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COMPLETING THE MOBILE OFFICE PACKAGE

By David Wilkinson



Mobile computing and the office on the go are here to stay. Now that most things are extremely portable and wireless, the number of devices we travel with only seems to increase. While multifunction devices help to ease some briefcase congestion, certain things will have to remain a peripheral for the time being.

Portable printers provide good print quality and are compact enough to find their way into most any mobile office niche. Whether a contractor is printing a document in the car, at home, at a trade show, or in a hotel room, the time saved can make a portable printer worth having.

If a contractor's office is of the mobile variety, having a portable printer accessible and ready for business is key. For maximum convenience, several printer mounting packages are available that are ideally suited for mobile professionals. Ram Mounting Systems offers one such product, and it has everything a contractor needs to keep everything safe, secure,

and within easy reach. With both universal and custom holders available, contractors are sure to find a mounting solution that is just right for their portable printers.

FINDING THE RIGHT FEATURES

Custom printer cradles are available that are both compact and lightweight. Many mounting kits are available that can support a portable printer. The problem is that once they are installed, the compact nature of the printer is nullified. Accessory products should always complement the environment, not take up valuable space and hinder a user's efforts.

No matter how cautious a person is with the morning coffee, sooner or later things are going to get messy in a mobile office. Whether it is food, drink, or a flying briefcase after a sudden stop, nothing is totally safe in a vehicle. The best option is to provide a strong, durable, and protective

ABOUT the
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David Wilkinson is a member of the design team at National Products, Inc., in Seattle, Washington. Outside of the office, he performs installations and testing for mounting accessories designed for portable electronics. For more information on Ram mobile office mounting products, please call 206.763.8361 or visit www.ram-mount.com.

mount that was specifically designed with road warriors in mind. With a narrow platform and some Velcro for the printer, a user will likely be buying a replacement printer soon. Custom cradles like the ones offered by Ram, however, encase the printer and even a roll of paper, keeping it safe, dry, and ready to perform.

QUICK AND EASY INSTALLATION

When choosing mounting equipment for a mobile office, it is important that installation is straightforward and requires few tools. Regardless of whether the car is part of a fleet or for personal use, foreign or domestic, it helps to find a dependable base, such as the No Drill™ base from Ram, to suit multiple needs.

Trucks with chairs by National Seating, Sears, and Seats, Inc., can be transformed into a mobile office just as readily as an F-Series truck. Mobile office products are now available truly for the masses. Long haul or short haul, having a laptop and printer ready to do business just makes sense. Putting them on a dependable mounting system specifically designed for both makes perfect sense.

Once the base has been chosen for the vehicle, one of the first things that can act as a stumbling block during installation is the placement of the telescoping pedestal. Many vehicle bases use the passenger seat rails as the attachment point. Placement of the pedestal is of absolute importance. This not only determines the amount of comfort the front passenger experiences, but it also determines the overall safety of the occupants.

Subtle differences in vehicle interiors, namely center consoles and floor shifters, can spell trouble. Versatility should be built into the product line to help ensure that installation is simple, quick, and, ultimately, comfortable. Fixed risers that are 4 or 7 inches tall are available, as well as a fully adjustable swivel riser.

FROM DAY TO NIGHT

Dual-use vehicles are increasingly common. Mobile office by day and family car by night might mean the laptop mount needs to be removed from time to time. Look for features that allow the removal of the telescoping pedestal with the pull of a pin.

Standard kits are a great way to get everything you need in one box. But what if a more custom configuration is required? Individual components allow users to adapt existing products to suit individual needs.

When choosing a mounting system, it is important to look for one that has few, if any, sharp corners or edges.

Smooth lines and surfaces are not only more aesthetically pleasing, but are also less likely to hurt if someone bumps into them.

Putting a laptop and other equipment into a vehicle is going to take up some space. Installing a truly user-friendly mounting system in a vehicle just makes good sense. ♦

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