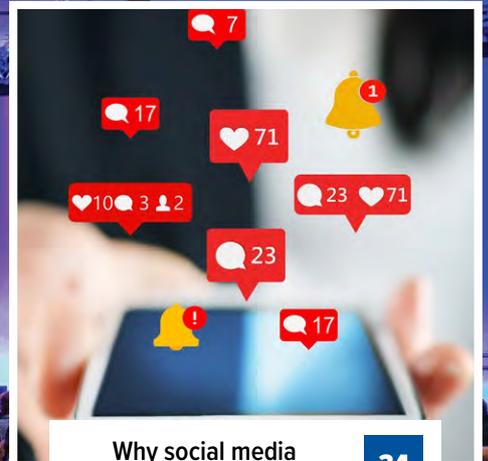


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*John Trotman
FEDESSA President*

President's Report

The FEDESSA Conference and Trade Show in London was a huge success with over 800 people attending over the 2 days. The sessions were very informative with a theme throughout the event of automation versus personalisation. It is clear that emerging technologies are changing our industry - the question is will automated systems ultimately replace our in-store staff? Or will customers continue to appreciate building a relationship with a real person, who they are trusting to look after their belongings? Only time will tell, but it was certainly interesting to hear people's different opinions on the issue.

The FEDESSA general council met at the end of the conference and discussed a range of issues including; independent accreditation for operators against the European Standard and implementing a new Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) for FEDESSA to manage the membership. This new software system will integrate into the FEDESSA website providing members with more control over the communication they receive from FEDESSA, the ability to update their store and contact details and more easily book and pay for events and other resources. It will also allow for online membership applications and renewals. The FEDESSA board will be meeting in January to decide on an implementation programme for this new system which will include a new website for FEDESSA and the Associations that use the FEDESSA template.

As always, the FEDESSA / JLL Industry Report provided insight into the development of the industry across Europe. The industry continues to show strong growth in supply across Europe, including the developing Eastern and Southern European markets. While occupancy and revenues are up on last year, the increases were marginal, suggesting a possible softening of the market in some areas. Despite this, operators are optimistic about the future of the industry with 75% of operators suggesting the coming 12 months will be better than the last 12 months. Within the survey group, there were 68 facilities under construction and 52 in the planning process, indicating that more growth is to be expected in the coming years.

Next year's conference is heading to Portugal, to be held at the Tivoli Marina Vilamoura on the Algarve coast. It will be a very different event with the focus on interaction between delegates and exploring the issues facing operators, particularly with online marketing. The conference space will be interactive and there will be lots of delegate interaction throughout the event. The conference space and trade show are all on the same level and part of the hotel complex which is nestled between the marina and the beach. There will be social events organised for those coming in early including golf, a boat cruise to the grottos and a wine and cultural tour. Book the dates in your diary now: 29th September – 1st October 2020. More details can be found at www.fedssa.org and bookings will open in early 2020.

I wish you all a safe and enjoyable festive season and look forward to another great year for self storage in 2020.

The industry continues to show strong growth in supply across Europe, including the developing Eastern and Southern European markets.

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*Rennie Schafer
SSA UK and FEDESSA CEO*

CEO Report

It was interesting to see the different reactions from members at this year's conference to the theme of automation of self storage stores. The session where Dean Booty and Travis Morrow debated the merits of automated stores versus the personal approach of managers was certainly insightful. The concept was further picked up by Lord Stuart Rose, the millennial research group and James Gibson, who also had strong opinions on the issue.

While self storage is not a big employer of people, the personal approach of store managers has always been pivotal to the success of a store. Good store managers do not just sell the product, they also create relationships with people. This is important when customers are storing their personal belongings. These goods are important to them and customers want confidence that someone is looking after them. Staff can also value add a sale, adding packaging materials, making sure the customer is correctly valuing their goods for insurance or selling other services. There is also the issue of unit sizes. Many customers struggle with selecting the correct unit size and the staff can guide them through this process. If you have a fully automated store, then how do you deliver this kind of service?

Automation, on the other hand, also has its own benefits. There is the convenience to the customer of using their phone or credit card to access their unit rather than keeping additional keys or fobs. The store gets to centralise their services so they have a dedicated sales person dealing with all enquiries, a maintenance crew looking after the store and an accounts person billing and chasing the debt; rather than a generalist self storage manager who needs to do all these tasks and more. Customers can complete the entire check in process online, and move their goods in at a time convenient to them, rather than having to come in during office hours to complete the move in process. There are potential savings in staff costs and while the technology is new, it gives these businesses a clear point of difference over their competitors. You can also potentially operate smaller stores in locations that are not currently served by self storage, by not having the store staffed.

Listening to the discussions at the conference, some operators see advantages in automation. Particularly, those developing new sites and those with a strong online presence. Others claim that the change is not customer driven and customers value the personal interaction with their staff. While staff interaction is important for some customers, how many customers never actually interact with a staff member once they move in? Most likely this is the majority of customers in a lot of self storage stores.

It seems inevitable a level of automation will be introduced into self storage, as it will in most industries. The question is how much automation and will it apply to all stores or become an option for customers to choose. Only time will tell, and the customer will probably be the one who has the most influence over the pace of change. Interesting times ahead for the industry which has not really seen much technological change at a store level since it started in Europe over 30 years ago.

This issue will be debated further at this year's Winter Workshop in St Anton, Austria. Technology and online marketing is the theme of this event and I am sure the guest speaker, Rafe Offer, will have his own ideas about how changing technology will impact self storage businesses of the future.

While self storage is not a big employer of people, the personal approach of store managers has always been pivotal to the success of a store. Good store managers do not just sell the product, they also create relationships with people.

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Tim Burnam, VP Development and Construction, StorageMart.

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New YSN Charter



The YSN Charter encourages the industry to support these young people in their roles within the self storage sector.

The YSN recognises and supports youth in the industry and encourages their growth through professional networking and development. We understand for this group to be successful it requires the support of self storage businesses that employ these young people.

The YSN and the SSA UK commit to:

- Develop training programmes suited to the development of young people in the industry
- Have a dedicated SSA UK YSN Liaison Officer
- Provide employers with feedback on issues raised in the YSN slack group
- Provide insight into the younger perspective of the self storage sector
- Provide reports on outcomes of YSN meetings and activities
- Provide a certificate to indicate your staff are members of the YSN

We invite all companies to sign up to the Charter and aspire to these principles

Voice

We are committed to listening to our young people and to providing opportunities for their voice to be heard within our organisation and the self storage sector

Creating Opportunity

We are committed to creating opportunities for our young people to gain the skills and experience they need

Recognising Talent

We are committed to recruiting young people based on their ability, talent and potential, and understand they are still developing and may have limited experience

Development

We are committed to providing training and support to develop our young people to further their careers

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Are Cap Rates Relevant to Self Storage in Europe?

The cap rate is used in the world of commercial real estate to indicate the current income generated from the property as a proportion of its capital value.

Whenever a self storage valuer takes the stage at a European self storage conference, they inevitably end up taking questions about what the capitalisation rate (“cap rate”) was on the latest sale, or what the cap rate for the industry is. While cap rates can be an indicator of value trends in other real estate sectors, are they really relevant to self storage operators?

What are Capitalisation (Cap) Rates?

The cap rate is used in the world of commercial real estate to indicate the current income generated from the property as a proportion of its capital value.

So, if a business had an operating income at the date of valuation or sale of €1 million and a sold for a total consideration of €20million (including buyer’s costs such as stamp duty) it would have a cap rate of 0.05 or 5%. The lower the cap rate the bigger the difference between the operating income and the sale price or asset value. A lower cap rate generally means the property is considered to be of higher quality, and hence value, than comparable properties. The cap rate can be determined when a property is sold as the operating income and sale price would generally be known. However, the equation is also used to give an indication of the value of a property that is for sale.

A buyer may look at the property and say they will pay a cap rate (or accept a return on their investment) of 7% and then multiply the inverse of the cap rate, often called the multiple, against the declared income to obtain an idea of the total purchase price they are willing to pay. They would then typically deduct the purchase costs from this figure (in order to achieve the required net return on their total outlay).

On the face of it, reference to a cap rate (or multiple) seems straightforward but there are elements of interpretation that need to be recognised. On the revenue side it is possible to consider the last (or trailing) 12 months of income or the forward looking 12-month forecast. It is also possible to look at different income points; net operating income before and/or after notional or actual management fees and also before or

after some allowance for capital reserves. The revenue/earnings after operational costs, but before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) would usually be adopted for a property valuation.

On the capital side, consideration needs to be given to whether the denominator should be the transaction amount or the total outlay, including costs. The costs can be material, particularly if full Stamp Duty Land Tax is to be paid.

Self Storage Variables Impact Cap Rates

One of the problems when talking about cap rates in self storage is the number of variables that can significantly impact revenue in a relatively short period of time. Self storage businesses largely speaking have fixed operating costs so the net operating income between a store that is 50% occupied compared to a store that is 60% occupied can be very different. If the market applied a cap rate of 5% to a store which was occupied at 50% based on a comparable transaction of a store that sold with an occupancy of 60%, then the value would be out of kilter with market evidence. The cap rate tends to be higher for properties that are sold with a higher level of occupancy.

The same happens if a self storage business has areas that have not yet been fitted out with units. Adding extra space and filling it up increases the income and based on the purchase price, raises the cap rate. Potential to cut expenses will also add to value, and an operator with multiple stores may be able to buy a single site and reduce the operating costs through their centralised management. Lower costs mean higher net income and a higher value. These are all examples of how a purchaser can add value to a self storage business. Investors may be willing to pay a lower cap rate for a business where they are confident that they can increase the

Self storage businesses largely speaking have fixed operating costs so the net operating income between a store that is 50% occupied compared to a store that is 60% occupied can be very different.

continued on page 12

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Taking cap rates aside, what is clear is that there is a growing interest in European self storage by institutional investors. Recent sales have shown that large operators and investors have been willing to pay higher values for properties



net income, and so the future returns. Essentially, they are calculating their purchase price not on the income from the previous owner but what they believe they can generate with their business model and management team. Once the business is operating at optimal levels with no more space to fill out, then a prospective buyer is unlikely to pay the same lower cap rate as they cannot so easily add value to the business.

Cap Rates can be Used to Show Trends in the Market

In other industries, analysts will look at how cap rates have moved over a period of time and extrapolate this to the market generally. If the bulk of the sales in a 12-month period have a lower cap rate than the previous 12 months, this would indicate investors are willing to pay more for that asset class as long as the cap rates are on a like-for-like basis with properties with similar characteristics, locations and occupancy levels. This could indicate that most businesses in this asset class have increased in value purely based on purchaser appetite. This works in industries where there are dozens of assets sold every month and there is a large volume of data to consider. In self storage there are only around a dozen prime transactions in a year across Europe. Given the variables in each of them, there is simply not enough data to provide accurate industry commentary on cap rate trends in European self storage.

Low Cap Rates on One Sale do not mean your Business is Worth More

Sometimes there will be a flurry of self storage transactions with low cap rates. This can lead operators to think their business is worth more as they apply these cap rates to their revenue to get a business value. If only it were that simple. No two properties are identical, particularly in self storage. An experienced valuer would look at the business, consider potential uplift, unused space, management costs and the like, to come up with a valuation of the property, reflecting trading potential. Applying a cap rate from an unrelated business sale does not account for these variables. Location can also come into play as the purchaser of the property with the low cap rate may have seen this as an attractive location within their existing portfolio, or in terms of future rate growth, and there are also significant differences between countries. Your business is not in the same location, is not the same size, will have a different uplift potential and probably a different cap rate if sold.

Increased Appetite for Self Storage

Taking cap rates aside, what is clear is that there is a growing interest in European self storage by institutional investors. Recent sales have shown that large operators and investors have been willing to pay higher values for properties as the property market has had a long bull run over the last decade with all commercial property increasing significantly, and self storage offering attractive income compared to other assets such as retail which has seen rental values fall materially in some markets. All the publicly listed self storage companies have lowered their debt to equity in recent years, so they have access to capital for acquisition and growth. The main barrier to growth is access to suitable property both for development and acquisition of existing operators. When a prime self storage property comes on the market there is no shortage of potential purchasers.

The Value of your Property is ultimately determined by the Purchaser

People seek valuations on their business for a range of reasons, financing being one of the most common. It is important that when valuing your self storage business you talk to a valuer who is experienced in the self storage industry. These experts have access to all the industry data and a comprehensive understanding of the elements that influence a valuation. Their valuations are a lot more accurate than taking a cap rate from an unrelated business and applying it to your property. Of course how much your business is ultimately worth can only be determined if you sell it. As with any item for sale, it is only worth as much as someone else is willing to pay for it.



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Influencer Marketing in the Self Storage Industry

In the beginning, only celebrities and a few dedicated bloggers were considered social media influencers. Today you see influencers everywhere and “everyday” people have become celebrities due to their social media presence. We have seen them rise, saturate the market and some are even getting caught up in fraud. There is not one day you don’t see on Instagram or Facebook pictures or videos from influencers giving comments on facial creams, restaurants, clothes and many more products. Influencer marketing helps companies reach an audience which is difficult to access through other channels. However, is this a good way for companies to reach new audiences and is it a tool that can be used in the self storage industry?

What is influencer marketing exactly?

At a fundamental level, influencer marketing is a type of social media marketing that uses endorsements and product mentions from influencers—individuals who have a dedicated social following and are viewed as experts within their niche. It is the process of identifying, researching, engaging and supporting the people who create high-impact conversations with your customers. Influencers have trust and influence to guide an audience toward loving, listening to or leaving brands.

Nowadays we see a large number of self storage operators publishing pictures of

Today you see influencers everywhere and “everyday” people have become celebrities due to their social media presence. We have seen them rise, saturate the market and some are even getting caught up in fraud.

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their brand new building or initiatives on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. However, in Europe, we don't tend to see a picture yet of an important influencer standing in a storage unit or posing in front of a brand new self-storage building. This is of course less impressive than showing a picture of the latest BMW model but it can be done. In the USA there are self storage businesses that have had posts from influencers using their self storage store. World champion surfer Kelly Slater even made a video blog of his self storage unit in a Store Quest store.

Some influencer marketing is spontaneous, created by the influencer through their day to day experiences. However more often it is a commercial enterprise between a business and the influencer to promote a product or service. It is increasingly common for brands to send a free samples of their product to an influencer for them to review, or even to provide payment in exchange for a favourable post. It's a technique that is particularly popular in the beauty, fashion and travel industries – but it can work just as well with any product or service that can be easily showcased in a photo or video. The talent of the influencer is to weave the review into their normal social media coverage without making it look like an advertisement. The influencer gets paid to endorse the product or service and connect the business with a wider audience.

Can influencer marketing be a tool that can easily be used in the self-storage industry to increase awareness?

Social influencers have become a serious business, they are the new marketing and communication tool. Today there are more and more opportunities to use social influencers in marketing strategies. Most companies however are wondering what they want and what they can do with it. There is also concern that you have limited control over a social media influencer. What if they go rogue and post negative comments on your business instead of positive. If you are considering using a social influencer, what do you need to be aware of and how do you work them? This is

Some influencer marketing is spontaneous, created by the influencer through their day to day experiences. However more often it is a commercial enterprise between a business and the influencer to promote a product or service.



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difficult if you are not familiar with the market.

You first need to define which influencer fits your company the best. Having a greater reach is not always better. Many people think the more followers an influencer has, the better opportunities for a brand but this is not always the case. Finding an influencer whose audience and target demographic fits well with your brand is much more important. Having someone with a million followers is no good to you if none of them live within 20 minutes of your store. Also consider the age demographic of your customer, many influencers target the under 25's, but this is not your typical self storage user. So look for an influencer in your local community that is targeting the older demographic. They may not have millions of followers but the people they engage with are more relevant to your market. It will also probably be cheaper and easier to engage with them.

So, how can influencers help to increase awareness of your self storage company? Followers of an influencer rely on brand messages when they are shared by the influencer because they trust the opinions and recommendations. Secondly, the influencer is the best person to strengthen a customer's confidence in your company. If an influencer believes in your product, they can write stories about your product or brand. When their followers come across this content, they are likely to trust it and consequently, your brand. However, to strengthen customer confidence, you must invite influencers to experience your services or products. Explain your products including their benefits and functions to your target influencers. Let them know your value proposition and unique selling point. They need to know why your product is worth mentioning on social media. Talk about all the life changing reasons that people use self storage for. The reviews will be original and authentic since these vloggers and bloggers have actual experience of the products or services. Customers value honesty which in turn promotes confidence in the brand. By working with an influencer, you can introduce your brand to potential customers, people who are relevant to your brand given their interests and trust in the influencer's recommendations. When influencers link your company in their content, you get more traffic and backlinks that help your SEO efforts that have a significant impact on your search ranking.

Before you start it is important to study the target group of your organisation or brand on Instagram or Facebook. Look at the list of accounts they follow. Record frequently occurring accounts in the lists of your target groups: are they perhaps influencers? With many "known" influencers you can already see a blue check mark behind the name. These are often the really big influencers, which means they will also request a larger reimbursement. For many target groups, the effectiveness already decreases when large influencers are deployed because they know that a lot of money is earned from this. The small influencers that are closer to the target group are seen as the most reliable. "The more, the better" does not apply in this case.

It is also very important to follow the rules. Influencers must disclose that they are paid for posts or that they receive some type of in-kind compensation (i.e. a free storage unit for a month or a package of free boxes). Influencers are obliged to communicate this information through hashtags such as #sponsored or #ad on Instagram and Facebook.

To find suitable influencers you can use different social media monitoring tools which will indicate which influencers may be relevant. However, if you are considering working with an influencer it might be worth contacting an agency who can source the right influencer for you. Start small and focus on the channels where your customers are but at the same time, be open to suggestions. Also consider that people in your community or even your own customers may be influencers and they do not realise it. Have a look at your Facebook or Instagram followers now, who has the most connections, are these connections to others in your community, do they post regularly? If so, they could be your next influencer and they are already your customer. Work out how you can get them to post more regularly about their storage experience.



To strengthen customer confidence, you must invite influencers to experience your services or products. Explain your products including their benefits and functions to your target influencers. Let them know your value proposition and unique selling point.



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Maximising entry security for your self storage site

There has been a recent spate of self storage break ins where criminals have used skimmed or stolen PIN codes to get access to Self Storage sites. We asked Hugh Murray from Bearbox on how operators can improve their store security and deter this kind of criminal element.

The approach to any security threat of this kind is to carry out a risk assessment and ensure that there is layered security regime established across the site. This “target hardening” will cover access through the perimeter, access to and within the storage area and finally security for the boxes themselves.

AIM 1. Deter or prevent criminals from getting onto the site and into the storage centre.

Security should start with a proper external boundary fence and a substantial (preferably sliding) gate. Access to the gate should be via a credential which cannot be cloned or easily read. In this respect if a PIN code has to be used it should be unique, composed of a minimum of 7 digits (none of which should include the unit number) and be backed up by a second verification system such as a QR code, for out of hours use. An alternative solution would be the use of a card or fob, again with a second out of hours validation.

If the Company policy is that the gate remains open on a timer or whilst a member of staff is present, there must be a system to ensure that there is no unregistered individual left on site when they leave. For that matter it is good policy to do

continued on page 20



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Security should start with a proper external boundary fence and a substantial (preferably sliding) gate. Access to the gate should be via a credential which cannot be cloned or easily read.



To take advantage of the alarm reactivation it is important to have a number of detection devices such as door contacts and corridor PIR's within the storage.

These should be located at entrances, fire escapes and main corridor intersections.

a sweep of the store before closing anyway to ensure no one is remaining in the building overnight.

Similar care should be taken for the access control to the building. All main entry points should be treated in the same way with dual verification on the way in. Normally the presence of a bona fide client on site will "shunt" out the alarm in the storage area. However to be effective there must be an alarm in place and that includes fire door contacts and corridor PIRs. These measures will be to no avail if the criminal has a valid code of credential - He will need to be identified in another way.

Aim 2. Identify a breach as quickly as possible.

The criminal, posing as a client will want to appear confident when entering the site. However, although they might have a legitimate code or credential, it is unlikely that they will know the number or the whereabouts of the corresponding unit. If you have a system that identifies when a user code is used to access the store but then not used to access the corresponding unit within say 15 – 20 minutes then you can identify this use and potentially re-activate the alarm

You can also look on your reports for codes that were used to login during the evening and then not out again until much later in the evening or early in the morning.

Aim 3. Raise the alarm

To take advantage of the alarm reactivation it is important to have a number of detection devices such as door contacts and corridor PIR's within the storage. These should be located at entrances, fire escapes and main corridor intersections.

In the event that the entry was as a result of tail-gating there may be an opportunity for someone to enter an unrented unit so unrented units should always be set to alarm when opened if only for a short time. Tailgaters should also trigger an alarm when everyone else logs out.

For the units themselves, the bare minimum should be door contacts (or internal PIRs). Not only do they allow the system to flag when a unit has not been opened but also recognise when a units is opened without a reciprocal code being entered. They are also used to indicate when a client last closed his door and act as the starting point for auto log off for clients who forget to do so. There is an improved contact used in the security industry for grade 3 alarm systems which can detect any attempt at magnetic interference. If desired additional detection in the form of PIR's inside each unit can be installed. These could be on every unit or just in a random 10% to limit tunnelling and cause an alarm if the contacts are compromised.

To support the above it is important to ensure that the CCTV system complements the alarm system so that there will be a good evidential record of both vehicles and personnel entering the site. This means CCTV on corridors not just entry points.

Recommendations to improve site security

1. Install a decent set of doors and locks to all perimeter doors and shutters
2. Install a reliable access control system which has links to the management software to ensure that only staff and paid up customers can enter.
3. Make sure that all users have unique codes of at least 7 characters. Short codes

are easy to guess or use 2nd validation such as QR codes or NPR!

4. If possible use fobs for staff to minimise the chance of their codes being stolen.
5. Fit corridor detection in loading areas, on access points and circulation areas.
6. Fit-detection to each unit so that units are monitored individually. - This can be either matched contacts or PIRs or a combination.
7. On unmanned sites, fit automatic overlocks which remain locked until a bona fide customer logs in.
8. Ensure that customers log out when they leave a site so that their units don't fall victim to theft during the default log out period.
9. Run a regular report on customer pins where the client never goes to his unit.
10. Run a report on codes which are used to enter the centre at the end of the day but which do not exit until the next morning. This can be run after hours to see if there is any chance that someone is locked in overnight. This also removes the risk of people sleeping in the units.
11. Run a regular report of code guessing and look at the CCTV footage to see if there are similarities.
12. Explore the limitations of the top of the units - a person may not be able to look over but a hand held camera on a selfie stick can! There are adaptations that allow the camera to be inserted through the mesh!



Unrented units should always be set to alarm when opened if only for a short time.

13. Fit two-way audio to autonomous or out of hours sites to allow communication with customers etc.

How BearBox Analytics can help

Bearbox have developed a database interrogation facility which allows the site operator to search a number of functions to help them identify unusual activity or events. These can be relayed to the monitoring station or sent direct to the operators or their clients.

In the context of credential or PIN code theft, we have a log function within BearBox that identifies "log ins" that have been made without a corresponding unit being opened. These alert site operators via SMS, email or alarm. The alarms can also be set to ring automatically at the end of the "entry pin disabled timer". Using the "entry PIN disabled timer" at a minimum also helps to identify any attempt at door magnet sabotage.

H J Murray, Director BearBox International Ltd

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"John is a true networker who enthusiastically connects people. The knowledge about the Self Storage business is in the family genes. It is very pleasant and effective to work with the Lindsey Self Storage Group in the USA, but now also in Europe.

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—Jan P. Bikker, MD at 1BOX SelfStorage



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Recent SSA UK Events



Training Day – Legal Issues 12 September 2019 - Birmingham

Lindsey Hemingway, formerly of Rooks Ryders Solicitors but now based at Knights plc, facilitated another comprehensive and informative Legal Issues training day at the Copthorne Hotel in Birmingham. Lindsey has worked across numerous sectors but for many years this has included the flexible space sector - self storage/managed offices. Lindsey's specialist knowledge of our sector enabled her to develop, along with the SSA UK, the current suite of standard self-storage agreements and the important Manual of Advice and Procedures (MAP). Who better to deliver this training session?

It was great to see multiple members of staff from the same organisation attending to benefit from Lindsey's incredible wealth of experience in dealing with some of the more difficult aspects of self storage. If you haven't attended this training session yet, it really is a must to ensure you are up-to-date with current legislation along with; how to manage your risks/liabilities, grant access only to those you should and how to handle bankrupt and deceased storers the right way.



Training Day – Selling Self Storage Online 30 October 2019, London & 13 November 2019, Manchester

Two training days on this increasingly popular topic were held in quick succession to meet the growing demand. The first in London at Ambassadors Bloomsbury at the end of October and the second at etc. venues on Portland Street in Manchester just two weeks later. Customised specifically for the self storage industry, the training focused on the online sales process and the need to manage online enquiries to the same high standard as phone or in-person enquiries, which is often not the case.

Delegates were first introduced to the psychology of online shoppers including why they shop online and what makes them different. Delegates were then encouraged to drill down into the necessary detail of; when, how and how often to respond to online enquiries including the importance of response content, online pricing, keeping customers engaged with you and not your competitors, online chat, social media lead generation and online reviews. There was also a discussion on how to automate the process of replying to online enquiries. A comprehensive, interactive and engaging session delivered by the SSA UK's CEO, Rennie Schafer.



Regional Members' Meeting 7 November 2019 – Edinburgh

Our annual Regional Members Meeting in Scotland was held at Marlin's Wynd, a wonderful venue in the caverns under the city of Edinburgh. Following a presentation by Rennie Schafer, SSA UK CEO, there was plenty of discussion on managing online reviews, marketing on social media and improving website presence. The evening was finished off by Manchester born comic 'Big Lou' who gave an entertaining sketch, generating lots of laughs. Thank you to our members north of the border for supporting a fantastic evening.



Training Day – Operational 7 November 2019 - Birmingham

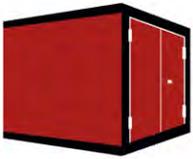
Delivered by industry legend Dave Davies of Double D Consulting, the most recent Operational Training Day was held at the Copthorne Hotel in central Birmingham. Many familiar operators attended but it was great to see new staff members or 'storeologists' as one delegate referred to themselves, attending to gain from this invaluable training along with operators yet to open their doors. Topics included; enquiry management, price increases, customer perceptions, managing customers and debt control.

Mandy Lavia from Bristol based Fox Self Storage said

"Recently I attended the operational training day. Although I have been confidently selling storage units I have never felt that I was using all the right operational tools and had doubt in my ability to secure sales.

I urge anyone who is involved in self storage to attend one of these training days, it is a fun and exciting way to learn about how to build and boost your self storage facility and gain some exceptional knowledge, motivation and confidence... then like me you can honestly say you operate an outstanding storage facility and achieve your professional goals".





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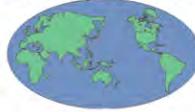
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Community engagement drives growth and longevity in your business.



Julia West

Quote required when
article cut down

Engaging in your local community is a great way for any self storage business to foster relationships, boost visibility and increase brand awareness.

Statistically we know that most of our customers store within a 3-5 mile radius from their work or home. So engaging in your local community is essentially ensuring you are marketing to your core target group. The great thing about community engagement strategies is it doesn't matter if you own just one single site, or if you have multiple sites, as each facility is as unique and individual as the local community in which it resides. Additionally, community engagement doesn't have to be expensive, in fact the financial outlay can be minimal and often costs nothing in terms of a monetary value, but simply takes a little of your time.

Longevity of your team

Once upon a time, when you started a career, it was for a lifetime. However, in today's world a person averages 15-20 job changes over a 50-year career. For businesses, retaining their employees has huge benefits, such as a happy and more productive workforce. The cost of rehiring is astronomical and for small businesses, the process is both overwhelming and costly.

But what makes an employee stay? Well that is quite simple; job security, fulfillment, culture and a sense of achievement go a long way into employee retainment. Community engagement really does have a tremendously positive impact on your team and the longevity of their employment. It drives comradery, engagement, motivation, enthusiasm and increases productivity. A happy workforce will have a direct impact on your customer experience which will ensure the long-term sustainability and growth of your site and its occupancy.

Local charities and not-for-profit community groups

One of the biggest engagement opportunities is working with local charities. Firstly, you should establish if they meet your values. Secondly, you should consider how you will benefit from the affiliation. Think about other win/win opportunities that you may be able to both leverage on.

There are many opportunities that you can explore such as:

- Training & development
- Team building events & activities
- Branding opportunities
- Utilising their networks and community groups
- Functions, meetings and award ceremonies
- Facilitate events
- Sponsor marketing material

And while all of these are fabulous outcomes, what is also important is to boast about your affiliation. Don't be shy, share your engagements through social media channels.

Local business networks

Local business networks, Chambers of Commerce and local enterprise Europe networks are a fabulous avenue for connecting with other business owners in your catchment area. Like many businesses, the self storage industry is largely dependent on referral business and repeat or referral clients which represents approximately a third of our customers.

Being active in local business network groups gives you the opportunity to:

- Form new relationships
- Discover like businesses
- Increase brand awareness and exposure
- Nurture trust within your business community



continued on page 26

- Allows you to showcase your facility
- Gain a great source of local marketing
- Increase referrals
- Improve social interaction

Developing relationships with other like-minded professionals is a great way to engage with your local business community. Once relationships are blossomed, they will become an extension of your sales team, promoting your business for you, without the wage expense.

Many of these network groups host seminars that support a charity or a not-for-profit group while providing a guest speaker. Your team find these seminars exceptionally fun, motivating and inspirational which, in turn, drives productivity and engagement within your workplace. It's also good to note that local media often support and photograph these events, so while you may be camera shy, this is a great opportunity for you to have your people and brand seen.

Local sporting groups

Like one big extended family, we recognise that our support is needed for all ages and members of the community. Engaging in local sporting clubs is a great way to get to know your local community. Look for opportunities to engage outside of normal sponsorship packages:

- Provide free storage in exchange for sponsorship
- Sponsor kits and uniforms with your brand
- Place signage around local sporting grounds
- Advertise in newsletters / forums and social media posts
- Add your Logo onto fixtures, with a call to action
- Reciprocal links on websites & social media platforms
- Attend functions and sponsor awards
- Be known, be present, be part of their community



By engaging with these clubs, you will soon be known and be considered part of their family and community. You will find that these clubs are very loyal and therefore will promote your business as a trusted partner for you.

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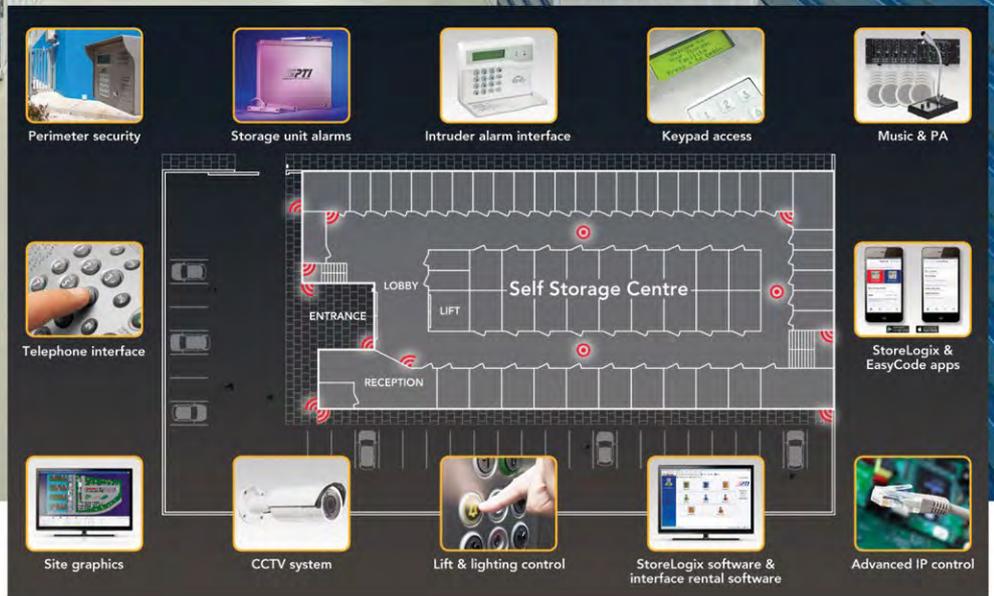


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With an increase in home renovation and reality tv shows, like Grand Designs, Changing Rooms & Escape to the Country, there are great opportunities for our industry to capitalise on these increasingly popular television programs.

As we know, the real estate market has a huge influence on our growth and increased occupancy. When the market is hot, enquiries rise. They know your local demographic better than any business. So, make sure that your local agents are your best friends. While it's a hard market to crack, if you can build solid relationships with your local agents, they will promote your business for you.

Think about promotions and offers that benefit the agents and they will promote your business for you. A win/win will always be received well by a real estate agency. If you were to offer the first month of storage free, the agent will sell this to the client as if they are paying for the storage, which is fine, if it gets you a new customer. Experience shows that rarely do the referred clients store for just one month – it's usually several months and they need boxes, tape, etc. to pack their home when moving. The cost is minimal, and they do all the work in bringing customers to your door.

Beyond real estate agents, there is a whole business sector in your community that you can tap into, such as:

- Stylists
- Interior designers
- Renovation companies
- Relocation companies
- Removal companies
- Retirement villages
- Builders

In conclusion, these examples are just a small collection of the many relationships and community engagement activities that you can engage in. Community engagement has so many benefits for you, your team, your business and for our industry including;

- An increase to your lead enquiries
- It will drive referral business
- An increase in move ins, and area occupancy
- It will increase your social media exposure and google ranking
- It will increase your brand awareness and trust
- Consumers will respect your corporate responsibly and select you as a self storage provider of choice
- Millennials and Gen Z's will want to work with you as they recognise you as an employer of choice
- It will improve the happiness, culture and productivity of your team
- Drive motivation and improve the longevity of your employee's service
- You will genuinely improve people's lives
- You will feel good

So, what is stopping you? If you haven't considered or aren't currently partaking in community engagement strategies as yet, then let me ask you now to make a promise and commitment to yourself that you will step outside of your site take a good look around at your community and start engaging.



2019 FEDESSA Conference and Trade Show

The FEDESSA 2019 conference in London smashed all the records with over 800 people attending across the 2 and a half days. A truly global event with delegates from 35 countries across 6 continents. The biggest self storage Trade Show held outside the USA taking up an entire floor of the QEII Centre in Westminster.

Delegates were treated to a range of speakers from both within the self storage industry and external business and marketing experts. Feature speakers Lord Stuart Rose and Baroness Karren Brady were popular with their experiences of growing a business and insights into the challenges facing operators in the new online and automated environment. The topic of automation versus personalisation was covered by many speakers throughout the conference and was a common conversation piece during the networking functions. The self storage millennial research group provided some fascinating insights into what millennials really think of self storage and what it will take to engage the next generation of self storage customers.



Some of the comments from delegates included

"The best self storage conference ever"

"Worth coming just to hear Stuart Rose"

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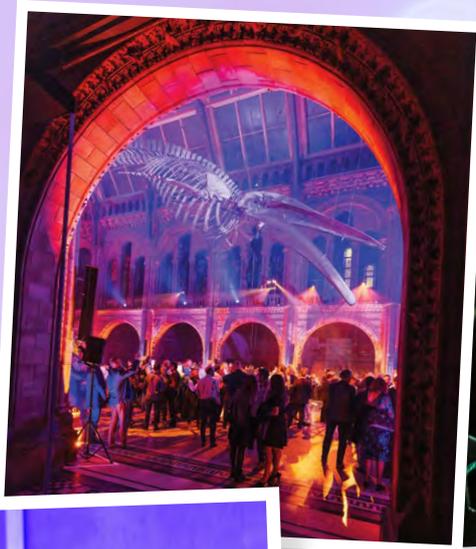


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Next years event will be held at the Tivoli Vilamoura, Portugal, September 29 – October 1. A completely new event with even more focus on networking and learning from other industry participants. **Be Part of the Change.**

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"I don't know how they do it, but the conference gets better and better each year"

"My first conference and I was surprised how open other operators are and willing to share their experiences"



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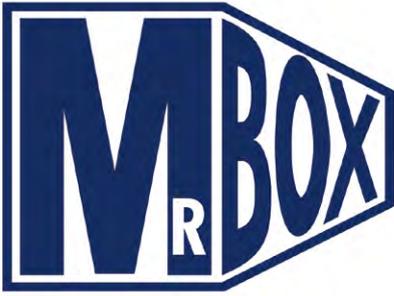
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Why social media is important for business marketing



Social media is all about getting referrals from reputable sources within your friendship group or community. The conversations that used to be held around the BBQ, water cooler or at the pub between mates are now held on social media.

Social media may not be your thing, maybe you don't have a Facebook account or twitter feed, but then reality is that social media is becoming an increasingly important avenue for generating business. It is not like traditional marketing streams and it can take up time and resources. But these days every business should have at least a basic social media presence.

It doesn't matter if you run a small single store operator or a big national company. Social media is an essential piece of your business marketing strategy. Social platforms help you connect with your customers, increase awareness about your brand and boost your leads and conversions. Social media companies like Facebook are aggressively targeting business users, not just through paid advertising, but also features like recommendations and marketplace. Its not all about crazy cat videos and food photos, social media channels are about connecting people with local and relevant businesses that can assist their needs. Doesn't that sound just like what self Storage is? A local business that helps people through life changing moments.

Referrals

Social media is all about getting referrals from reputable sources within your friendship group or community. The conversations that used to be held around the BBQ, water cooler or at the pub between mates are now held on social media. If someone wants a recommendation for a local service provider they look for recommendations on social media. If they want to find out more about a product or service they ask their social media "friends" if anyone else has used the service. Your business could be being talked about right now on social media and you probably don't know about it. But if you have a solid social media presence then you will find out when that person chooses to contact you and more importantly, you can be feeding them information about your business throughout the process. Facebook is the best example of this with their recommendations tool. Any user that asks for recommendations for anything gets a map based search result where people can recommend businesses, their Facebook page is automatically displayed and they are plotted on the map. All this is done automatically. But if you don't have a Facebook page for all your stores in each location then you will not be displaying in the results.

Build Awareness

If people don't know about your business, they can't become your customers. Social media boosts your visibility among potential customers, letting you reach a wide audience. It is particularly useful for businesses looking to market in their local area. Social media is full of local community groups that you can be a part of. Post useful community information to these groups, build up a following and then periodically drop in content about why people use self storage. LinkedIn is great for building relationships with local businesses and commercial customers. Facebook for personal customers in your community.



Communicate Authority

Customers are increasingly savvy and more discerning about which businesses they support. Before making a decision, they'll do a quick search to browse your website and social media. If you have no social media presence then this does not portray a modern growing business. Setting up robust profiles that you update frequently with relevant content will build your brand's authority and make sure you make a positive first impression, showing that your business is trustworthy, knowledgeable, and approachable.

Remember your content should not all be about your business as such, it should target the reasons why people use self storage. Provide insight for house movers, people growing their family or dealing with a death in the family. Comment on content relevant to your local community so you engage with people that are more likely to want to store with you.

Make it personal

Customers aren't interested in businesses that publish dry, corporate-style social media posts. Your social media content is your chance to express your character and personality. What does your brand stand for? Are you casual and funny, formal and friendly? Take this tone throughout your posts and be true to who you are. Don't be afraid to show some of your individual personality.

Use video content

The internet generally is becoming more about video content, particularly in social media channels. You can create engaging video content for social media with a simple setup—good lighting, a smartphone, and maybe a tripod. Keep your videos short, 90 seconds is great, no more than 3 minutes. Subtitle the speech or important messages so that people can view it without sound. Aim the content at your viewers, tips on how to pack boxes and keep moisture out of your unit are common self storage videos. Think more about how you can help your customers, how to fold a fitted bed sheet, tips on decluttering a house for sale, 5 things people forget to do when moving house.

Its takes time not money

You can invest in paid social media campaigns and these can provide good results, allowing you to target people that are more likely to need self storage. However, the real work on social media takes time more than money. For the best results you need to be active in the space, not just when you have time or feel like it. Assign someone to the task who will embrace it, even if that is a store manager. Give them the time to build the profile and engage with the customers. It is a difficult medium to measure results as a lot of the work is done behind the scenes and sometimes the customer will have done all their research on social media and then enquire through your website or phone. You can measure interaction and engagement though. It's not all about the number of followers or likes you get but the actual interaction with people through comments, conversations or retweets.

Social media should be part of your business marketing, but it doesn't have to be stressful to manage. Take the first step, create a profile, and start engaging with your customers.

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Who can gain access to a customer's unit?



Article by Lindsey Hemmingway,
Knights plc

We all know that one of the fundamentals of self storage is that “you lock it and keep the key”. The customer has control over the space and who accesses it. But the legal reality is that other authorities and individuals can also access a customer's storage unit in certain circumstances. In this article we explore the rules on this in the UK.

The Police

The police only have the right to access a self storage unit with a correctly worded warrant. The warrant would usually be made out to the customer who has a unit at the self storage business. It is not made out to the self storage business directly as they do not control access to the space. This can change if the self storage business has a key to the unit or other means of accessing the space. If the police do attend at your store with a warrant then it is their responsibility to break the lock



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on the unit, not yours. You can give them the tools required but they should forcibly enter the unit. They should also re-secure the unit after they have broken it open. If the police do not re-secure the unit before they leave then you should contact the customer and advise them of the circumstances and that their unit has been left open by the police.

The police may contact you asking if a certain person has a self storage unit with you. They may provide you with a list of names to check. The SSA UK standard agreement and suggested privacy policy allow the business to divulge storer's details to the police as part of an official investigation. The request from the police should be made in writing and then you can confirm if the person or anyone on the list is a customer. You can also release their personal details, as well as the number of the unit they are using.

Trading Standards

Trading Standards officers have wider powers of access than the police on commercial premises like self storage businesses. They can access any self storage unit within their general access rights and do not need a specific warrant - they just need to show you their Trading Standards ID. They usually request access in relation to imported goods from outside the EU. Tobacco, pirate video and music recordings, unsafe toys and counterfeit goods have been found in self storage units by Trading Standards in the past. As with the police, it is the officers that should break the lock on the unit and re-secure it.

Access by the Self Storage Business

The self storage business can access a unit under certain circumstances. The most obvious is when the customer has not paid for their storage and the relevant sell up letters have been sent. In this case the business can enter the unit, inventory the goods and potentially move them to another unit if required.

The business can also access the unit after giving a period of notice for maintenance or other non-urgent reasons. The standard agreement says you must give 7 days notice before access and this must be sent by registered mail. Ideally, the customer will be present when you access their unit, opening the lock themselves and ensuring none of their goods are damaged in the process. If the customer cannot attend, set a date for entry and advise them again in writing. If the customer cannot attend on the day of entry, take a photo or video of the lock being cut (if you don't hold a key), the door being opened and the state of the goods in the unit. At least two people from the storage facility should be present. Make detailed notes on why access was facilitated, who was present, what was done/found and when and how the unit was re-secured. You can use this method of access for maintenance purposes and also if you suspect prohibited goods are being stored or other terms of the contract are being broken, unless the prohibited goods are illegal goods or there is an emergency situation.

You can also access the unit immediately in the case of an emergency. This could be if you see chemicals seeping out of the unit, there is a suspicious smell coming out, a fire has broken out, you have seen vermin entering the unit, or there is some other direct threat to the contents of surrounding units or the building itself or to the health and safety of people using the facility or your staff. This will mean cutting and removing the lock unless you hold a key. If the circumstances allow, you should photograph or video record your entry into the unit. You must ensure the unit is re-secured after the event and if possible, you should attempt to record the state of the inside of the unit by taking a picture or video of the unit as soon as practicable after the entry. As soon as possible after the emergency, you should make detailed notes of the incident, action taken and contact the customer.

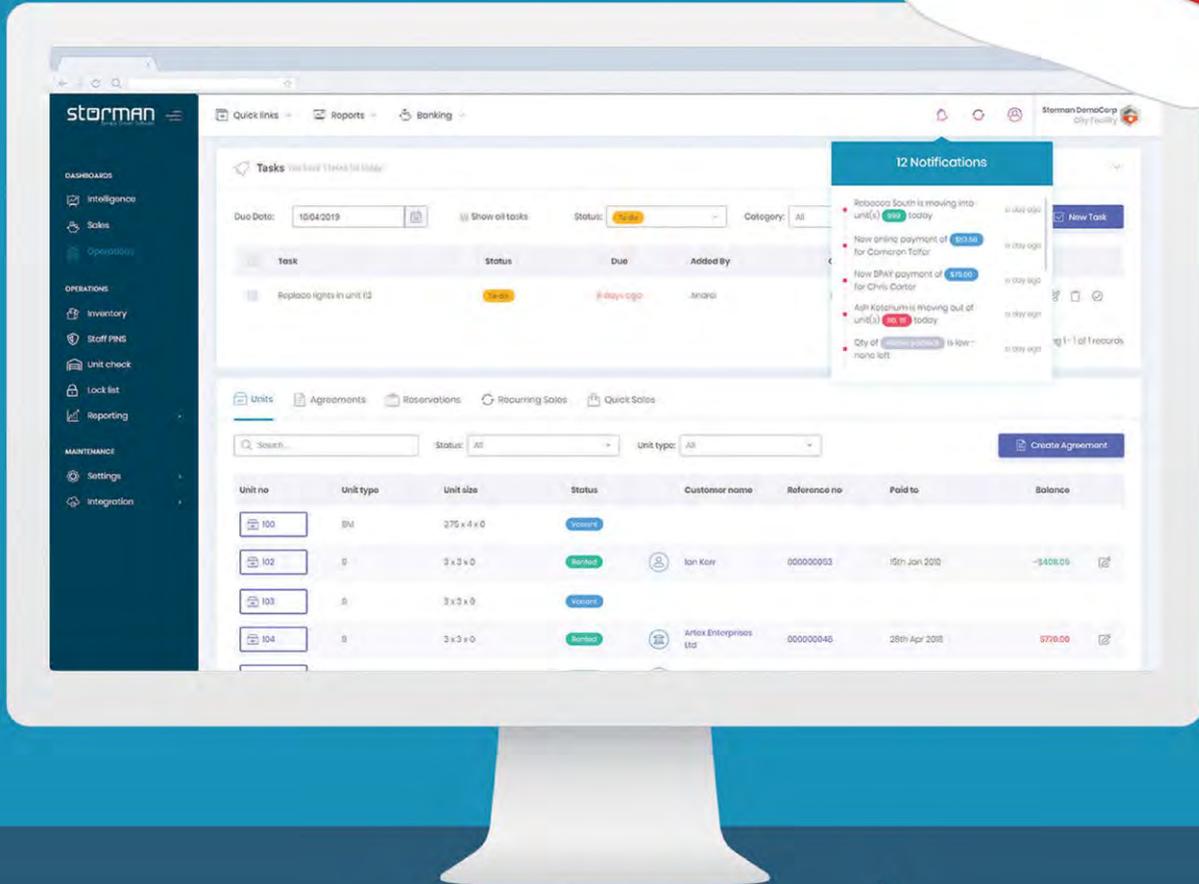
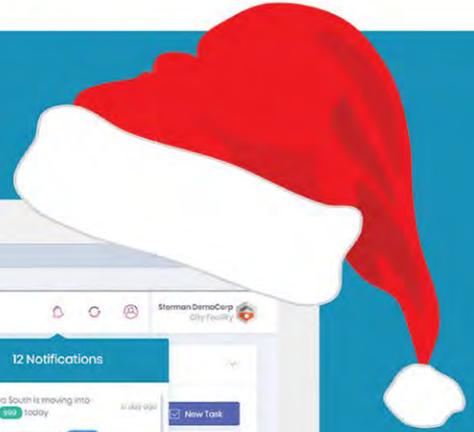
If you suspect that the unit contains illegal/counterfeit goods or goods to be used for criminal or terrorist purposes, or you discover such goods when you enter for routine maintenance, you should notify the police or trading standards and let them come

Tobacco, pirate video and music recordings, unsafe toys and counterfeit goods have been found in self storage units by Trading Standards in the past. As with the police, it is the officers that should break the lock on the unit and re-secure it.



If you suspect that the unit contains illegal/counterfeit goods or goods to be used for criminal or terrorist purposes, or you discover such goods when you enter for routine maintenance, you should notify the police or trading standards

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and do their own inspection. If you haven't already notified the customer regarding maintenance access, then you should not notify the customer until after the police or trading standards have confirmed you may do so.

The Customer can Assign Access

The customer has the right to allow others to access their unit. In some cases, this will be as simple as giving the third party a copy of the key, fob and/or any relevant access codes. In other cases, they may give you written authorisation to let the person forcibly enter the unit. In this case you need to do all you can to ensure the authenticity of the request. It should be a signed written document and you should verify it verbally with the customer as well as check the ID of the person who has been given access.

The Alternate Contact

Alternate contacts have no right to access the space unless they have been given that right specifically by the customer. If they allege that their goods are in the self storage unit and they have been unable to make contact with the customer to allow them access as above, then they should take this to the police who can then get a warrant to force access.

Family Members

As with the alternative contact, family members have no right of access unless they have been given that right specifically by the customer or have the keys and codes themselves. This includes when the customer is deceased, in hospital, prison or otherwise unable to access the unit. The only way a family member can forcibly access the unit is if they have the legal power to act on behalf of the customer. In the case of a deceased customer, this would be the person who is named as an executor or administrator in the grant of probate. Otherwise, this would be a person who is able to act under a power of attorney. You would need to see the grant or the power of attorney to the person requesting access, together with ID for that person.

The Person who Pays the Bill

Sometimes the person on the contract is not the person that comes and pays the bill and regularly accesses the unit. These people may have been given access to the unit by the customer. However, this does not give them the right to forcibly access the unit. If they come to you saying they have lost their key or requesting forced access for some other reason, then you need to refer them back to the customer who signed the contract. The customer must approve any forced access in writing.

Alternate contacts have no right to access the space unless they have been given that right specifically by the customer.



As with the alternative contact, family members have no right of access unless they have been given that right specifically by the customer or have the keys and codes themselves.

European Awards Winners

European Facility of the Year

Less Mess Storage – Bemowo, Warsaw, Poland

Less Mess has a 5-level purpose built store offering premium self storage in the Bemowo suburb of Warsaw. Every detail of the store has been designed to enhance the customer experience as well as minimise the environmental impact of the business.

The store is located in a prime location on the S8 highway, a 3-lane motorway serving as part of the ring road around Warsaw, and the main road to and from west Poland. Around 200,000 cars a day pass the store and over 350,000 people live within a 15 minute drive, with more residential developments underway. The modern design and prominent location of the store makes it an icon in the area, both during the day and when lit up at night.

Construction started on the store on the 15th September 2016 and was completed on the 10th May 2017, just 8 months from greenfield. It is a poured concrete, steel reinforced structure with a number of drive up access units on the ground floor. There is a total of 4,873 sqm of storage space across 1360 units. A patented ground heat exchanger with solar panels and sophisticated ventilation systems was designed and installed to minimise the carbon footprint while providing optimal, climate controlled storage conditions. Weather can be extreme in Warsaw with temperatures regularly below 0°C in winter and climbing to as high as 40°C in summer. The store has 70kW of PV capacity, and in the first 2 years of operation, avoided 65,906kg of carbon dioxide emissions. That's the equivalent of driving of a car 439,374km, or planting 1,690 trees. Customers are made aware of the impact the store is having on the environment with a screen in reception showing how much solar power is generated in real time.

Less Mess have a customised store access control system, monitoring their individually alarmed rooms with both hardware and software integrated with the store operating software. In addition to PIN code access, there are RFID readers allowing customers to access their unit using a contactless credit/debit card or smartphone. CCTV coverage with screens in reception, floor plans, and colourful door stickers give customers security, ease of navigation and a sense of fun.

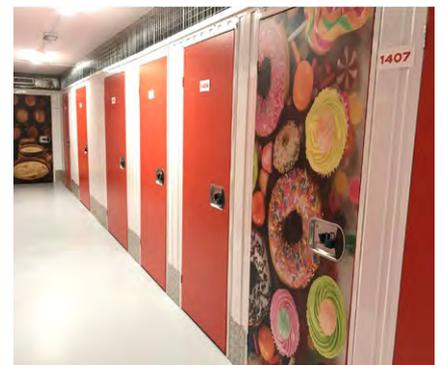
From the service desk, to the retail layout, the fresh bean-to-cup coffee and the Dyson hand drier in the customer loo - every last detail is thought through from the customer perspective. There are full size door decals located randomly throughout the store, featuring everything from jelly beans to garden sheds. These add colour to the building, breaking up the monotony of doors and corridors and provide customers with a point of reference when navigating the building. They also look very cool!

Not surprisingly, the store has exceeded sales and revenue expectations filling steadily since opening. So much so, the initial bulk storage space has already been broken down into smaller units to gain more yield. From the day the store opened, the staff have been focussed on value added sales to customers with an impressive retail display in the store front. 12% of the store's income comes from sales of ancillary services.



Key factors

- 4,873 sqm of storage space
- 1360 units
- Opened May 2017
- Constructed in 8 months
- Heat exchange and PV generation
- Decal doors and other fun additions



Manager of the Year

Rudolf Fiedler – ZeitLager, Germany

Rudolf Fiedler not only embodies the Bavarian mentality like no other, he is also a true fountain of youth and inventiveness. A master of upselling, Rudolf finds an opportunity to increase sales in almost every situation.

Rudolf is an experienced self storage manager. In 2016, he won a German Self Storage Award when he kept the debt rate of his branch at 0% for months on end. He did this by using a range of communication and payment methods that specifically met the needs of his customers. Having got the debt on the store down to next to nothing, Rudolf moved on to improving the revenue in an already mature store.

ZeitLager has had compulsory insurance for several years, so the business already had solid revenue from insurance sales. Rudolf pushed this further. At the end of 2016, almost 80% of all customers in the branch were insured. By the end of 2018, it was 90%. Not only that, by communicating the importance of insurance to all customers the level of premium had doubled with more customers correctly insuring to the true value of their goods, rather than taking the minimum amount.

Rudolf is committed to upselling. He takes “do you want boxes with that?” to a whole new level, increasing revenue from packing materials 400% within 2 years. He uses the philosophy that his knowledge and expertise can help the customer and having quality packing materials will make their job easier. Hence the business makes more money and the customer leaves happy with the experience - winners all round.

Rudolf Fiedler really engages with every customer on an individual level. After all, he wants to help the customer and so, of course, he learns where he can make a difference to their storage experience. He simply does not know “that’s not possible.” This attitude has resulted in the store offering specialised wine storage, as well as uniquely shaped units and packing materials for hobbyists, such as kite storage and snowboard storage.

Rudolf may not be a big man, but he really punches above his weight in terms of managing a self storage store. To understand this, you really need to get to know him like his customers do - knowing that he always hides a smile under his typically Bavarian moustache.



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Charity Initiative Winner

The Big Yellow Foundation

Big Yellow Group PLC ('Big Yellow') has always been committed to responsible and sustainable business practices. The board recognise that corporate social responsibility ("CSR"), when linked to clear commercial objectives, will create a more sustainable business and increase shareholder and customer value in both the medium and long term. People, planet and profit need to be aligned to make a sustainable business.

Over the years, their employees have demonstrated a strong interest in supporting charities and the stores have discretion to support local communities with discounted or free storage space. However, the board, and CEO James Gibson in particular, wanted to do more and have a more coordinated effort to provide more support for charities. Therefore, in 2018 they created the Big Yellow Foundation.

The foundation has three passionate trustees who manage the governance and select how the funds will be allocated, and there is a 10-person steering committee who drive the internal engagement and fundraising agenda. Together they have selected six wonderful, hard-working charity partners to support: Bounce Back, Breaking Barriers, St. Giles Trust, Down's Syndrome Association, Hire a Hero and The Back Up Trust.

Big Yellow donate £1 for each customer move-in into the trust. They also match all employee fundraising donations and provide donations in kind to effectively run the Foundation. The importance of the Foundation to Big Yellow is passed down through all the staff, and store managers come up with their own creative fundraising programs, knowing all funds they raise will be matched by Big Yellow. They also talk to the customers about the charity, seeking additional donations.

The result is over £160,000 was raised in the first 12 months, with expectations for this to rise significantly in the coming years, as more fundraising programs are established.

Big Yellow is justifiably proud of the Foundation, and raises its profile at every opportunity with customers, suppliers and employees. There is promotional material in store to inform and engage customers and visitors. They also promote the Foundation on social media as well as through other media channels. In its first year, the charity was placed 17th in the Sunday Times 'Giving Something Back' score.



Innovation Award Winner

Virtual Reality Self Storage at Attic Self Storage

Attic Self Storage have used emerging Virtual Reality technology to create a unique experience where customers get to visit their store from any location in the world. While the technology will work on any web browser, its true potential is unleashed when the user is wearing a VR headset. In this mode, the customer can move through the facility, look around and interact with the VR assistant, all in 3D as if they were in the store. This has the potential not only to improve the customer experience, but also to deliver on the bottom line for the business. VR helps Attic Self Storage reduce barriers to transact, reduce friction in the sales process and gives a new medium through which they can inform and educate customers.

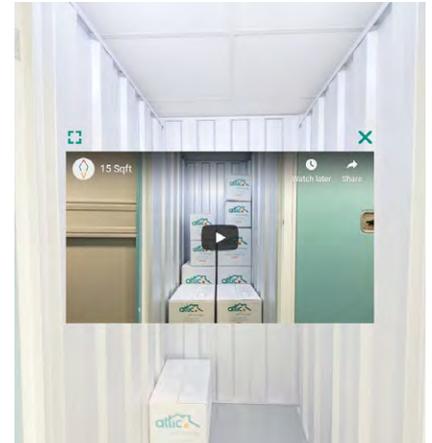
Every operator knows that most customers struggle with selecting a unit size, and really need to physically see the spaces to understand their size. The VR system allows them to do this remotely. The technology enables clients to experience the reception and welcome spaces without having to leave the comfort of their homes or their desk. They get to understand what self storage is all about. They see the availability of other products & services, such as padlocks and merchandise. Customers can visualise better than ever before what a self storage unit looks like, and what fits inside any given size. The system uses stop-motion photography to fill real units with real items, rather than graphics or illustrations, once again better enabling people to judge what size might be right for them. Customers can call the business, request a call back, or make use of the online quote and check in platform all in Virtual Reality.

The system is available in a desk-top version, making it accessible to everyone, and not just those with VR goggles. This is the first self storage VR experience in Europe, and possibly the world. It offers a unique and intriguing boost to the image the European self storage industry. It allows Attic Self Storage to market directly to VR goggle users, the only self storage operator in Europe able to do so. VR is the quickest growing media market in the UK with an estimated 8 million goggles to be sold by 2022. The data Attic Self Storage gather during this pioneering phase will set them up to be a dominant force in this market in the future.

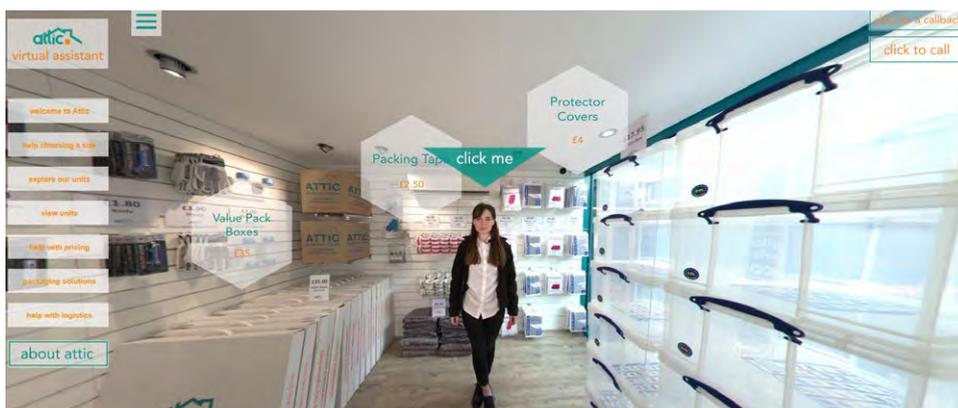
Overall, the VR offering lowers barriers for their customers, making it easier to engage with and understand self storage. It also shows that the industry is progressive and adopting new technology, potentially appealing to the younger demographic in particular. It opens up new marketing and PR opportunities & channels for self storage, both in terms of routes to market as well as the way in which operators persuade customers to store with them.



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Extraordinary Achievement Winner

Robin Greenwood

This year, Robin celebrates his 30th year in the self storage industry. He is truly a veteran of the industry, and one of the most experienced individuals in the European self storage industry, having worked with, and led, a number of leading UK self storage companies during his career.

Robin has shown complete dedication to the self storage industry. He is always willing to share his wisdom with new entrants and experienced operators alike. He has served two terms of six years each on the Self Storage Association UK board, most of which as Treasurer for the Association. He was instrumental in guiding the association through some major challenges including the introduction of VAT on self storage in the UK and the hiring of a new CEO.

Robin began his career in the industry in 1989, working for Abacus Self Storage (now Access) as a Store Manager, soon progressing to Area Manager. He then took on the role of Sales and Marketing Director before, in 1999, he left to join Shurgard Self-Storage as Vice President of Operations. During this time he was responsible for opening 20 stores. Robin joined Storage King in December 2009, where he has been leading the company with his renowned passion for the industry. He has grown Storage King into one of the UK's leading self storage companies. When he joined the company there were 45 franchise stores and no owned stores. Today there are 16 owned stores, 1 fully managed and 11 franchisees trading under the Storage King brand. He was instrumental in attracting and negotiating a £77.13 million deal from South Africa's largest storage company, Stor-Age, when they acquired Storage King in 2017.

Robin is a regular at SSA UK and FEDESSA events, having not missed a FEDESSA conference since they began in 1999. Many operators in the industry have learnt from Robin when they were first starting their business, as he is always willing to share his experiences and help out new entrants to the industry.

During his 30 years in the industry, Robin's passion and dedication has positively impacted not only the companies within which he has worked, but the entire UK self storage industry. He has certainly contributed to the advancement of the industry generally, not just within the businesses that he has worked. He is a truly exceptional ambassador of the UK self storage industry, and a truly deserved winner of the Extraordinary Achievement Award.



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Movers & Storers Show 2019

SSA UK CEO, Rennie Schafer and Operations Director, Helen Bourke attended the Movers & Storers Show at the Ricoh Arena in Coventry.

On day one, 19 November, Rennie presented a session on Automation in Self Storage and also hosted a session with the insurers Minimising under insurance in the industry. Both sessions were well attended and created some positive discussion and questions amongst the delegates. One attendee stated that he had been “blown away” by the presentation on automation.

This was the 12th year of the Movers & Storers Show, a free to attend event to delegates who pre-book. While the bulk of the attendees are in the removals industry there was still a solid attendance at the self storage streams. Many of the self storage delegates were new to the industry or had come from a removals background. The show features a trade show along with loads of removals trucks and vehicles on display.

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23 January
UK Regional Members' Meeting
Manchester

3-6 February
UK Winter Workshop
Raffl's, St. Antoner Hof, Austria

5 March
UK Regional Members' Meeting
Birmingham

21 April
SSA Sweden Conference
Stockholm

5 May
UK Annual Industry Report Launch

21 May
AESS Spanish Conference
Madrid

29 May
AISI Italy Conference
Milano

3 June tbc
NSSA Dutch Conference
Rotterdam

25 June
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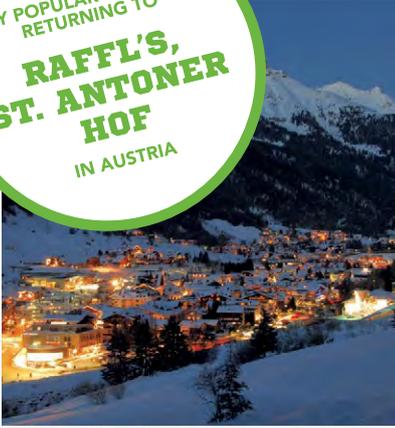
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Christel Land

Technology in Self Storage

Michael Fogelberg

Making your business memorable

Rennie Schafer

Special Guest Speaker

Caleb Storkey



Caleb is a serial entrepreneur, international speaker and consultant in disruptive technologies, marketing, entrepreneurship and leadership.

Co-author of Futureproof – How To Get Your Business Ready For The Next Disruption and Founder of Storkey Media (an integrated marketing agency), Caleb has worked with a wide range of businesses, from multinationals to highly disruptive and rapid growth tech start-ups. He will be looking at what new technology is relevant for self storage and what is just futurism.

This interactive workshop will show how Self Storage operators can harness technology to improve their business, from marketing to operations and everything in between.

Two days of speakers, industry workshops, skiing and networking in St. Anton in the Tyrolean-Alps region of Austria.

The hotel is only a short walk from the ski lifts and access to 350 kilometres of marked ski runs, superbly prepared slopes for all ability levels and 200 km of off-piste with challenging steep slopes and deep-snow ski runs, snowboard fun parks, carving areas, permanent racing circuits and numerous cosy meeting places.

This exclusive event, open to just 50 delegates, is set to be an event to remember. This year we have taken exclusive use of the hotel so book early to avoid disappointment.

Arrive on Monday, 3 February ready for two full days each consisting of business sessions over breakfast before hitting the slopes and rounding the day off with more sessions and a networking dinner. Leaving the hotel to fly home on Thursday, 6 February. All you need to do is get to Innsbruck and hire the ski's (if you don't bring your own) all the rest is organised for you. Transfers are also available from Zurich.

Book early to avoid disappointment!

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Member Upgrades & Upgraded Members

In the UK, operators initially join the SSA UK as provisional members. This enables an operator who has not yet opened their store to join the association, or for operators that do not yet meet the industry standard, to access the advice and resources available.

Members may only remain at the provisional level for a maximum of 3 years and we urge provisional members to upgrade as soon as possible to take advantage of the additional membership benefits only on offer to full members. These include; a listing on the SSA UK's Storage Locator on the website, Full Membership Certificates for each site together with SSA UK Window stickers. We are of course more than happy to visit any provisional member who needs guidance on upgrading.

In order to upgrade to full member status, a provisional member must first check and confirm their facility meets the criteria in the SSA UK Membership Standard for all Self Storage Operators. A member of the SSA UK staff, usually Hannah Speed the Membership Services Officer, will then arrange a site visit to assess the facility to ensure the criteria has been met. Should all areas be satisfactory, FULL membership will be offered. Note there is no additional cost for full membership of the association.

We are delighted to announce the following 12 provisional members have been upgraded this quarter:

Members may only remain at the provisional level for a maximum of 3 years and we urge provisional members to upgrade as soon as possible to take advantage of the additional membership benefits only on offer to full members.



Go Store Self Storage, York



Lakeland Self Storage, Kendal



Tortoise Storage, Liverpool



Guardian Self Store, Newport



Masters Removers Groups (Aussie Storage), Bath



Cubix Self Storage Solutions, Southampton



Securus Self Storage, Epsom



Rydon Self Storage, Redditch



Beacon Self Storage, Stafford



More Space Self Storage, Newcastle



Flavell & Co, Falkirk



Westfield Self Storage, Glasgow

Self Storage Industry News

New Rent a Space Facility

Following the recent sale of their Liverpool store to Armadillo, Kevin Murphy and Andrew Donaldson - the guys behind 'Rent A Space' have wasted no time in continuing the further expansion of their brand.

The pair, who retained the Rent A Space Shrewsbury store, have recently exchanged contracts on a plot of land on Wirral and plan to build a 60,000sqft facility. "With Shrewsbury and Wirral, both Rent A Space stores will be shiny new design and builds, which we believe is the future direction of the sector, and both stores are can be found in prime settings – that being high visibility locations in the heart of both retail and leisure quarters with quality housing stock within close proximity. Our only hinderance to further growth is continuing to find the quality of location we want" says Kevin.

Amy King Joins Board of Directors

Basil E. Fry & Co. Ltd is delighted to announce the recent promotion of Amy King to the board of Directors at Basil Fry. Since starting in claims at another Company in 2010, Amy has consistently sought to provide excellent service to her clients. Amy started at Basil Fry in 2014 moving quickly to Claims Manager and we are delighted that she has accepted a place on our board with immediate effect. Basil Fry's new adjusting service, taking our expertise out on the road, was one of the many excellent initiatives put in place by Amy and we all look forward to working with her in the future. A recent graduate of RSA's Broker Leader Programme, Amy is now perfectly placed to bring further opportunities to the claims side of our business.

New Dunfermline Site For Storage Centre Firm

Keepsafe Storage Centres, the firm behind the first purpose-built drive-up storage centres in Scotland, has expanded operations by opening a new outlet in Dunfermline to cope with the increasing demand for storage solutions in the area.

The Perth headquartered company, which was the first operator to launch "American style" self-storage in Scotland in 1978 at sites in Perth and Dundee, has opened its fourth location situated in Pitreavie Business Park, to the South of Dunfermline.

The easily accessible new storage centre, which is just off the Queensferry Road and close to the M90, reactivates a site which was previously used for the parking of articulated lorries and brings a full-time employment opportunity to the area.

The new drive-up self storage Dunfermline site offers a range of units to suit every requirement, from virtual office mailboxes to a 9sqft locker, to much larger 40 sqft and 160 sqft units which have 24-hour access.

Keepsafe Storage Centres is a family run business, with three generations of the same family now working in the company.

Jordan Black, third generation and general manager at Keepsafe Storage Centres, commented: "There's anecdotal evidence that Dunfermline is one of the fastest growing economies in the UK due to improved transport links and accessibility to major business hubs, including Edinburgh. With an increasing demand for storage solutions in the area, we saw this as the perfect opportunity to expand our operations and open our fourth site in Scotland."

For more information, please log onto www.keepsafe-storage.co.uk

Europa Storage Group

The Self-Storage Industry is growing quickly across the European continent, and Europa Storage Group (ESG) has taken notice. ESG is a self-storage enterprise financed by Volta Global, a U.S. based private equity and real estate investment group.

Focused on building a pan European self-storage platform, ESG partners with individual local operators looking to grow and consolidate their respective markets, or provides operators with the option to achieve a full exit opportunity for their portfolio. Their goal is to become a top 3 operator within any country that they operate by building institutional quality assets and

The guys behind 'Rent A Space' have wasted no time in continuing the further expansion of their brand.



Keepsafe Storage Centres is a family run business, with three generations of the same family now working in the company.



continued on page 50

Keepsafe Storage Centres is a family run business, with three generations of the same family now working in the company.

Shurgard has signed an agreement with France self-storage operator Flexistockage to manage its four-property portfolio. The intention is to acquire two of these facilities early next year.



providing the highest levels of service to customers.

“The mere awareness of self-storage itself in continental Europe is also still very early and has yet to develop into the type of institutional standards that it has in the US or UK, which requires a significant investment in ‘boots on the ground’ activity in any country we are looking at entering, and having the ability to be very flexible and long-term oriented in our investments“, says Jeff Evans, President of Europa Storage Group. Earlier this year ESG acquired the Dutch self-storage company 1Box Self Storage, with locations in Rijswijk and Groningen. Together with Jan Bikker, CEO of 1Box, they will continue to invest in the expansion and growth of the 1Box portfolio throughout the country.

They had a strong interest in the Netherlands as a market in general, and after many months of discussions they felt the goals of the 1Box founder were very much aligned with their own strategic objectives. Following the 1Box acquisition, ESG acquired its second European self-storage portfolio in August with the purchase of StorageBox. The company is comprised of four facilities located in the Limburg region of the Netherlands, and totals over 3,200 lettable square meters. The newly acquired portfolio will be re-branded and fully integrated into the existing 1Box Self Storage brand that ESG currently operates across the Netherlands and has plans to expand throughout the Benelux region over the coming years.

Shurgard expands in Paris

Shurgard expands in Paris with four properties under management contracts of which two will be acquired early 2020 from Flexistockage

Shurgard has signed an agreement with France self-storage operator Flexistockage to manage its four-property portfolio. The intention is to acquire two of these facilities early next year. The portfolio serves the Paris metropolitan market and comprises 20,400 square meters in 2,885 units.

With more than 230 self-storage centers, Shurgard is the largest developer, owner and operator of self-storage centers in Europe. As of 4 November this year, they began operating the four Flexistockage facilities under management contracts in the Paris region. With this deal Shurgard is reinforcing their number one position in the region with 40 stores owned and/or managed by Shurgard in and around Paris.

Early 2020 they will purchase two of the Flexistockage properties. All four properties (located in Central Paris, Villepinte, Clichy and Argenteuil) will carry the Shurgard brand. The Argenteuil property is today the biggest self-storage center in net square meters in the Paris region. Flexistockage is one of the few multi-site self-storage players operating in the Paris region. This deal supports Shurgard’s growth strategy, which includes targeted acquisitions, such as the four new properties in the Paris metropolitan area. France, and especially Paris, has always been a strong and stable market for Shurgard and self-storage.

Shurgard's European network currently serves 150,000 customers and employs approximately 700 people.

Allsafe comes with professional storage of valuable cars Allsafe engine rooms – 5-star hotel for your valuable car!

The number of owners of classic cars in the Netherlands has risen sharply. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics, the number of young-timers (15-40 years old) has more than doubled in recent years, from 900,000 to 1.9 million. According to the same source the number of vintage cars (40+ years old) will increase in five years to 141,000 (+24%). Not only is there an increasing need for storage of hobby cars, but a growing number of car owners seems to be looking for services making sure that their cars are kept ready to drive and, if desired, delivered to their homes.

To respond to an increasing demand for the storage of hobby cars, ALLSAFE introduces the “Engine Rooms”. These are full service storage facilities, developed specifically for valuable cars. According to Eric Stubbé, the CEO of ALLSAFE, there is a lot of potential in the market to roll out this new nationwide concept for car storage in the coming years.



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What are the materials made from?

Frame work - 100mm wide, 1.2mm Galv punched and rolled to any length

Roof/walls/ Insulation - Composite cladding, 40-80mm depending on preference.

Base - The base can be a cassette system then decked with 22mm plywood T&G or direct to concrete base

Doors/locks - Roller door or double skin swing doors are available with a slide lock with padlock or barrel Stainless Steel or Zinc coated. Higher grade security locks are a option also.

Manufacturing to completion time?

Based on 10 160sqft units, manufacturing takes 7-10 days from order then 14 days to erect on a flat surface, uneven surface subject to survey.

What sizes are available?

These units can be designed to fit virtually any space, making any odd areas/corners rent-able from 80sqft up to 500sqft.

How will they arrive?

Two options for delivery, the elevations put together in our factory then fitted on site or completely flat packed. Flat packed will save on the delivery price but will take longer to install on site.

Any issues with condensation? Life expectancy?

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How much weight will a wooden floor hold?

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What is the difference compared to a shipping container ?

Our drive ups are user friendly, adaptable sizes, condensation free and offer a professional and attractive appearance

How secure are these units?

Depending on door style these units are as secure any commercial building , they can also be alarmed and connected to access control systems.





Engine Rooms buildings can hold between 90 and 130 cars on multiple floors, separating classic cars from modern sports cars. In addition, there will be spaces available for motorcycles. Cars can be stored on large 18m² open spaces, or in a private and secluded unit. To keep the cars in perfect shape, ALLSAFE offers a variety of services, such as washing facilities, flatstoppers and protective car covers. On top of that, customers can benefit from a unique concierge service: keeping the car in perfect shape with regular checks on tyre-pressure, fluids and leakage. Upon request, cars can be delivered to their owners homes and be picked up again. In order to guarantee maximum security, the buildings are extra well protected with an innovative access control system with time-delayed access doors, the cars on a floor can only be reached with a secured car lift. In addition, precautionary measures have been taken with regard to fire safety and the temperature and humidity are kept at the correct levels.

The first two engine rooms will open early 2020 and more will follow soon.

A Suffolk business is seeing record occupancy from domestic customers as more people decide to refurbish their existing homes, rather than move house in the current political and economic climate.

Safestore enters Dutch Market

The Dutch self-storage market is the fourth largest in Europe with almost 1 million m² of storage space spread over 303 locations. A lot of investors are showing a high interest in accessing this very attractive market. Safestore (UK operator) is convinced that the Netherlands is an interesting country to start investing in.

Safestore and Carlyle European Real Estate Fund ("Carlyle") formed a Joint Venture ("JV") to acquire M3 Self Storage ("M3"), an operator of six prime storage locations in the Netherlands. Safestore invested a 20% equity stake for a consideration of c. €5m they also provide management services to the joint venture, Carlyle Europe Realty (CER), a €540 million pan-European real estate fund, holds the remaining 80 percent interest in the JV. With this acquisition, Safestore got six locations in Amsterdam and Haarlem representing a total area of 25,700 m².

Safestore has developed a multi-country highly scalable platform with leading marketing and operational expertise in self-storage with 152 stores opened and [£1.3] billion of assets. The acquisition of M3 represents an excellent platform for entry into the Dutch self storage market and they expect that their JV with Carlyle to enable them to target carefully selected self storage opportunities. Since 2016, Safestore has successfully invested or committed c. £180m in 38 stores, acquisitions and new developments in its core markets of the UK and Paris which are delivering consistent strong returns. They expect to continue to develop and acquire in these markets.

Safestore is the UK's largest self-storage group with 150 stores, comprising 122 wholly owned stores are in the UK (68 in London and the South East with the rest in key metropolitan areas such as Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Liverpool and Bristol). The remaining 28 fully owned stores are in the Paris region.

The company was founded in the UK in 1998, six years later it acquired Une Pièce en Plus, a French self-storage operator, also founded in 1998 by the current Safestore Group CEO Frederic Vecchioli. They are listed on the London Stock exchange and entered the FTSE 250 index in October 2015.

In August 2019 Safestore acquired an existing 34,000 sq ft MLA freehold store. The store was previously operated by Ready Steady Store and is located on the Parkway Trading Estate near Heathrow Airport to the west of London. In addition, they have opened 2 new stores in October 2019, a 42,000 sq ft store Peterborough and 55,000 sq ft store in Merry Hill near Birmingham.

In November 2019 Safestore also acquired 100% of the shares of companies owning Fort Box Self Storage, which comprises of two stores in London. The stores, in the affluent areas of St John's Wood and Chelsea will be rebranded as Safestore.





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FEDESSA CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW 2020

29 SEPTEMBER - 1 OCTOBER

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**Bookings
Open
February
2020!!**

The 2020 FEDESSA Conference & Trade Show will be held in the Algarve at the Tivoli Marina located in the picturesque town of Vilamoura.

This iconic venue is far more than a luxury 5-star hotel, sitting directly on the beachfront with the harbour to the rear, it has superlative leisure and sports facilities and a variety of restaurants and bars. It is perfect for the FEDESSA 2020 event with impressive conference facilities located on a single level and in the same building as the accommodation.

From the moment you step into the conference room you will realise this FEDESSA conference is very different to anything we have ever held before. A greater focus will be on interaction between delegates, more discussion on topical industry issues, an expanded networking programme just to name a few of the changes. Not everything has changed though, Mark Durden Smith will still be hosting the event with his charm and quick wit.

Confirmed Speakers include:

Isabel Aguilera

Former CEO of Google Iberia and of General Electric Spain

Jes Johansen

StoreFriendly Singapore

Geoff Ramm

Creator of Celebrity Service and OMG Marketing

John C. Lindsey

Lindsey Self Storage Group

Nicholas Wheeler OBE

Charles Tyrwhitt Company

Social Programme for 29 September includes:

Golf Tournament

Sailing Cruise and Grotto Tour

Cultural and Wine Tour to Silves

YSN at the FEDESSA Conference and Trade Show 2019

If you were lucky enough to attend this year's FEDESSA Conference and Trade show, you will know that it was bigger and better than ever! All of the guest speakers this year were fabulous. The topics were very relevant, current and easily transferable to your own storage business, no matter the size or scale. I was fortunate to attend all of the talks and came away with an injection of energy, motivation and new information to take back to my company.

The Young Storage Network shared a stand this year with the Self Storage Association in the trade show where we had the opportunity to talk to delegates. This year we were on a mission to recruit new storage operators who share the same vision and passion - to spread the word about the YSN, to create a wealth of knowledge and expertise but to also shape the future of the storage industry.

We had the pleasure of hosting a table at 'Breakfast with the Stars' where we were able to talk about the YSN and what our future plans are going forward. It was a brilliant morning filled with enthusiastic, motivated people who are passionate about sharing their knowledge and expertise ... (plus the mini full English breakfast in a pot went down a treat!).

This is the second conference I have attended and personally I think it is an amazing way to meet new people, network, share ideas and to learn about new ways of working which you can take back and implement in your own business. It helps you to create a greater understanding and knowledge of the industry and being from a small independent operator, it makes you feel like you are a part of something bigger. I would highly recommend going or if you are from a larger operator, sending some of your team to go as it can help develop your people as well as your business.

If you were unable to make the conference this year, do not fear! You can still become a member of the YSN! If you are interested or would like to find out more information then please contact Helen Bourke hbourke@ssauk.com or Hannah Speed hspeed@ssauk.com at the SSA UK or call 01270 623150 for more information or an application form. Alternatively, visit the website <https://www.ssauk.com/membership/ysn/>

Toni Hodges-Moore, Stock N Lock Self Storage



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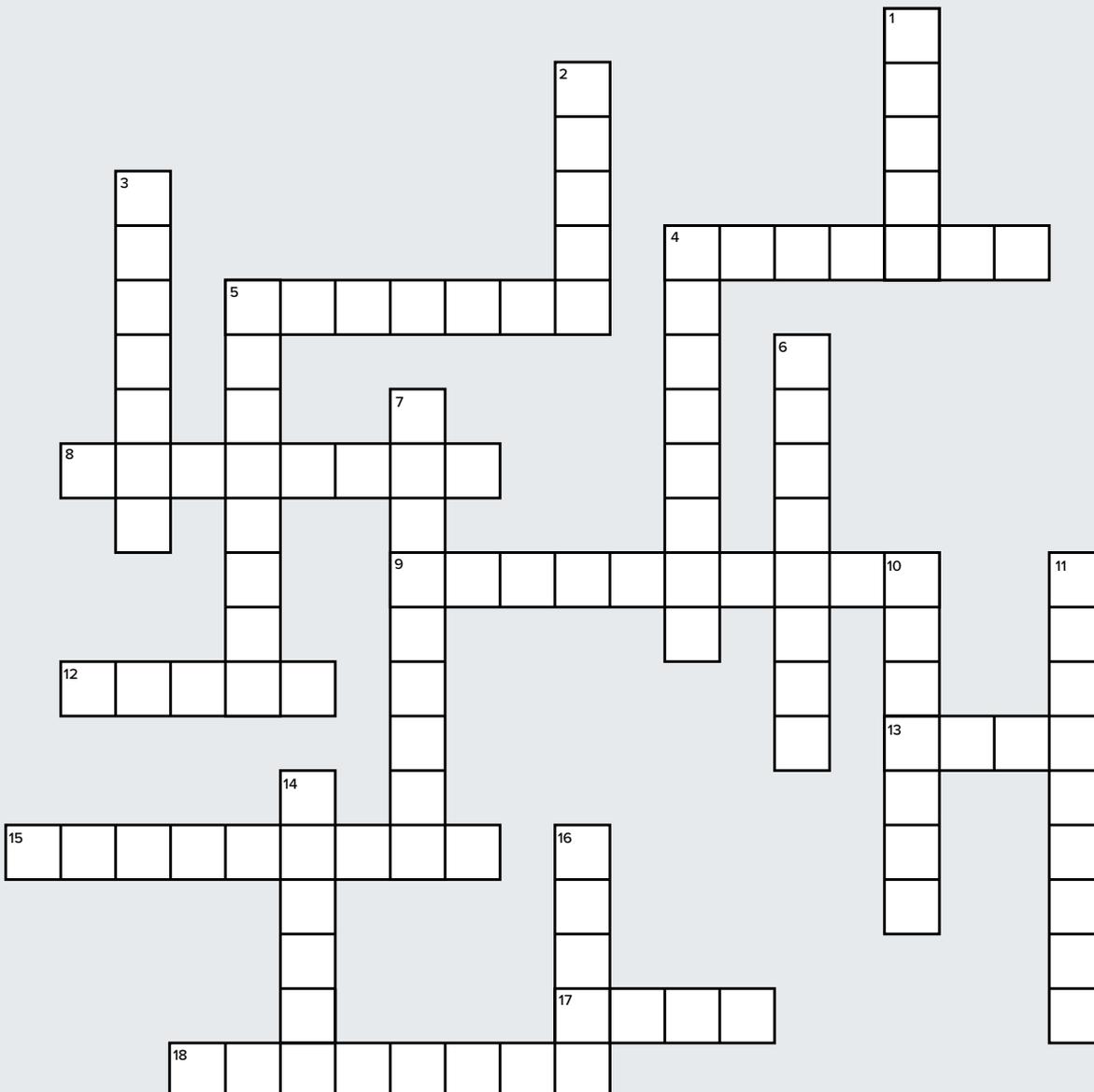
Puzzle Page

Sudoku Puzzle

The object is to fill all empty squares so that the numbers 1 to 9 appear exactly once in each row, column and each of the nine 3x3 boxes.

| | | | | | | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | | | 1 | | | 3 | | |
| 9 | | 3 | | 2 | | | | 4 |
| | 5 | | 3 | | 8 | 9 | | |
| | 9 | | | | 7 | 4 | 6 | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | 7 | 8 | 4 | | | | | 1 |
| | | 6 | 9 | | 2 | | 7 | |
| 7 | | | | 3 | | 5 | | 1 |
| | | 4 | | | 1 | | | |

Self Storage Crossword



Across

4. Pupil (7)
5. Throw away (7)
8. Position (8)
9. Packaging material (10)
12. Put away (5)
13. Raise (4)
15. Intermediate Floor (9)
17. Casual conversation (4)
18. Bend easily (8)

Down

1. Buy and sell goods (5)
2. Interval of time (5)
3. Observe (7)
4. Vendor (8)
5. Catastrophe (8)
6. Agreement (8)
7. Prohibited (9)
10. Portable security device (7)
11. Social network (9)
14. Connected to a computer (6)
16. Cost (5)



Interview

Christian Schmutz

Zebrabox

How did you first get into self-storage?

My first contact with self-storage was in Florida in 1990. I found the idea interesting and at a personal level, would have been happy to have something equivalent in

Switzerland. I could have used it on a private and business level. The problem was that the very high land prices in Switzerland do not support the US model with garage type outdoor units. In 2001, I saw one of the first European self-storage stores in Düsseldorf / Germany. This was a converted warehouse with 3 levels of stacked units inside, which changed my view on the feasibility of the business in Europe. After a short market study, I decided to quit my well paid corporate job, started Zebrabox with its first site and I have never looked back.

What has been the biggest change in the industry since you started?

The market is definitely getting more competitive, with more operators and prime sites than the early years. Fortunately, the industry is also gaining awareness with the general public as the market develops, so growth is still present.

What do you like most about the self-storage industry?

The sustainability and planning security of the business and the variety of the customers.

What do you like least about the self-storage industry?

The patience needed to get stores to where we want them to be. It's not a business for impatient people!

What is your favourite book or movie?

There is no one in particular. I like movies where you can get lost in it, like the English patient, or Once upon a time in America.

I recently read a book about the pilots from the Aerospatiale, who were risking their lives everyday in the 20's to transport mail from Toulouse to Casablanca and further South in Africa, with engines that were built to work for 20 hours. Very interesting in the perspective of our current over secured living.

If you had a time machine where would you go?

Probably to Rome in the year 100 for history, or home in the year 2049 to see what my kids do when grown up.

I think industry associations like the SSA UK are important because...

First, they are a great networking platform. Meeting people and sharing ideas are important for us to all get collectively more intelligent.

Secondly, it is important to have the industry organised to be able to react to any unforeseen event. If we do not organise ourselves, others will try to do it for us.

Right now I would rather be ...

Dining with my family, which I will do shortly.

What life advice would you give a younger version of yourself?

Do what you think you are good at, and have fun in doing it!

I'd really like to have dinner with ...

Staying at a business level ... I would choose Richard Branson.



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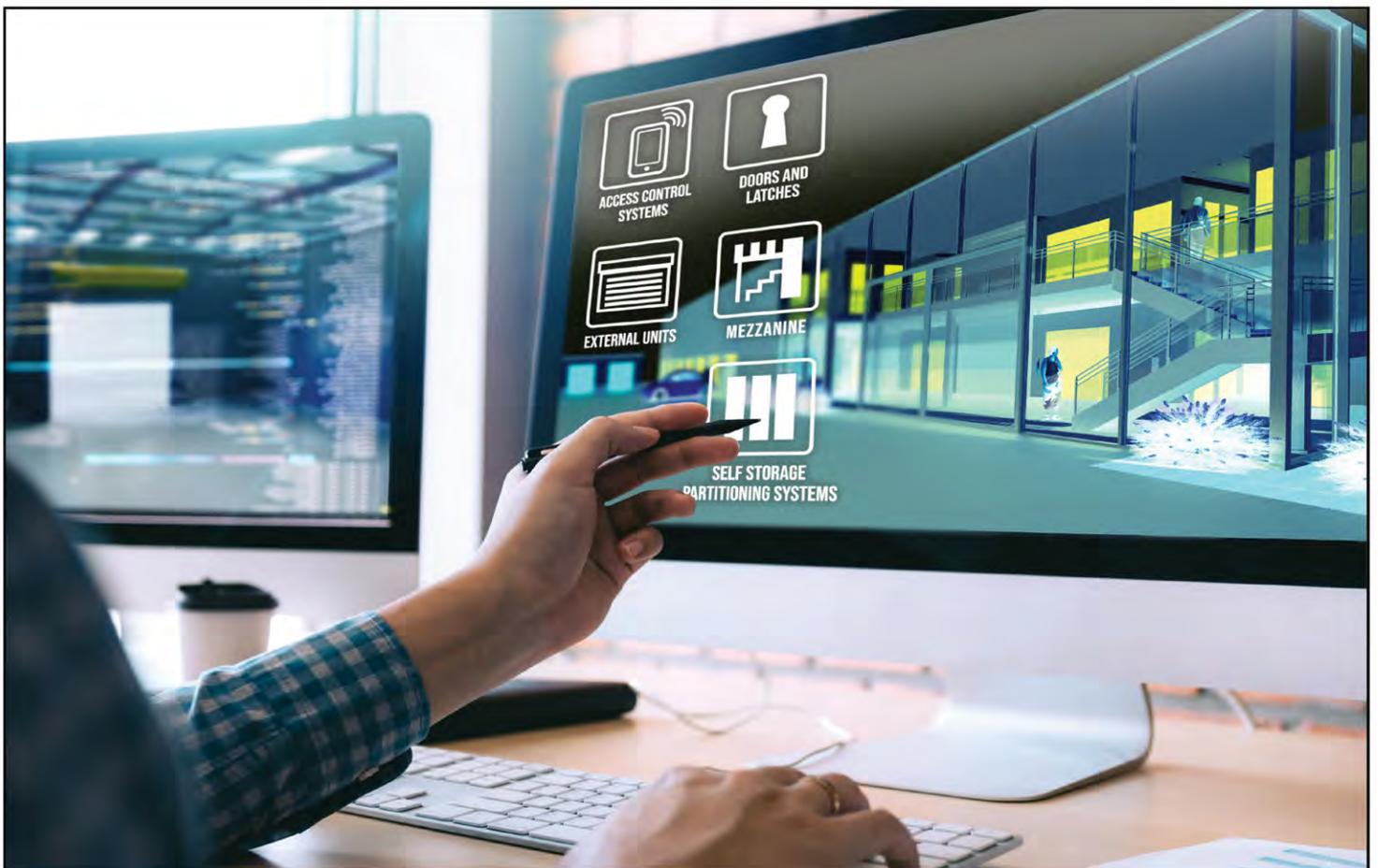
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