



A Verisk Business

CASE STUDY



HOW O'DONNELL BROTHERS CUT PACK OUT LABOR COSTS BY 25 PERCENT

O'Donnell Brothers Professional Furniture Service uses ContentsTrack to streamline contents restoration and track personal property more precisely

In the event of a contents loss, hundreds—even thousands—of items must be removed from the property and restored as quickly as possible. Thoroughly inventorying items and closely tracking them during the restoration process maximizes company efficiency and keeps expenses at a minimum.

To effectively manage the chain of custody, O'Donnell Brothers Professional Furniture Service uses Xactware's ContentsTrack™ solution. The mobile- and online-based application helps the company document and track personal property items as they are packed out of loss sites; stored, cleaned, or replaced; and packed back. With this technology-driven approach, O'Donnell Brothers can now track items more precisely, which saves time and reduces labor costs.

“At any given time, we have hundreds of thousands of items in our warehouse,” said Mike O'Donnell, President of O'Donnell Brothers. “ContentsTrack has helped us manage those items and keep them in a way to find them quickly.”

O'DONNELL BROTHERS PROFESSIONAL FURNITURE SERVICE

odonnellbrosfurniture.com

Industry:
Restoration Contractor

Implementation Partner:
Xactware

Solutions:
ContentsTrack

Key Challenges:

Streamline pack outs and track contents more precisely during the restoration process

Key Benefits:

O'Donnell Brothers has used ContentsTrack to:

- Streamline pack outs
- Track personal property more accurately
- Eliminate repetitive data entry
- Generate loss reports more efficiently
- Reduce labor costs by up to 25 percent

Getting Lives Back Together

Based in Mount Clemens, Michigan., O'Donnell Brothers is a full-service pack out and pack back insurance and restoration contractor. Each year, the company handles about 1,000 restoration jobs, restoring, cleaning, or storing approximately 2 million items in its facilities. The O'Donnell Brothers team takes pride in its ability to bring homeowners' valuable possessions back to life.



"When we're able to restore people's furniture and move it back to their home, and they see their prized possessions, that's really what it's all about," Mike said. "They're getting their life back, and to me that's important."

Mounds of Paperwork

For much of its history, O'Donnell Brothers catalogued and tracked contents items manually. Pack out teams photographed each item as it was removed from the loss site and wrote inventories on a three-part form. The insurer and homeowner each received a copy, and the third was placed in the box with the items and shipped to the warehouse.

Office staff used the handwritten inventories to create a condition report and then retyped that information into the company's contents estimating system to calculate restoration costs. Typical job files were three to four inches thick.

"There was a lot of typing involved," said Terry Phillips, Warehouse Manager for O'Donnell Brothers. "It was overwhelming."

Individual pages were sometimes misplaced or contained inaccurate item descriptions, and the office staff often had a difficult time deciphering handwriting. Locating items in the warehouse was also time-consuming.

"When a customer called and wanted certain things back, I'd dig through boxes to find it," Terry said. "I knew what room it came out of, which house, but I'm still going through 14 or 15 skids of boxes trying to find a specific room."

Then in August 2014, O'Donnell Brothers reached its tipping point. The company had grown so successful that its operations were split among three separate warehouses. Company management decided to consolidate the business into a 130,000-square-foot warehouse. But manually tracking all the household contents during the move would be a nearly impossible feat.

"We probably had between 275 and 300 households that we were dealing with," Mike said. "We were scared to death to have to check every tag against every piece of paper against every number, line item, box inventory sheet, in this entire building."

After evaluating several other alternative tracking and cataloguing solutions, the O'Donnell Brothers team discovered ContentsTrack.

"The Gold Standard"

Available for mobile and online platforms, ContentsTrack enables contractors to quickly record, categorize, and track personal property just using mobile devices. Photos, notes, and voice recordings can be added directly to individual line items, providing thorough loss documentation, and ContentsTrack sorts items by room and status.

The application integrates seamlessly with Xactware's award-winning estimating solutions, Xactimate® and XactContents®, allowing contractors to quickly calculate replacement costs and create reports without having to reenter information into multiple systems by hand. After thoroughly evaluating ContentsTrack, O'Donnell Brothers decided to make it part of the company's restoration workflows.

“The reason we came with ContentsTrack is, number one, it’s an Xactware program,” Mike said. “And they are the gold standard in the insurance industry as far as pricing, as far as estimating, and as far as insurance companies using their product.”

“We think that we’re going to save 20 to 25 percent on labor costs alone... It’s pretty amazing.”

“One Step with a Tablet”

With other solutions, O’Donnell Brothers would have had to invest in costly, cumbersome hardware. Rolling out ContentsTrack was as simple as ordering a dozen Galaxy 4 tablets. When packing out, work crews now tag items and boxes with a bar code, enter detailed item descriptions into ContentsTrack, and capture photos to show loss condition—all with just a few taps of a finger. That information seamlessly transfers to the company’s estimating systems, which eliminates duplicate data entry.

“We’re able to go out on the job site, do a condition report, take a picture, and get the room it’s in and numerically categorize it all in one step with a tablet,” Mike said.

The O’Donnell Brothers team adapted quickly to using mobile devices instead of three-part forms.

“Our staff members prefer technology over manual input,” said Dan O’Donnell, Vice President of O’Donnell Brothers.

With ContentsTrack in place, the company was prepared to unite its business under one roof and to revolutionize the way it operated.

“It’s Pretty Amazing”

By using ContentsTrack, O’Donnell Brothers successfully moved its restoration stations and storage to a centralized location without any disruptions to its normal business operations.

“At a time when we consolidated three buildings into one, ContentsTrack made what probably would have been a nightmare into something manageable,” Dan said.

“We were able to bar code everything, we were able to move it, continue to do our work, and have everything come out straight in the end,” Mike said. “And we didn’t lose anything. ContentsTrack made that move seamless.”

Work crews now document and pack out contents much more rapidly. Reports that used to take four to five hours to create are now generated in less than an hour because inventories seamlessly transfer into XactContents.

“Typically, a person can pack three boxes in an hour because they’re writing condition reports on everything,” Mike said. “With ContentsTrack we can probably do four or five boxes in an hour, and it moves the process along much more quickly and efficiently and thoroughly.”

Locating individual items among the tens of thousands of boxes stored in the warehouse is much less of a headache than before.

“If the office called and said, ‘This customer wants this item,’ I’ll tell them to go into ContentsTrack and tell me where it’s at,” said Terry. “They can tell me exactly where it is, and I can walk right to it. Takes me 10 minutes whereas, before, it might take me half an hour trying to find that one particular item.”

The greater efficiency and precision has had a significant effect on the company’s bottom line.

“Any technology that lets us do the work that we’re good at easier, we would be fools to not embrace.”

“We think that we’re going to save 20 to 25 percent on labor costs alone,” Mike said. “Last year’s labor costs were somewhere in the neighborhood of \$2.8 million, so if you can think 20 to 25 percent off that in just savings and efficiencies, it’s pretty amazing.”

Mobile and online technology such as ContentsTrack can help forward-thinking restoration professionals avoid getting bogged down by paperwork and focus on what they do best—helping homeowners put their lives back together after disaster.

“Any technology that lets us do the work that we’re good at easier, we would be fools to not embrace,” Dan said.

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