

Case Study

Crown

Creating a consistent standard of excellence:

Crown Worldwide Records Management and Dexion in Kuala Lumpur





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“There is an expectation from business networks, particularly those operating in the service industry that a job well done in one location will be equally well done in another. We therefore work tirelessly to ensure that our network delivers a consistently high standard of service globally.”

Jim Thompson, Chairman, Crown Worldwide Group

In 1965, Jim Thompson adopted this simple philosophy to transform \$1,000 of capital and a small Yokohama office in Japan into a multi-million dollar business 50 years later. The Crown Worldwide Group now operates in almost 60 countries and employs more than 5,000 staff globally.

Originally an international moving specialist, the Crown business organically evolved to meet the expanding needs of its customers. Crown’s service offering now includes relocation, fine art transportation and records management.

Crown’s Records Management arm was established in 1983. Over the past three decades, the business has seen many changes save one: its unwavering commitment to delivering a consistently high level of customer service, no matter where in the world the customer is based.

When Crown’s Operations Project Manager, Damian Cross was looking to implement a new records management solution in Kuala Lumpur, one of the key deliverables was best-practice thinking that could be applied to each of Crown’s Asian markets.

“Our clients include government bodies, banks, and legal and accounting firms. These companies are accustomed to consistent regional standards across all areas of their businesses. So, why shouldn’t they expect the same from their records management?” said Cross.

Though Crown had existing facilities in Kuala Lumpur that could store up to 800,000 cartons of records, Cross and his team had the vision of building a new facility on a green field site with the capacity to secure 4 million cartons.

“We work on more than 3,000 accounts in this region, for which data management is critical. However, many of the businesses we work with do not have systems in place that effectively and efficiently store and retrieve data. Further, many of the existing models lack the appropriate security protocols, which is a major concern for businesses. Accordingly, Crown Records Management has an increasingly important role to play in the region,” added Cross.

Crown engaged leading storage and materials handling specialist, Dexion in 2001 to bring the project to life by installing a



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common regional standard of practice. Crown was supported by Dexion's specialised Asia-Pacific records management team comprising of Simon Ingram (General Sales Manager – Asia and Middle East), Andrew Plummer (Project Realisation Manager), and Tony Balit Anak Boniface (Design Manager).

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According to Ingram, Dexion had an existing relationship with Crown, which was cultivated well before the formal tender process began in 2011.

“In the years leading up to the Kuala Lumpur project going live, we'd already presented and discussed a variety of preliminary concepts from manual to fully automated solutions. This process equipped us with a solid understanding of what Crown needed, so we were able to hit the ground running,” said Ingram.



“For Cross, the final solution was borne out of a comprehensive audit and consultation process. “Each of Dexion’s designs brought something new to the table. Without that thoroughness, it’s fair to say we wouldn’t have ended up where we did,” observed Cross.”

Perhaps unusually for a project like this, the storage solution was designed first and the building then (metaphorically) wrapped around it. As such, it was critical for Crown’s partner to be able to work harmoniously and collaboratively with both architect and builders.

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The new Crown Records Management facility opened in November 2012 with more than 750,000 carton locations. The facility’s flagship feature is a 7-tier, 27-metre high racking structure that maximises the internal building space, while still providing peerless document security and access. Each level is spaced and fireproofed with mesh flooring.

Dexion’s Andrew Plummer believes that Crown’s racking structure, Speedlock (Mk8) provides the regional benchmark for racking integrity.



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“Though manufactured in different locations across Asia, it’s constructed to meet the demands of Australian Standard 4084:2012, regardless of origin. Speedlock (Mk 8) is standard and 100% compatible across all Asian markets, so parts and servicing can be centralised and streamlined,” said Plummer.

“Whilst AS 4084:2012 is nominally an Australian standard, it’s observed in Malaysia and other countries in the Asia-Pacific region. Some consider it to be the toughest standard in the world. So it fits perfectly with Crown’s vision of regional best practice,” observed Plummer.

Construction of the Speedlock (Mk 8) was not without its challenges. The building was incomplete when Dexion commenced work, however timelines dictated that construction of the installation couldn’t wait. According to Plummer, his team “was literally working under the stars!”

Despite it being dry season in tropical Kuala Lumpur, work was frequently interrupted by downpours of rain. The rains not only halted construction; they also hindered access to the site, making it

difficult to manoeuvre the enormous cranes required to lift the 27-metre high racking structures. These unexpected challenges made collaboration across the entire project team even more important.

“Collaboration was one of the defining features of the project. There were no competing interests or agendas – everyone was working towards a common goal and thanks to regular meetings, we were able to work through every challenge together,” noted Plummer.

Crown’s Damian Cross agrees.

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Stage one was completed in May 2012. Documents were transitioned from Crown’s primary facility and several satellite locations soon after. Stage two saw the completion of Crown’s fine art and wine storage and specialised media vaults in November 2012, all of which utilised Dexion’s Compactus systems.



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A fully operational site today, Crown’s new facility marks the first step towards a next generation of facilities across the region.

According to Damian Cross, the Kuala Lumpur facility offers a level of data security that far exceeds its client’s expectations.

“Documents can be immediately and accurately searched to a granular level, first to the correct carton and then to the correct file within that carton. In a hot, humid climate like Malaysia, we’ve also created revolutionary environmental controls to keep documents safe. The design of the building interior and racking structures keep cool air circulating throughout the building without mechanical systems. This is a major design breakthrough within our industry,” said Cross.

As Crown and Cross look to replicate the Kuala Lumpur model across the Asia region, there will be even more benefits from standardisation when it comes to OH&S, unrivalled security, continuous improvement objectives and cost-per-carton savings. The successful launch of the Kuala Lumpur facility has set the future benchmark for a new standard of service.

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Jim Thompson would no doubt agree.

