‘Future proofing’ storage solutions today eliminates tomorrow’s problems

The future isn’t as far away as we think it is. The future is tomorrow, but many companies only look at what storage solutions they need TODAY, leading to increased costs in the long run. The answer is ‘future proofing’ and the companies that design storage solutions using these innovations.

The future isn’t as far distant as we imagine it to be. The future begins tomorrow and the day after that and all the days after that. Often companies only look at what storage solutions they need at the moment and don’t spread their thoughts further, leading to increased costs in the long run as the system was not designed with the future in mind, leading to entire storage redesign and overhaul.

The way to avoid these costs and problems is to evaluate ‘future proofing’ and identify the companies that are able to design systems using these ideals. One such company is Universal Storage Solutions.

Future proofing is a process that anticipates the future, developing methods of minimising the stress of future events. Simply, it is a way of ensuring that storage solutions will be of value in the future and not become obsolete when newer technologies or problems arise. Some of the main principles of future proofing include:

- **Delay deterioration.** Future-proofing structures and products shouldn’t accelerate deterioration of existing materials.
- **Be flexible and adaptable.** Implement solutions that are in themselves flexible and adaptable, but also are adaptable to the environment, uses, occupant needs and future technologies. This is critical to ensuring the long life of storage design.
- **Prolong service life.** Ensure your future proofing enhances and prolongs service life.
- **Increase durability.** Take into consideration the materials used and ensure they are durable so that an intervention is not required in the future.
- **Support and use local suppliers and goods.** Support local suppliers by using materials and labour that are locally sourced and available should repairs be required at some point in the future – local is more easily accessible ensuring the same standards of workmanship.

Related to future proofing is forward compatibility. Here, during the design process, storage solutions are created with the ability to accept or easily integrate future versions or additions. These concepts are right now mainly used in data storage and electronics. Can you imagine the heights your business could reach and the money saved if you thought of physical storage the same way?

It was 50 years ago that the first PC was created with a storage space of 5 Mb. In a world where space has been redefined by limitless virtual storage, a visionary strategic approach is needed for physical storage. According to Universal’s technical manager Niel Pool, warehousing and storage needs to be seen in the same light as the evolution of the humble 5 Mb PC, it has to be strategised according to today’s needs and future expansion.

Universal has realised the need for future proofing and is breaking new ground: imagine walking through your warehouse or storage facility while you are still conceptualising the idea. Universal has made this possible, with software that enables you to view the complete installation before building has started. The internationally renowned ‘Autodesk Inventor’ technology, a specialist 3D mechanical design solution, allows the designers to migrate the current 2D drawings into a productivity-enhancing 3D design environment.

Jan Breytenbach, marketing director, maintains that what sets Universal Storage Systems apart from other companies offering similar services is that the company does not just focus on racking and shelving, but takes an “all-encompassing approach”, where it is involved from the stage of identifying a challenge right to the stage of erecting the building that resolves the problem. “Our secret lies in providing services no one else offers; we reinvent storage solutions to enhance space for any industry,” he assures.

The future of storage and your business lies in solutions that are not only for today but for all the tomorrows after that. Universal is following these ideals with strategy, innovation and always looking ahead to the future.

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