
IRN - The Reuse Network

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Case Study in Reuse

Consulting Firm, Multiple Projects: VA, MD, DC, FL, and CA

Overview

This IRN client is one of the best known environmental consulting firms in the U.S., serving large government and corporate organizations. As such, when they initiated a company-wide program to refresh outdated furnishings and reduce their own environmental footprint by encouraging employees to work from home offices, the firm identified IRN as the environmentally and socially best disposition option. The first phase of this initiative encompassed six locations, with each location disposing of a few hundred to three thousand-plus pieces.

Setting: The work encompassed fourteen separate projects extending over nine months, at six locations in the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, Florida, and California. With the exception of the downtown DC location, all were suburban office campus settings.

Composition & Quantity

About two-thirds of the surplus consisted of individual offices, typically including two free-standing desk units, one under-desk file cabinet, two overhead storage cabinets, a castered task chair, and a side chair. The balance of the inventory included executive offices (wood desks, hutches, file cabinets, etc.), conference rooms, seating, and miscellaneous furnishings including file cabinets, bookcases, mail racks, work tables, and related items. The total quantity was over 5,600 pieces. Individual move-outs ranged from just over 100 pieces to about 1,800; the majority included from 200 to 500 pieces.

Implementation Weekend Schedule

Weekend Schedule: To avoid interference with daily operations, nearly all moves were completed on weekends. Typically, the moving crew gained access to the buildings at about 7:30 AM and trailers were scheduled to arrive an hour later, giving the crew time to begin to break down the offices and stage for loading.

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Inside and Outside Crews: A crew of about a dozen men knocked down the offices, put them on dollies, and brought them out the front door. A loading dock was available in only one location; in others the surplus was brought out the front door. Elevators were padded and used as necessary, and floors were masked with masonite.

Outside, a three-man crew loaded the trailers. The crew leader, fed by two helpers, was responsible for maximizing the quantity loaded on each trailer.

Loading: The major challenge with these projects was time and volume – packing bulky and awkward furnishings into the smallest possible number of trailers, with very quick load times. After experimentation, the load foremen identified combinations of furniture that packed most efficiently, and inside crews preassembled these combinations on dollies, which could then be quickly slotted into place.

Destination: In all, furnishings were provided to five U.S. charities and to communities in four Caribbean and Central American countries. In addition, a fraction of the surplus was recycled for its metal value.

Totals

Date	Location	Pieces	Description	Destination
Jul-11	Virginia 1	1,767	249 offices	Nicaragua
Jul-11	San Diego	450	50 offices	Neighborhood Outreach Council, CA
Jul-11	Virginia 2	308	44 offices	Guatemala
Aug-11	Virginia 3	229	30 offices + additional seating	Dominican Republic
Sep-11	Virginia 1	410	61 offices	New Life Christian Ctr, MD; Honduras
Sep-11	Virginia 1	219	Seating, desks	Christian Appalachian Fund, KY
Oct-11	Virginia 1	455	63 offices	Christian Appalachian Fund, KY
Oct-11	Virginia 1	455	63 offices	Partners in Care, MD; Christian App
Oct-11	Maryland	230	Seating	Christian Appalachian Fund, KY
Oct-11	Virginia 1	229	File cabs, bookcases, carts, etc.	Recycled
Nov-11	Virginia 1	169	File cabs, bookcases, carts, etc.	Recycled
Jan-12	DC	446	50 offices, conf rooms, misc.	MD Ctr for Veterans Educ'n & Training
Jan-12	Florida	158	28 offices, conf. rooms, misc.	Honduras
Apr-12	Maryland	111	Executive furniture	Christian Appalachian Fund, KY

