

If you can't find it, what will you use on stage?

Costume Inventory Resources can help you create a plan to catalog your costumes, props and gear.

USITT

Presentation by Margaret Messick (Margaret@costumeinventory.com)
Costume Inventory Resources www.costumeinventory.com

Only you can turn the stage from a dark, silent floor to a dazzling scene. But if you can't find the right costume, prop or set piece, microphone or lights - how will you do it? You don't want to make or buy everything again.

An inventory system can help you.

- Create Records for each item
- Do Searches on a variety of criteria to see what you have in stock and find what you need
- Print reports (paper or PDF) to share information with others
- Rent/Loan/Checkout items to other organizations and keep track of where everything is
- Assign items to Productions to create a Production Catalog. Print a "List by Storage Location" of everything you need.
- Create Asset Management Reports

Organizing a large (or even a small) collection of costumes, props/sets and equipment is a huge task but it is so worth the effort and expense.

Every inventory project requires planning, money and people. Most of you will have to prepare a proposal to give to your theatre director, department chair, or Principal to get funds to make the inventory project happen. As we go along in this lecture we will be going over several points that you will want to include in your proposal. You can also look at:

<http://www.costumeinventory.com/where-do-i-start>

I have set up seven steps for getting started.

- 1) What is your goal or motivation for starting the project?
- 2) Start planning your project
- 3) Make preliminary decisions and purchases
- 4) Become the Expert ! - <http://www.costumeinventory.com/become-the-expert>
- 5) Train staff, students, volunteers

- 6) Look critically at your storage area
- 7) Set up a schedule and get started !

Summary for Proposal:

- 1) **Do the Numbers:**
Summarize how many productions your department does each year. Count how many students are served Estimate how many costumes, props/sets, pieces of equipment you have
- 2) **Outline the benefits to:**
 - The Theatre / University
 - The students
 - The community
- 3) **Show your plan:**
Decide on inventory software and hardware - give the reasons you selected these items.
Prepare an order for tags and labels for costumes, props, & equipment
Design the updated storage areas
Make a priority list of what sections to do first, second, etc.
Do training - with the "Become the Expert" series or other sources
- 4) **Show your schedule**
List the people committed to help
Show the timeline of when items will be order/received
Show the calendar of dates when people will be working to enter data and take photos.
- 5) **Show your budget**
Create your own spreadsheet or use the spreadsheet you can download at:
<https://1drv.ms/f/s!Alq2Mht88PPGiBGMMFf8YZcpnmL09>
List all the details of the costs.
- 6) **Summarize**
Be sure to state reasons why you need to do this project now (and not 5 years from now) . Summarize the benefits vs costs. Explain your willingness and commitment to do the project

