from one place to another. A storage business provides space for people or businesses to store and access their goods. The importance of space comes in common forms, whether it is a storage facility, moving van, portable storage container, special containerized van, ocean shipping container, or storage vaults that are all quite typical throughout these industries. To provide a few examples how this occurs; a self-storage operator that utilizes a moving van, or a moving company that utilizes a portable storage container, or a portable storage company that utilizes its containers as static self-storage. The idea here is that there are common-

ly shared methods of renting space tangled between these industries.

The convenience of these industries resides in their "do it yourself" or "DIY" factor. People independently complete the job without the aid of professionals. This is quite common in the moving and storage industry, with containerized moving solutions allowing people to order a container and have it dropped off at their request to the location of their choice. Once they finish packing the container, it is picked up and moved to their desired location. The self-storage industry is short for "self-service storage" with people loading up their cars and trucks with goods to store and access when it is convenient for them to do so.

The economic recession is causing even greater convergence amongst these industries. In the moving industry a full-service move is more expensive when compared to containerized moving solutions. A key difference is that much of the liability falls on the customer when utilizing these services. This gives reason for movers to seriously look at alternatives that are less involved and expensive when compared to full-service moving. The self-storage industry has seen recent developments with add-on buildings or portable storage containers to their existing facilities due to considerably less construction cost, time, and capital investment when compared to traditional methods of building self-storage facilities.

The innovative vehicle bringing these industries even closer together is the storage container. In my opinion, the storage container must possess a few key elements before it can become the innovative solution utilized throughout these industries. It is



a given that the container is waterproof, wind resistant, stackable, collapsible, secure, quickly assembled, lightweight, and aesthetically pleasing. The storage container must be able to be utilized in a static self-storage environment in various sizes, colors, and surfaces to the self-storage operator's liking. The same storage container must be capable of "mobilization" from a static self-storage environment into a portable storage and moving environment in minutes.

The static storage container will already possess the various fittings required for portable storage with internal tie-downs, signage, removable wheels, and have the ability to be dropped off and picked up at any location at any time. The same portable storage container must be the correct size, giving it the capability of being transported long distances or across continents inside of moving vans, ocean shipping containers, or flat beds. The storage container must be able to be quickly disassembled and stacked when empty to allow for better utilization of freight and relocation costs when repositioning assets. Finally, the container can be quickly re-assembled and returned to a static self-storage environment, or continue to be utilized as a containerized moving solution for a moving or portable storage company.

