

CLIENT: United Airlines • MEDIA: 3480 Tape Collection • SOLUTION: Gemtrac

The Challenge

United Airlines World Headquarters is located in Elk Grove Village, Illinois. United Airlines now has 145,000 employees worldwide and serves customers on more than 4,600 daily flights to approximately 170 destinations in 32 countries and territories around the world.

Jim Smalley, United Airlines Computer Operations Supervisor, is responsible for the day-to-day business data processing services, along with additional services such as Mileage Plus, Rewards Programs, and Shipping Services. Initially the 1,500 square feet of floor space, with "open tape rack" storage, allocated for the tape library was adequate. However, with ever increasing services, the tape library spilled over into the systems area. Although United Airlines has numerous tape silos, their external tape library grew to almost 90,000 3480-tapes, and approximately 30,000 of the tapes were no longer in the designated area.

Jim Smalley had a dilemma. He was instructed to find a way to get the tapes back into the designated area, along with 2 employees, to make room for a new system. To make matters worse, Jim also had to find space for six "round reel" racks that supported an older system.



United Airlines increases productivity by decreasing the square footage of their tape library with Gemtrac.

solutions

The Solution

Russ Bassett presented a floor plan demonstrating that it was possible to store all 90,000 tapes in just 540 square feet with 18 Gemtrac systems. It was apparent that Gemtrac was the only solution that would condense the tape storage space requirements enough to allow United Airlines to recover the systems area for the new computer.

The installation of the new computer system was on a fast-paced time schedule. Phase one was the removal of the tape racks from the systems area and installation of 12 Gemtracs. The 12 Gemtracs equated to approximately 60,000 slots. The 30,000 tapes that had migrated into the systems area plus an additional 30,000 tapes were moved into the Gemtracs. Phase two was the installation of 6 additional Gemtracs, to regain enough floor space to move 2 employees and the round reel racks into the tape library.

"Gemtrac reduces the walking distance between picks & re-files."



Joanne Giannini houses almost 90,000 3480-tapes in just 540 ft².

The Result

Productivity gains were realized because of the decrease in walking distance between picks and re-files. United Airlines was able to reduce their tape storage floor space by 60% and still has room to add 3 more Gemtracs for future growth.