

## CASE STUDY: CONVERSION GIVES NEW LIFE TO OLD WAREHOUSE

**Management:** The H.O. Seiffert Co.  
**Location:** Everett, WA  
**Square Feet:** 92,685  
**Gross Sqft:** 67,740 Net Rentable.  
**# Units:** 717 (93 Sqft. Avg. Unit Size)  
**Type of Construction:** Conversion



Prior to 2007, the H.O. Seiffert Company already owned two self storage facilities under the Everett Downtown Storage trade name. Understanding the local market, President Pat Sievers had his eye on a 1965-built beer distribution warehouse as his next self storage project. With their current facilities hovering at 90% occupancy and an urban revitalization of the area underway, another storage facility was a natural progression.



Because the shell was soundly intact with tilt up walls, high ceilings and existing zoning, Sievers estimates a savings of at least one year in his construction process. To maximize net square footage, he called on Self Storage designer, Greg Moore of Moore Design Associates and Janus International in Temple, GA, to design and construct a mezzanine system, offering two full floors of storage units.

Janus International is a leading manufacturer of mezzanine systems, roll up doors, hallway partitions, wine storage, lockers and more for the self storage industry. Sievers did his homework, comparing a variety of criteria between the major door manufacturers in the industry. "We were looking to build a quality storage facility, which meant our doors and systems had to be of the highest caliber, too. Janus offered the best overall product and service, and they completed the job professionally and on time," says Sievers.



While the doors and hallway system installed without a glitch, there were some construction challenges. A few design obstacles existed that hindered their ability to cut hallways into interior load bearing support walls. With as few modifications as possible, Sievers made adjustments and achieved a 74% efficiency ratio.

While digging an elevator pit, Sievers' team discovered petroleum compounds, which meant that 87.5 tons of contamination had to be removed and disposed. The contaminants were thought to have come from a pre-existing railroad switching turnstile that once occupied the site. The Washington State Department of Ecology was called in, and it was determined that there was no chance of remaining encapsulated contaminants migrating to neighboring properties.

Parking was also an issue. The building had been added onto in several stages and fully encompassed its property lot lines on all four sides. To satisfy the city's requirement for one parking stall per 300 square feet of office space, Sievers adjusted his plans for a large scale retail-environment office to one of just 850 square feet. Another three rentable drive-in units had to be sacrificed as well, but in the end the goal was accomplished.

Despite these obstacles, Sievers is happy with his decision to convert an existing warehouse into self storage. "The solid shell, plus time saved in construction, made this storage conversion a wise choice for our next venture," says Sievers.



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