

# Document storage – the risks of adopting a DIY approach

There are many things in life you'd never attempt to do yourself. Like rewire your house. Or clean the outside of a 25th floor window. Or catch an escaped anaconda. Unless you were an electrician, an aerial window cleaner or zoo keeper, obviously. But when it comes to document storage... well, that's a different story.

On the surface, it's understandable. How hard can it be, right? You pop down to Staples, pick up a few reasonably priced archive boxes, stick all that pesky paperwork inside, lob it into the nearest spare room. Job done, and no need to pay those onerous ongoing storage fees.

If it were as simple as that, we'd be encouraging you to follow just such an approach. But sadly it really isn't that straightforward. We know this because we've been doing it for more than 20 years and we've seen just how many ways there are for document storage to go wrong.

Here are a few things to add to your risk assessment\* when you're weighing up whether to take a DIY approach to your document storage or to use a professional service like ours.

## Fire and flood

"Never going to happen," you say. "Welllllll..." we say. Thing is, it may not be one of the top three most likely problems you're going to face in any given week (depending on where your HQ is located and how cavalier your attitude is to chucking lit matches about). But on that rare occasion where a disaster like this does strike it can be devastating.

That's why we built a bespoke, climate controlled storage warehouse that is monitored and alarmed 24-7, alerting us to the slightest whiff of a problem so we can swoop in and protect the precious papery loot within.

## Rats and other nasties

Much more likely than fire or flood and potentially just as damaging. Imagine you've finally located that invoice from 2006 that your biggest client suddenly wants a copy of... only to find the key information has been chewed to the point of illegibility. And it's not just rats. Mice, pigeons, wasps – all enemies of the humble office document.

## GDPR fines

Don't worry, we're not here to bore you with the intricacies of the recent GDPR legislation. What you do need to know is that we could if we wanted to. In other words, we understand the ins and outs of the legal ramifications of storing physical data and we've done everything we need to to ensure the stuff we store is covered. Can you say the same about the spare room at your HQ?

## Damp conditions

We're not talking floods here. We're not even talking about a leak in the corner of that spare room where you're stashing your documents. We're talking about the natural moisture in the air. It's not good for paperwork. If you're really unlucky, you'll end up with a rather unfortunate spread of mould across it all. Oh and don't imagine that sunlight is any better – then you'll get fading. You really can't win, can you?

## Being flattened

It's not just your documents that are at risk if you go down the DIY document storage route. You'll be surprised by how often we see storerooms piled high with boxes just waiting to topple on an unsuspecting staff member innocently looking for a hard copy of last year's accounts. That could be you, in which case – ouch. Or it could be a member of your team, in which case – lawsuit. And also – ouch.

## Losing stuff

Far less dramatic, far more likely and equally frustrating – and potentially damaging to your business. If you need to get hold of documents quickly, you might think the DIY approach is the only

option. After all, you don't want to be bombing across town to retrieve files every five minutes, do you?

But what are your filing skills like? Do you have a system in that store room of yours? We'll wager it's not as good as ours, which includes individual barcodes so we can instantly pinpoint where any given box is. We can also scan documents (even [oversized documents](#)) if you need to see them quickly and even send them round via courier so you don't need to leave the comfort of your desk.

*If you're rethinking the DIY approach to document storage and want to find out how much it might cost to bring the professionals in, give us a call. A chat is always free.*

(\*What do you mean you haven't done a risk assessment? Never mind, we have, just give us a call and we'll look after everything for you.)