CONTENTS SOLUTIONS
THE GO-TO-GUIDE FOR PERSONAL PROPERTY RESTORATION

Volume 11  Issue 6

Contents Pack Out
The Awesome and the Awful

Supervisors
Getting Things Done Right!

No Damage
Protecting Valued Contents

Provided by your Contents Restoration partner

The Most Comforting Call You Can Make

J&L RESTORATION & CLEANING
517-322-3000
www.JLRestoration.com

Emergency  Fire  Water  Wind
The Awesome and the Awful

We wanted to know more about why the insurance adjusters and agents prize the new "Contents Pros" so highly, and to find out, we went to the world's foremost authority in the field – Barb Jackson CR.

"It is easier to tell you what it looks like when you are looking at a group that are not true contents professionals. They look... well... untrained. There is a great deal of wasted motion, handling items more than is necessary, wasted time, wasted energy, wasted resources. And the truth is they are largely 'winging it' with no real plan or method."

"Trained contents pros have a system. They create "processing stations" and would look more like assembly line workers than they would a moving company.

"Untrained amateurs often have no method by which they can prove pre-existing conditions of contents in our care – contents pros not only take pictures of everything and keep a running photo inventory; they also take pictures of the items in exactly the position and condition they were when we arrived on the scene.

"Contents professionals also make careful note of the make, model and serial numbers of specific items. Untrained workers focus on getting the contents into boxes and out of the home or office – often to the chagrin of the owners (especially when items are missing or end up buried in the mélange of materials being moved).

"Adjusters have privately shared horror stories of crews that send valuables to sub-contractors for repair or specialty handling, only to have no tracking system in place to show when it was sent, to whom it was sent and the sort of condition it was when it was sent. Contents pros treat such items as if they were their own. They establish a simple, effective "paper trail" that rivals that of the police when a vital piece of evidence is taken from a scene and put into their store room. We don't lose anything – we keep receipts, invoices, and a computer file that shows the 'when, where, how, who and why' of an item that leaves our control."

Did you know that contents pros are also trained in manners, ethics and professionalism?

Among the first things they learn is that the owner often feels anger, embarrassment, and as if the world is out of their control. The contents pros are trained to help minimize these feelings.

It can be something as simple as, "Be discreet. Ask permission before entering a room, opening a closet or drawer."

Or as subtle as, "Don't appear to be giving undue attention to photos, letters, legal documents."

"Be respectful of their property. Don't judge the owners items by your own values. If a client thinks something is important – it is!"

"If items are 'total lossed,' that does not give permission to take them. If gifts are offered by the insured, respectfully decline."

"Above all, give the insured privacy. Do not eavesdrop, do not loiter, stay out of their way."

"Bet you didn’t know this

"Courtesy, generosity, kindness, efficiency, understanding, caring – these are the hallmarks that place the contents pros a step above the average restoration professional. Their insights and training reflect very well on the insurance company that works with them."
Contents pros have long been aware that the restoration crew, the adjusters and the agents never, “Have the place to themselves.”

With baby monitors, “nanny cams,” nosy neighbors, friends, relatives of the insured and unexpected visitors to the site we are all under scrutiny. That is why a professional demeanor, well-groomed and socially acceptable appearance and language are an absolute necessity.

Agents know that having the restorers say a good word about them can go a long way to assuring a policy renewal – and that an overheard disparaging remark can have even greater impact on the thoughts of the insured.

In another instance, we have seen well-meaning workers tightly wrapping layers of plastic wrap around fragile antique furniture. To the untrained eye it looks as if they are protecting it from getting scratched, but plastic wrap tends to expand and contract when exposed to heat and cold. The stresses placed upon the furniture by such action can actually crack the wood and pull it apart at the seams.

A trained contents pro would never make such a “rookie” mistake. In fact it is quite common to find contents crews busily covering furniture with moving pads – even before anything is moved. Why? Because they know that as things are shifted from the walls, the floors, other rooms, etc. furniture can be bumped, accidentally rubbed or scratched, and it might go unnoticed. Of course a careful crew may never even touch the furniture while other items are being inventoried or packed out – but one of the contents pros’ many maxims is, “Why take the chance?”

Something else you won’t see when contents pros are on the job – items stacked on top of the furniture. A homeowner or office manager might think it would be all right to place books, computers, boxes of plates or paintings on a well protected wooden table – contents pros don’t.

Handling Things

In a contents team, the supervisor is the focal point around which everything else revolves. He (she) will be the one who sets up the basic rules, “No smoking on the job,” or “This is your break area. No food anywhere near the contents.”

He also is the one who will act as the main point of contact with the insurance adjuster and the insured.

If an owner asks, “So how soon do you think you will finish up?” A frontline worker will smile and say something like, “Well Mrs. Jenkins, the supervisor, can see the overall picture better than me – I’m focusing on your clothes and bedding. Would you like for me to find her for you?”

If a contents tech finds something valuable (ex. money, jewelry, etc.) behind a dresser or under a bed – you guessed it – it goes to the supervisor.

If a contents pro has an opinion about how a job is going, it is not shared with the insured, it is shared with the supervisor, because he (she) can see every aspect of the job and can make a far more succinct value judgment.

The supervisor can also go a long way toward helping to make the insurance company, the adjuster, and the agent look good to the homeowner or office manager.

A positive word spoken to the insured about the adjuster or agent can go a long way toward increasing trust and cooperation.
Contents Solutions! may not be reproduced in whole or in part except by prior written permission of the publishers. Contents Solutions is created each month by the research team at Total Contentz who are solely responsible for its publication and the material contained within ©2011.

Coming Up In the Next Issues of Contents Solutions

Contents Pros’ Creative Ideas Save Millions for Insurance Companies

Wasted Time, Wasted Money, Wasted Resources – Contents Pros to the Rescue!

Valued Antiques or Yard Sale Debris? Quick Tips from the Insiders

The Most Comforting Call You Can Make

JL RESTORATION & CLEANING
517–322–3000
www.JLRestoration.com

Emergency Fire | Water | Wind

The Most Comforting Call You Can Make

Total Contentz
www.totalcontentz.com