



Mobile Shelving Buyer's Guide: Get What is Right for Your Organization

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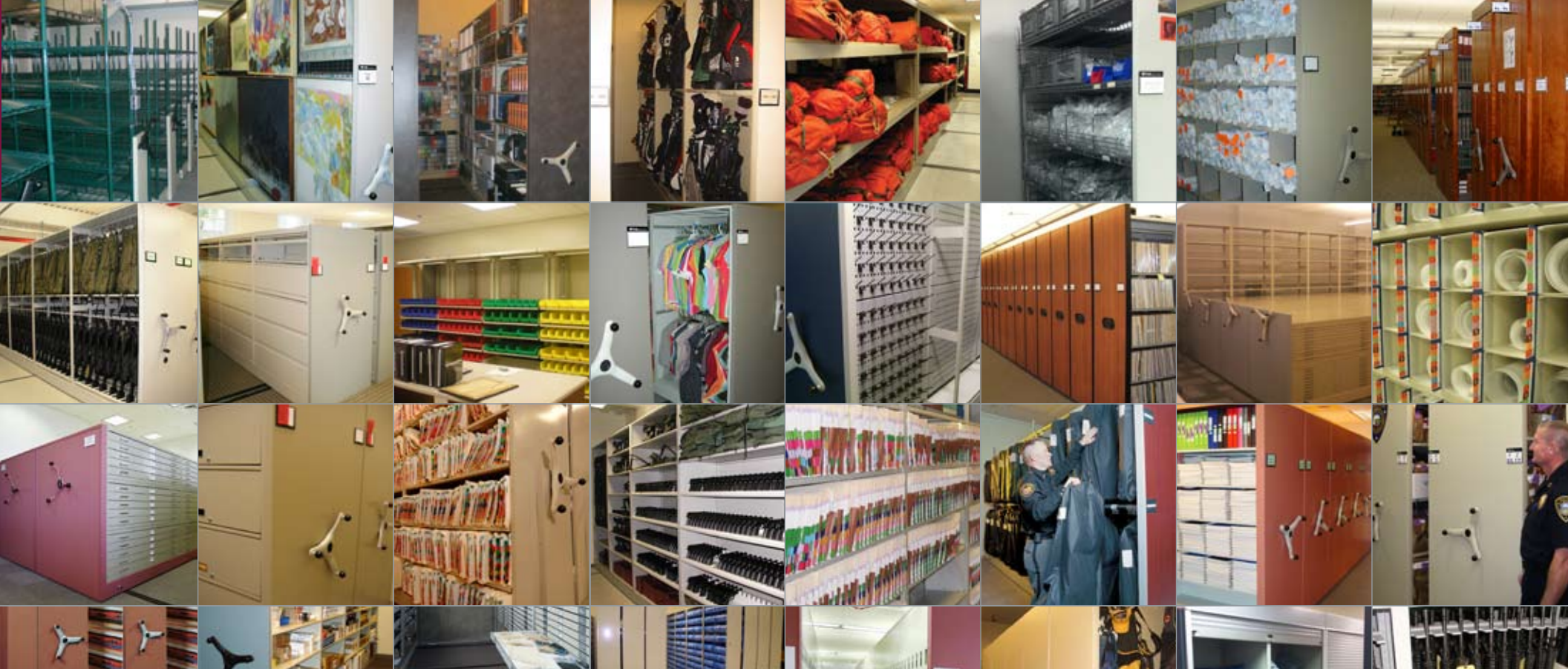
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TAB



Thinking of mobile shelving?

We've helped hundreds of customers in countless industries with mobile solutions, and this experience will help you get the equipment, design and accessories that are right for your organization.

This resource will explain and highlight some of the important factors you need to consider when it comes to mobile, and how those factors will impact your buying choices.

Once you've had a chance to go through this document, please [feel free to contact us to discuss your findings](#).



1.0 Storage and Shelving Requirements

Understanding what exactly you'll be storing, and how much of it, both now and in the future, is an essential part of getting the right mobile storage system. The following questions and considerations will help you make the correct determination:

1. What type of media do you need to store?



Binders

File folders

CDs/DVDs

Equipment

...or a combination of these?

Remember, mobile storage systems should be able to store ANY three dimensional object, from files and books to art and golf bags.

Buyer's Notes

You just need to get the right shelving options, and if you are storing a combination of media, you'll need flexible storage that will accommodate that. Your goal is to get the shelving option that works for you, rather than working with what you get.

TAB recommends our Four-Post shelving solution to many of our clients, simply because of its versatility in almost all situations. On any given Mobile Storage System many items of different sizes can be stored: files, binders, boxes, supplies, drawers, etc., and they can be housed in specific lock up units. Even roller shelving can be incorporated for large-book storage! Our Four-Post shelving really is the answer to storage of almost all media types.

2. How much filing capacity do you need now and in the future?

To ensure your shelving can accommodate current and anticipated filing needs, you'll need to calculate those needs based on existing files and predicted inflow. Your consultant should be able to help you with this.

Buyer's Tip: It should be relatively easy to accommodate 15-20% Linear File Inches (LFI) of file growth per year with the right equipment. Say, for example, you are re-locating files from a standard 4-High cabinet and going to a vertical cabinet. The 4-High cabinet would empty out into 3 shelves on one unit of Four-Post shelving, and the remaining space would help accommodate LFI growth over time.

Another way to ensure your mobile system can accommodate any growth is to deck your file room with full rails and then add mobile carriages as you grow. Remember, it's easier to add mobile carriages than it is to add track!

And when thinking of expansion, consider the possibilities of a move or reconfiguration in your organization's future. In that case, you'll want to get equipment that is flexible, durable and can be easily relocated.

1.2 Security Requirements

Obviously, some materials that you store need to be protected. There are a number of security considerations critical to any storage plan, including:

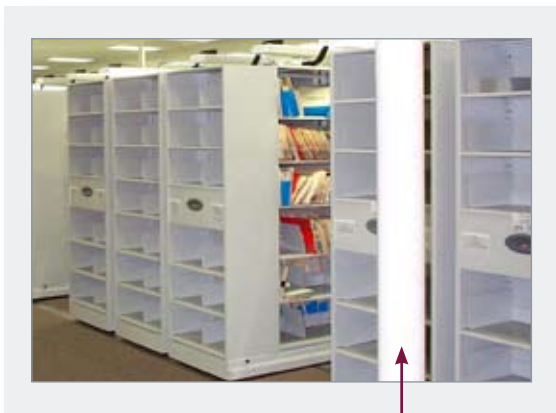
- those parts of your collection which need to be secured and accessed only by authorized users
- relevant regulations and compliance issues that need to be met

Buyer's Notes

Depending on the level of security you want (or that is required by law), you can create different levels of security—from room level to an individual carriage within the mobile unit, or right down to individual shelves within the shelving unit (tambour and doors), as well as different types of locks (end-panel or in the floor).

2.0 The Space

The characteristics of the space into which you will be putting the mobile system will dictate the kind of equipment and layout you'll need. Here are some things to consider when it comes to the space.



2.1 Available Square Footage

Obviously, knowing the amount of space you have to work with is critical and will dictate what equipment can be used and in what configuration. So you'll need to understand:

- Total amount of floor space available
- Obstacles, such as pillars, doors, sprinkler systems, lights, ductwork, etc.
- Floor load (see subsection below)

When figuring out your available space, make sure someone is taking field survey measurements (i.e., of the room and equipment) and that they do it again AFTER the equipment is bought to ensure accuracy.

2.2 Weight Load

Weight load simply means the weight of the system and media to be stored that you will be putting on the floor.

This is important because it has to do with the supporting structure or how much load the existing floor can support.

Buyer's Notes

Understanding the total weight of what you need to store will dictate the rating of your mobile shelving product.

To calculate your weight load, you need to know:

- floor load
- weight of system
- weight of media (80-90% of total)

Then add these up, and divide the total by the available square footage to get your weight load. Your consultant should be able to help you with this.

For a deeper dive into floor loads, check out our [Floor Load Handbook](#).

NB: When calculating weight of media, it is helpful to remember that:

- Legal files are 2.5 lbs per inch
- Letter files are 2.0 lbs per inch



Buyer's Notes

In terms of weight load, typically the ground floor presents no issue, but the higher you go within a building, the more the load changes. For anything above the ground floor, check with your engineer for specifics and which system you should use (i.e., 500 lbs/ft., 700 lbs/ft. and so on).

Remember, too, that different configurations will change the weight load. For example, layouts that run parallel to the floor supports will have less weight load capacity than layouts that runs across floor supports.

2.3 Floor Level and Composition

Obviously, as mobile shelving units must be connected to the floor, the characteristics of that floor will have an impact on what you can and can't do.

2.3a Levelness

Most floors aren't completely level, and depending on your floor, different products will be required to deal with any unevenness. Remember, the larger the area, the less likely it is to be level.

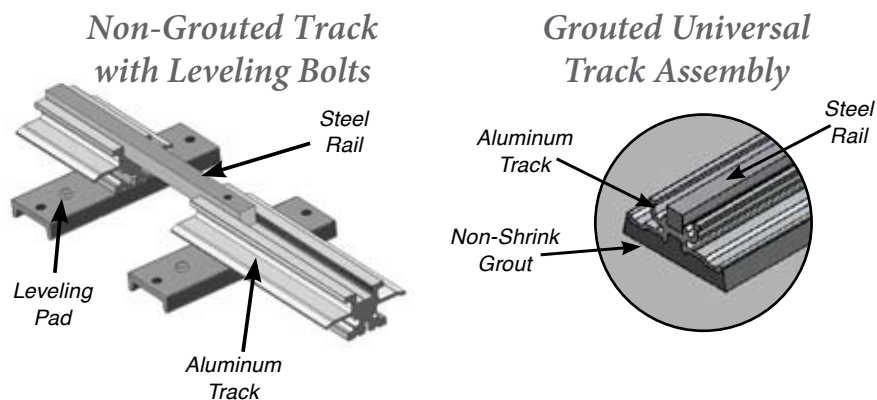
Buyer's Notes

Modular mobile systems sit on tracks on existing floor covering, so they have a very limited self-leveling capacity. When it comes to low- and high-profile systems, both can be leveled with a false floor between them, filling the void with neoprene or a similar substance.

2.3b Composition

The type of floor you have may impact the kind of anchors and tracks that are used in the mobile installation. For reference, it is worth noting that there are three different methods of track installation:

- Embedded in concrete
- Track that is grouted and a deck is built with it
- Track that sits on top of the floor



Buyer's Notes

Whatever your floor composition, in most cases the right provider should be able to give you anchor and track options that work with what you have.

2.4 Workflow and Accessibility

As part of your space evaluation, you need to think about daily workflow. How many people will be accessing the shelves and how often?

Analyzing which people in your organization are creating and using these files, where these users are located, and how often they're accessing the files will help you determine the most appropriate location and design of your filing system.

A big part of what you are trying to establish is how many aisles need to be created, with the rule of thumb being one aisle per active user in the space.

2.5 Aesthetics

How you want your media and equipment to appear (or not appear) is also part of the buying decision. For example, if you are working with a customer-facing room, then you might want to choose end panels because they provide a nice finish for the equipment. In a back room where visuals are not important, you might select cheaper chain guard covers, which serve to protect the operator from getting into the mechanisms rather than providing pleasing aesthetics.

2.6 Compliance

For some organizations, installing mobile shelving will mean familiarizing themselves with the relevant building rules and regulations. For example, in California, the building code has a rating for buildings which dictates the kind of equipment that needs to be used. Consider, too, the relevant accessibility standards for your area (e.g. the ADA, etc.)

3.0 Mobile Shelving: The Basics

An understanding of the different types and uses of mobile shelving is critical to getting the right equipment for your organization.

3.1 Different Shelving Modes and Their Uses

Typically mobile shelving can be divided into four general categories:

Static Mode: free standing on the floor with no carriages

Fixed Mode: stationary on carriages

Lateral Mode: movable units in front of fixed or stationary units

Compacting Mode: movable rows (high density)

Note: "Compacting" is the option that transfers the most weight over larger areas, which is why there are different weight load options for these carriages as follows:

- 500 lbs/linear foot
- 700 lbs/linear foot
- 1000 lbs/linear foot

3.2 Lateral vs Compact Configurations

Remember, once you put shelving on wheels you have two available configurations: lateral or compact.

Lateral shelving is the most simple form of high-density mobile storage. Only the front cabinets are movable, rolling from side-to-side, allowing access to the cabinets behind them.

Compacting gives you more options. In compacting mode, you have the choice of manual, mechanical or electrical, and those formats come in the various weight loads as mentioned: modular mobile at 500 lbs, low profile at 700 lbs, and high profile which is 1000 lbs.

What you will be storing will dictate what is used, but remember that the heavier it is, the more concentrated the weight per square footage on the floor.



3.3 Electrical vs Manual

Mobile shelving units are available in manual, mechanical, and electrical models. The choice an organization makes often comes down to user preference. Remember, there are safety and convenience features available for electrical solutions that are not available with the others.

4.0 Available Products and Applications

To better illustrate the various modes of mobile shelving, let's look at TAB's line of products and their practical applications:



Use Case: A great way for organizations taking the first step to mobile file storage

Modular Mobile—A Good Place to Start

Modular Mobile file storage systems are a cost-efficient way to store more files in less space. Simple and economical, the system puts your existing shelving and filed material on wheels to double the amount of useful space in your storage area.

The system can be installed on any floor surface and installation can be completed without any disruption to your workplace. Modular Mobile is easily expandable and moveable and is an ideal solution for organizations taking the first step to mobile file storage.



Use Case: An ideal and economical solution for high-density, decentralized file areas.

SIDE-TRAC: The Simple Space Saver

TAB's SIDE-TRAC is a simple, lateral mobile records storage solution that makes your cabinets even more efficient. The system lets you store more files in less space, as the cabinets are arranged in two compact rows, eliminating aisle space. The front cabinets are mounted on tracks and move from side to side, allowing access to the back row of records storage. Access is created only where and when it is needed.

Sections can be configured with up to nine cabinets – four in the front and five in the back. SIDE-TRAC can be seamlessly added to your existing storage solution as you grow. The system provides an easy, economical and efficient way to access your records.



Use Case: Ideal for filing environments where high capacity, low access and secure records storage are required.

TAB-TRAC: High Capacity, Secure Storage

TAB-TRAC is a flexible, high-density movable file storage solution that compacts so you can increase file storage capacity while using less space. It is the ideal solution where space is at a premium. Double-faced shelving is arranged in a "T" intersection to the wall, eliminating the need for fixed aisles and allowing you to create aisles only when and where you need them.

Available in manual and mechanical-assist options, this sturdy system is designed to last a lifetime. TAB-TRAC can be configured to your exact specifications, and comes in a complete range of design possibilities to match your environment.



Use Case: Ideal for organizations that need high-density multi-media storage in one area, without having to attach it to the building floor.

EXPRESS-TRAC: Easy to install, easy to use

EXPRESS-TRAC makes it possible to store more files, supplies, electronic media and reference materials in less space. And the good news is that this mobile storage solution has an anchorless track, making it a snap to install, minimizing disruption for your organization.

Increase Your Storage Capacity

With EXPRESS-TRAC, shelving is placed on moving carriages so aisles are created only when and where needed. These mechanical carriages can handle up to 700 lbs of stored mixed-format material per linear foot and are perfect for letter- and legal-size files.

All this adds up to a mobile shelving unit that gives you high-density, multi-media storage all in one area, which means you increase your storage footprint while using less space.

Anchorless Track for Simple, Painless Installation

EXPRESS-TRAC was designed with a modular, non-grouted snap-together deck and an anchorless track so that the shelving unit doesn't have to be attached to your building floor.

This design has a number of advantages, including:

- Easier installation of track and deck means lower costs
- No grouting means less mess
- Eliminates the need to x-ray the floor prior to installation
- Simple, quieter install means less workplace disruption
- Easy to move shelving units as organizations and departments require

The anchorless track design is perfect for:

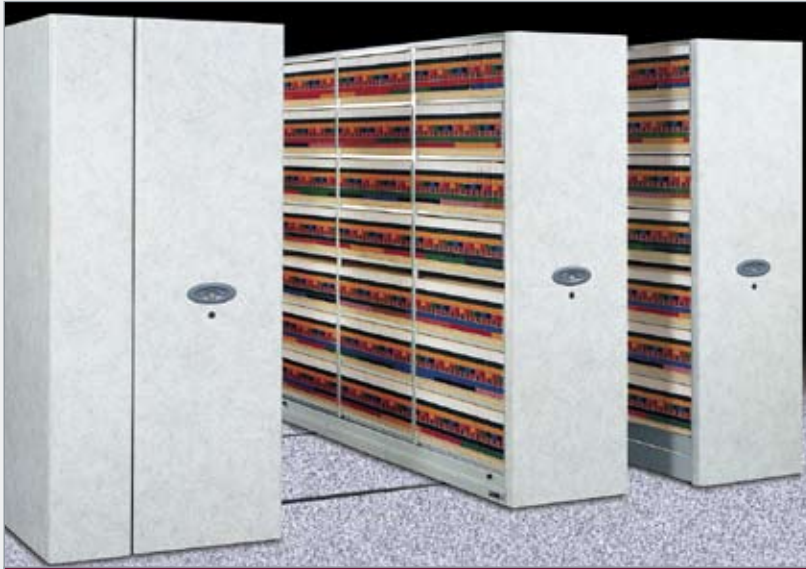
- Anywhere with floors not suitable for anchors, like vaults or cooler installations
- Organizations and departments that move frequently
- Buildings considered "post-tension" buildings (i.e., high rise building floors)

Easy to Use

The mobile carriages are designed for seamless operation with mechanical-assist drive maneuverability, making them easy to guide with smooth carriage movement and no track adjustments required. An ergonomic safety handle also facilitates easy access to stored material.

You've Got Options

You can match your office environment with your choice of a wide range of color and texture designs, including standard steel, fabric, and laminate end panels. There are also several ramp options available (including ADA compliance) should one be required.



Use Case: ideal for environments where large amounts of material are stored, heavy materials are involved and user file access is frequent.

POWER TRAC: Heavy-duty, High Density

POWER-TRAC is TAB's heavy-duty, high-density, electrical mobile file storage system that offers superior filing density for even the heaviest of media.

Double-faced shelving is arranged in a "T" intersection to the wall, allowing you to create aisles only where and when you need them, at the touch of a button.

The POWER-TRAC system can maneuver carriages up to 80 feet long and store up to 80,000 lbs of materials. The controller is easy to use and the entire system is UL listed and CSA approved.

5.0 Get the Right Provider

Working with the right provider is the final, critical ingredient for a successful mobile shelving project. So what makes the right provider? Organizations should avoid companies that just sell shelves. Instead, you are looking for a provider with broad experience, including:

- Field verification
- Multiple applications
- Information management
- Working with architects and designers

This isn't just about installing shelves; it is about getting the equipment and design you need for better information management.

Talk to TAB

At TAB we've been helping clients get better at storage for 60 years. We offer a range of storage and space saving solutions, including:

Storage for Filing and Records

We can manage all aspects of records storage, from creating the right records management program to designing and installing space-saving mobile shelving and everything in between.

General and Custom Storage

Whatever you need to store, we can design, create and install space saving solutions that will make access easier and free-up valuable real estate for profit generation.

If you'd like to talk to us about your mobile shelving situation, please [get in touch](#).

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