

Recyclable, adjustable and returnable postal boxes for information management giant, Iron Mountain

Iron Mountain, a global leader in storage and information management services and trusted by more than 225,000 organisations around the world, provides Asset Lifecycle Management (ALM) solutions, including IT Asset Disposition (ITAD) and Hardware Asset Management services, to their clients.

They facilitate the distribution of laptops and accessories to new employees across Europe while ensuring the secure return and disposition of retired equipment.

Finding fit-for-purpose packaging

It's a simple process, but one that relies heavily on having access to the right packaging. This dual-purpose packaging not only needs to meet various logistical demands but also support Iron Mountain's commitment to sustainability. Fit-for-purpose packaging is essential for the business, serving both practical and ecological purposes within their ALM line of business.

So, in June 2023, Iron Mountain turned to Smurfit Westrock for a solution that would seamlessly integrate with their supply chain. What followed was the creation of a unique shipping box, meticulously designed to safeguard their IT equipment during transit and streamline the returns process.

Designing a bespoke returnable postal box

This project was a sizeable task with many variables to consider. The team at Smurfit Westrock Peterborough had to give thought to the various sized laptops and accessories that the business needed to ship, and developed a universal cradle to cover a broad range of equipment sizes. They also had to consider the shipping of multiple accessory options so, their technical experts developed a common integral accessory box with dividers to keep them in place and protected during transit.

The team also wanted to help Iron Mountain boost its efficiency, so their expert designers created a solution that reduce packing time, and the amount of packaging required.

To do this, they simplified the cardboard laptop shipping box design for quick assembly and reduced the number of boxes needed from four to one. This simple change helped cut the need for extra packaging and subsequent shipping costs for the customer.

Adjustable boxes save time, space and waste

The unique packaging design for Iron Mountain uses a universal design aimed at protecting and packaging any size of laptop, keyboard, and accessory. The laptop edge protectors, end caps and flexible middle wrap can easily be adjusted to protect the product, regardless of size and shape. The single-seal packing boxes are a completely secure office solution, providing a common platform design which is now used by Iron Mountain to provide their ALM services across multiple EU sites.

This fully returnable dual-purpose box allows a new laptop to be sent and an old laptop to be returned in the same packaging for redeployment, resale or recycling. There's no need to source a new box which streamlines the process and works towards improved sustainability for the business.

Once used, the packaging - which is FSC-certified and 100% paper-based - is fully recycled within the customers' existing recycling chain.



Universal and versatile packaging solution

This new packaging, delivered in January 2024, gives Iron Mountain a functional and versatile solution, allowing for speedy packing and fewer boxes, helping to streamline packing and transit throughout the supply chain.

It's also designed with Iron Mountain's commitment to sustainability in mind using paper-based, reusable, and recyclable materials.

Charlie Watt from Iron Mountain said,

“We have big ambitions to grow the business, so we worked to define the need for a new type of bespoke box that meets our clients' expectations - and at the same time facilitates our new service offering.

By working with Smurfit, we've been able to innovate together and help grow our "Work from Home" service line. This is an important piece in our product portfolio giving us a positive outlook ahead and demonstrating how we are able to develop dynamic solutions with our clients and suppliers. It's been a great experience working with such an innovative and knowledgeable partner.”

By building on Iron Mountain's extensive logistics network, we're proud to play a part in a platform that's well on its way to establishing a market-leading distributed footprint for the deployment, retrieval, remarketing and recycling of IT assets. This will result in a more sustainable future for the IT industry and increased value recovery at the end of the IT asset lifecycle.

David Gill from Smurfit Westrock Peterborough said,

“Due to the success & positive feedback of this packaging, we are now also working with Iron Mountain on a bulk ship solution for their clients to recycle even larger volumes of IT assets across Europe”.

If you'd like to find out more about our returnable postal boxes, get in touch with the team today!