

Case Study in Reuse
 Seton Hall University, New Jersey



Situation: Replacing about 220 sets of dorm furniture, Seton Hall asked their furniture supplier, Butler Woodcrafters, to suggest an alternative to throwing the old furnishings away. Butler Woodcrafters and IRN have worked together many times in the past, so it was natural for Butler to give IRN a call.

Material Composition & Quantity: 1,425 pieces in total, including 210-220 each of beds (with mattresses), desks, dressers, and wardrobes, plus about 250 chairs and 165 bookcases.

Setting: Suburban campus about 15 miles west of Manhattan.

Overview

In early 2015 Seton Hall University confirmed an order with Butler Woodcrafters for about 220 sets of new furniture for the school’s 6-story Boland Hall dormitory. Seton Hall asked Butler for help finding a sustainable alternative for managing the furnishings they were replacing. Butler Woodcrafter has worked with IRN on many similar projects, so it was common sense for logistics manager Katie Longest and sales manager Bill Levine to give IRN a call.

Butler and Seton Hall requested a one-stop solution; they just wanted the old furnishings to go away, to the best possible use, with minimal hassle and disruption. They also required a tight schedule. All the furnishings had to be removed between a Thursday morning and the following Tuesday, with the weekend out of bounds because of commencement.

IRN reached out to our partner InstallNET, who identified Installation Concepts as the InstallNET member best placed to handle moving and loading the Seton Hall furnishings. IRN and the InstallNET crew converged on the site on Thursday morning, and by mid-day Tuesday the crew had packed ten tractor trailers floor-to-ceiling with Seton Hall’s surplus.

Composition

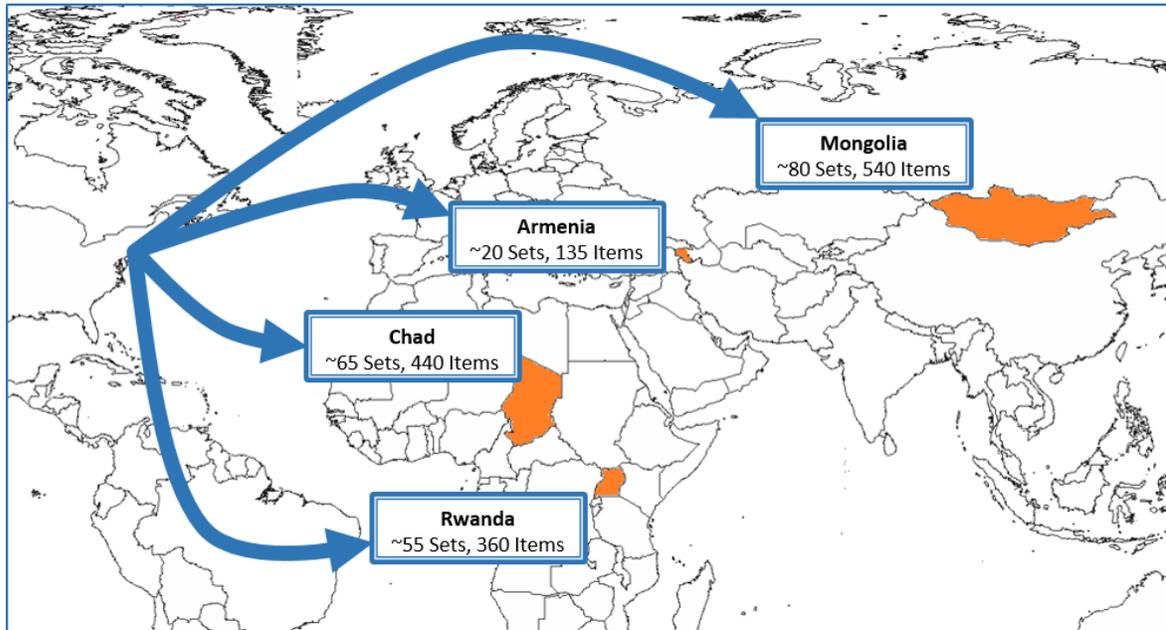
Item	Number	Item	Number
Bed w/ Mattress	220	Bookcase	165
Desk	211	Dresser	210
Desk Chair, Other Seating	240	Wardrobe	209
Total			1,475

Implementation

Apart from the split schedule, this was a straightforward project. There was no loading dock, but tractor-trailers could pull close to the dormitory. Two elevators were available, the only difficulty being that bed frames and mattresses had to be hand-loaded. Typical for an IRN project, the crew started on the top floor and worked down, dividing the crew into one team to break down the furniture and put it on dollies, a second team to move the furnishings outside and load trailers.

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Destinations IRN's longtime partner World Vision accepted the Seton Hall inventory. The inventory was delivered first to a World Vision warehouse close to the project site. From there, World Vision re-packed into overseas shipping containers, which were then loaded and shipped to World Vision relief and development projects in four countries from Chad in central Africa to Mongolia in central Asia.



Cost The cost to Seton Hall to manage the Bolton Dormitory furnishings for reuse was about \$7,000, or 13% less than they would have paid to throw the furniture away.

With more than 1,500 projects completed, IRN has documented that the labor required to handle furniture for reuse is nearly the same as to throw the same furniture into dumpsters – sometimes a few percent more, sometimes less, depending on the inventory and site factors.

Project management and administration for reuse cost more than for disposal, because one needs to plan, make a match with charities, track, and report the final destination for the furniture, where managing for dumpsters takes no planning at all.

The major savings with reuse are in the actual disposition of the inventory. One trailer loaded for reuse holds as much as three or four large dumpsters. The price difference depends on the location, but in most U.S. markets IRN trailers cost 10% to 40% less than their dumpster equivalents. In metro New York, Seton Hall saved more than \$8,000 in disposal fees by packing IRN trailers instead of dumpsters.

“We’ve come to rely on IRN whenever a client wants a sustainable solution for old furnishings, because they’ll know exactly where their furniture is being used again. And they’ll save money.”

Bill Levine, Sales Manager, Butler Woodcrafters

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