ROBOT/SPACE
HELPS HOBBY LOBBY. STOP PROBLEMS BEFORE THEY HAPPEN

by Josh Richards

Whether you are managing a warehouse or a personal computer, monitoring your available space is very important. When Hobby Lobby opened its doors on August 3, 1972, they had 300 square feet of retail space. Within five months, the operation moved to a building with 1,000 square feet. Today, Hobby Lobby has a 3.4 million square foot corporate office and 386 retail stores in 30 states selling materials for crafts, holiday supplies, picture framing, jewelry making, and other hobbies, so they know a little something about managing space.

Because Hobby Lobby monitored the space they were using, the space they had available, and the space they would need in the future, they were able to successfully manage their growth. As Hobby Lobby expanded, so did the amount of information on their IBM® System i™ disk drives. Thanks to Robot/SPACE,® Help/Systems' disk storage management solution, Hobby Lobby was able to manage all parts of their growing business.

Hobby Lobby currently runs two System i 550s and one 820, with a total of nine partitions, including test and development partitions and their entire inventorying system for the warehouse and stores. They use Robot/SPACE to manage their disk storage on all nine partitions.

HOBBY LOBBY.

Max Johnson, a System i Administrator for Hobby Lobby, quickly learned the advantage of running Robot/SPACE. When Max started working for Hobby Lobby, Robot/SPACE was only running on two partitions. As Max explains, "After a couple of really close calls with disks filling up and needing to find out very, very quickly, under distress, what was causing the disks to fill up, I lobbied to get Robot/SPACE on the rest of the partitions."

Max uses many of the Robot/SPACE features for system administration on a daily or weekly basis. "The main thing that I use Robot/SPACE for is keeping reports and ASP collections running constantly. I've got a paper trail of exactly what's going on. I go through twice a week to check all of our partitions, and look at all of the reports to see if we've got any exorbitant growth going on anywhere."

Max explains how they were able to use Robot/SPACE to quickly diagnose and fix a big problem with another application. "We had a job that ran away from us on an application. It's great to be able to go to a queue, open a file, and quickly figure out what is causing the problem. If I need to free up space, I see right away where I can go to get it. Under time constraints, it's great to be able to just open a report and see the information."

Max uses Robot/SPACE to view the Good Morning Report and the System Health Report on their systems.

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– Max Johnson

"I'm interested in the change in percentage, change in size, and general sizes of everything. I like that it's neatly laid out in order. I also like the way that the collection integrates into Robot/SCHEDULE®— it makes everything nice and simple." He uses the Robot/SPACE Explorer to view graphs and monitor the systems.

Max believes Robot/SPACE is a product every System i administrator could use. "I have really learned the value of Robot/ SPACE in hard times. I've seen what happens when the ASP fills up—and it's not pretty. In situations like that, when time is critical, something as easy to use as Robot/SPACE is great."

Max says Robot/SPACE was easy to learn on his own, but still turns to Help/Systems' customer support when needed. "Help/Systems' support is always great. That's one thing I can definitely say. When I run into a problem, Help/Systems helps me figure out what I'm doing wrong or how to configure something."

Available space is important for every area of business, not just for offices or warehouses. Thanks to Robot/SPACE from Help/Systems, Max is able to monitor available disk space across nine partitions and quickly solve problems before they even happen. "I really think Robot/SPACE is a great product. It does everything that I need it to."