

Technology Corporate Headquarters, Eastern Massachusetts



Situation: A Fortune 500 technology firm moved its headquarters staff from leased space to a new company building. The firm sought to optimize social, environmental, and financial outcomes by combining repurposing, recycling, and reuse of furnishings remaining after the move.

Material Composition: Systems furniture, private and executive offices, cafeteria, IT facilities, storage areas, reception and conference rooms, excess office supplies.

Quantity: 2,700 items plus 2 tons of office supplies reused, 37 tons recycled.

Setting: Suburban corporate campus.

Overview

A Fortune 500 technology firm terminated its lease on its five-story, 90,000 sq ft headquarters in suburban eastern Massachusetts. The building held a wide variety of furnishings: systems furniture; private offices; executive suites and conference facilities; staff training and conference rooms; kitchen and cafeteria; file rooms, and reception furniture. The first floor contained the kitchen and cafeteria, reception area, IT center, and storage areas. The remaining floors were divided among systems and private offices, training and conference rooms, and executive suites.

The company sought to optimize financial, social, and environmental values in disposing of its furnishings, using this hierarchy: 1) Internal redeployment, 2) Liquidation for dollar value, 3) Charitable reuse, 4) Recycling for commodity value, and 5) Disposal. Nearly half of the systems furniture and much of the seating was repurposed at other company facilities. IRN brought in buyers to determine the liquidation value of the executive furnishings and some other pieces. The items flagged for reuse included all remaining seating, conference and training rooms, private offices, file cabinets and work surfaces, and cafeteria and kitchen furnishings, along with several tons of office supplies. The remaining systems furniture was dismantled and recycled for scrap metal, along with other metal items unfit for reuse. The remainder (primarily work surfaces) was recycled as mixed construction waste. *Nothing* was sent directly to landfill.

Setting

Suburban campus about 25 miles from Boston. Employees were moved from the building before the project started. Each of five floors encompassed approximately 18,000 sq ft. Two elevators were available. With only a single loading dock, most furnishings were loaded out the front door of the structure.

IRN – Integrated Recycling

Case Study in Reuse: Technology Corporate Headquarters

Composition and Disposition	GRAND SUMMARY	Pieces	Pounds	Percent
	Redeployed by Owner	1,110	69,800	29.8%
	Reuse through IRN, Recycled, & Disposed			
	Reused, Christian Appalachian Project	1,505	77,700	33.2%
	Reused, Easter Seals of New Hampshire	65	3,700	1.6%
	Reused, AVA Gallery, New Hampshire	28	1,100	0.5%
	Recycled, Metal	n/a	45,800	19.5%
	Recycled, Mixed Debris	n/a	27,200	11.6%
	Disposed (nonrecyclable fraction of mixed debris)	n/a	9,000	3.8%
			234,300	100.0%

Zero Disposal *Not a single item was thrown away.* There was no dumpster, not even a trash can on the jobsite. The only material ultimately not reused or recycled was the small fraction of residuals from the mixed debris recycling facility.

Keys to Success *Coordination.* This was a complex project that unfolded in stages, demanding efficient coordination between the owner, IRN as project manager, Office Environments of New England (regional Steelcase dealer, who handled dismantling and moving), Christian Appalachian Project (received most reusable furnishings), Easter Seals of New Hampshire, and local hauler E.L. Harvey (recycling of metal and mixed debris).

Phased Work Flow. The first phase was to dismantle and remove about 140 Steelcase workstations for reuse at another client location, along with seating and other items. Phase 2 was to dismantle the remaining systems furniture and stage it for removal; at the same time approximately 4,000 lbs of left-behind office supplies were collected and boxed for charitable reuse. Phase 2 overlapped with Phase 3, when IRN coordinated the arrival, loading, and removal of five tractor trailers of furnishings for reuse, five rolloff containers containing nearly 23 tons of metal to be recycled, plus three rolloff containers of nonmetal items (mostly worksurfaces) to be recycled as mixed debris. Another truckload of reusable items was sent to local nonprofits Easter Seals and the Alliance for Visual Arts.

Liquidation. This project demonstrated the challenges attached to liquidation especially in a soft economy. IRN spent many hours identifying and touring the premises with buyers for a half floor of high-end executive furnishings and selected other items. Few were interested, and the single bid eventually received (for \$1,000) was less than one-half percent of the furnishings' purchase price. The owner decided to let the furnishings go to charitable reuse.

Inventory Management. The owner several times revised the inventory of furnishings to be kept for internal redeployment. This spilled over and forced changes in the number and scheduling of trailers (reuse) and rolloff containers (recycling). Meanwhile IRN and the owner also sought to provide a significant quantity of surplus to local nonprofits. Ultimately IRN's backlog of experience and the cooperation of nonprofit recipients, contracted haulers, and IRN's local recycling partner kept the project flowing on budget and schedule.

IRN - Integrated Recycling

7 South State Street, Suite 2 • Concord, New Hampshire 03301
 Telephone: 603-229-1962 • Fax: 603-229-1960 • web site: www.ir-network.com