

# Buyers Guide for Custom Storage Solutions

*By Organized Hawaii*

The purpose of this guide is to provide consumers with knowledge about the various terms, processes and product features related to closets and custom storage solutions. Our goal is to make your job easier.

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### 1. Showroom

Some closet companies have showrooms while others work out of small offices or even from home. The benefit of visiting a showroom is that you can see exactly what you're getting for your investment. You can see the quality of the product and how well it's assembled. You can see the range of options that a salesperson coming to your home cannot bring with them. The best way to know what you're getting is to see it and feel it.

### 2. In-Home Estimates

Most companies will be glad to come to your home, measure your space and provide you with ideas and a written proposal at no cost. Depending on the quantity and scope of the projects most in-home estimates take 30-60 minutes. Not only does the sales person look for ways to maximize space but they want to see how you utilize the space currently. In a closet for example he or she will determine the space needed for long dresses compared to skirts. How does the gentleman hang his pants; lengthwise or folded? Are shoes stored in boxes or on the floor, etc.

The other important step is to look for obstacles like outlets, light switches, attic access panels, alarm boxes, base molding and many other common factors that will affect the installation process.

### 3. The Proposal

After the in-home consultation the salesperson will create designs based on your feedback and what was observed during the visit. You should typically allow 2-3 business days to receive the proposal.

More complex designs can take up to a week but the salesperson should give you a timeframe after meeting with you in your home.

Each company sends proposals to clients differently but at Organized Hawaii we send every proposal as an Adobe .pdf file via email. When we send the proposal we'll usually call and let you know it's there to make sure you receive it promptly.

#### **4. The Budget**

At Organized Hawaii price is determined solely by the amount and type of products used in the design. For example, in an 8ft x 10ft walk-in closet we can build a \$1000 closet or a \$6,000 closet and it's completely dependant on direction from the client which determines the final design.

For example, designing a white wall mounted system with just open shelves and hanging rods is significantly less than a cherry floor mounted system with doors, drawers and crown molding. Both are functional and maximize space but the latter will provide better organization and will compliment the home more.

In the end, if you tell us you need to bring the final price down by 10%, we can provide you with options to hit that target. Again, we want you to have the most attractive and efficient design possible within the budget that is right for you.

#### **5. What's Next?**

At this stage you've approved of the design and placed your order. Depending on the complexity of the design, availability of in-stock components and other variables, lead times will vary. At Organized Hawaii we are able to install most basic closet systems within 2-3 weeks. With such a wide assortment of laminates, door and drawer styles and accessories we don't always have everything in stock. If an order needs to be placed with our manufacturer the lead time averages 3-5 weeks depending on when the order is placed. Lead times for wood veneer projects are typically 4-6 weeks.

#### **6. Laminate or Veneer**

Most companies should be able to provide you with a choice between laminate products or wood veneer products. Both have strengths and weaknesses and within the laminate family there are low-end and high-end choices. First we'll cover laminates...

##### Low-End Laminates

Low-grade laminates are printed paper glued to particle board. Because they are not sealed in any way or "fused" to the board they are highly susceptible to damage from moisture, peeling and cracking. These laminates are also applied to thinner boards which means shelves can't hold as much weight and are more prone to bending.

### High-End Laminates

Higher-end laminates are those that are fused to the boards with heat and pressure which make them stronger and less prone to damage. These boards are classified as “thermofused melamine” and since the surface is sealed it creates a moisture proof barrier against water. Some companies offer these laminates on thin boards but at Organized Hawaii we only use ¾” boards for strength and durability. Shelves thinner than ¾” will bow under weight and are typically made with a lower grade of particle board.

### Wood Veneer

Veneers are thin pieces of wood which have been sliced into very thin sheets and then are applied over a particle board or plywood core. They're adhered with glue, heat and pressure to form a tight, durable bond. Organized Hawaii offers wood veneers on both particle board and plywood. There are dozens of choices from standard maple to exotic veneers and most can be stained to match a home's décor. Drawer and door front options are typically more limited in veneer as opposed to laminates.

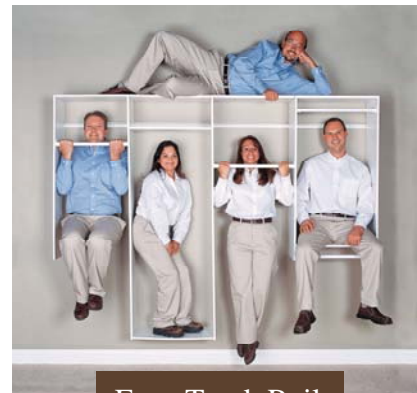
## **7. Floor Mounted vs. Wall Mounted**



Floor Mounted



Wall Mounted



Easy Track Rail

### Floor Mounted

A floor mounted design involves building the system from the floor up with the vertical panels standing on the floor and enclosed with toe kicks and optional base molding for a more finished look. A floor mounted system not only offers the best space maximization but it also looks more like traditional built-in cabinetry. These systems are typically 84” high but can be built as high as 9 feet for homes with higher ceilings. They can also be finished to the ceiling with crown molding. The first photo above is an example of a floor mounted closet.

### Wall Mounted

A few companies offer wall mounted design options where the components are secured to a horizontal rail or track which is secured into studs. This provides good space utilization while keeping costs down because installation is faster and fewer components are used to build it. A wall mounted system typically costs 15-20% less than a floor mounted design. Organized Hawaii's patented Easy Track Rail is designed to support 1200 lbs of weight across an 8 foot wall span so. To show the strength of the Easy Track Rail, the photo on the above right shows an 8 foot closet supporting five members of the ORG team.

### Hybrid Designs

Sometimes the best combination of organization and cost involves a combination of the two. Roughly 1/3 of our closet installations at Organized Hawaii involve a hybrid of these two designs used together.

## **8. Hardware**

Unfortunately this is the area that clients typically don't ask about so most closet companies cut corners by selling an attractive closet with inexpensive hardware. The homeowner often doesn't realize what they're getting until its too late. Things to watch out for include flimsy handles, noisy white drawer glides that only open 75% of the way, hanging rods which scratch and tarnish easily, or plastic legs for home office furniture.

At Organized Hawaii all of our designs include high-end hardware including full-extension ball bearing drawer glides and high end handle options. Most of our accessories like baskets, belt racks and clothes rods are available in several durable and attractive finishes including brushed chrome, black pearl, oil rubbed bronze and others.

## **9. Questions to Ask A Closet Professional**

1. Will all of the laminated products you install come from the same vendor?
2. Do you use  $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick boards or are they thinner?
3. Are your drawer boxes white or wood grain?
4. Do you offer full extension drawer glides as standard?
5. Please explain your warranty to me.
6. Are your installers employed by your company or contracted out?
7. How many drawer styles do you offer?
8. What makes you different from other closet companies?