

6 Things  
You Need  
To Know



# 6 Smart Things To Know Before Buying A Server Lift System

presented by: **BIAC Broadband USA**



RackLift - Fast - Simple - Safe - Effective

# ...Before Buying A Server Lift System

Installing heavy IT equipment manually is risky. It's a good idea to get a data center equipment lift before someone gets hurt or drops a piece of expensive gear that makes that sudden stop at the end of the gravity trip. Before you dash out to get a server lift of any kind there are **six important points** you need to know. Some characteristics that are touted as benefits actually have **serious consequences** if you don't know what to look for.

## 1. If It's Not Made For Data Centers Don't Walk Away – Run!

There are **two aspects** to consider - one is about **suitability** for use in data centers and the other relates to code or policy violations. Some data centers cheap out and get a "general purpose warehouse lift." Most are poorly designed, not robust and hard to maneuverable in tight aisles.

**They lack adequate safety features** and have no means of extending the load into the rack. It's like using a screwdriver to chisel wood; looks similar, lower price, easy to get purchase approval - but the result is an epic fail.

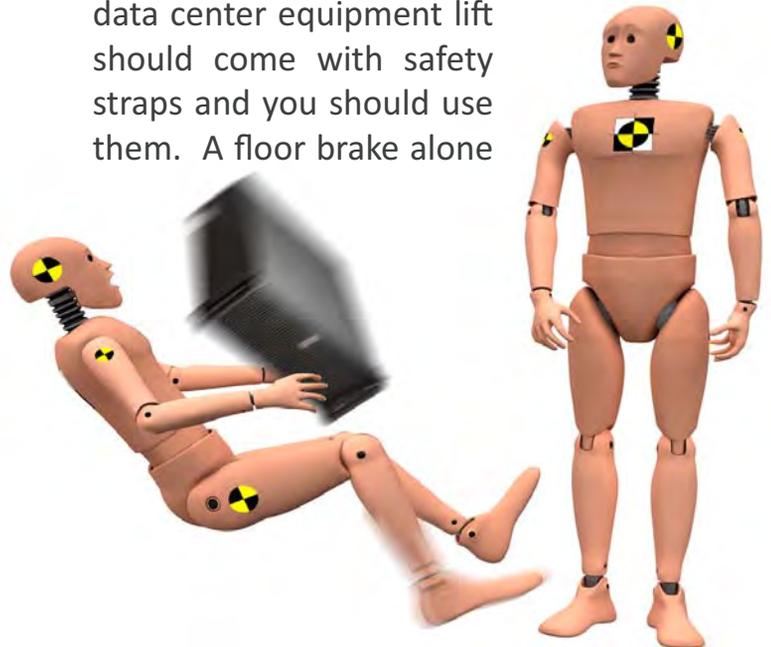
The other concern is for lift systems that use hydraulic fluid or oil in the mechanisms.

### *Sooner or later they leak.*

It's that simple. A few drops on the floor are worse than invisible banana peels. Someone is sure to slip and fall. (Not funny) Oil driven systems are probably a **violation of your data center policies** which are there for good reason - to protect people and equipment.

## 2. Safety Straps Are Like Seat Belts (Don't Be A Crash Test Dummy)

A) When lifting or installing equipment, ratchet straps are used to **temporarily fasten the RackLift frame to the cabinet**. Barring an earthquake, there's virtually no chance of the unit toppling over. Every data center equipment lift should come with safety straps and you should use them. A floor brake alone



offers little safety – especially for heavy loads.

According to ServerLIFT regarding their own product\* **"...the stabilizer brake is not to provide braking but to impart sideways stability..."** The ServerLIFT design has no frame for fastening straps. Hmm.

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## Safety Straps Are Like Seat Belts (continued)

B) Because RackLift is secured to the cabinet you also gain the unique ability to insert your load **a full 23 inches into the receiving rack space**. The lift table is attached to military grade gliders that fully extend and hold the load securely in position during the bolt-in phase.

It is the only way a **single technician** can completely **and safely** install equipment from beginning to end. ServerLIFT's insertion is **only 6 inches**. Hmm. Our engineers tell us the **limited six-inch travel may be to prevent toppling** over since their design doesn't facilitate strapping in.

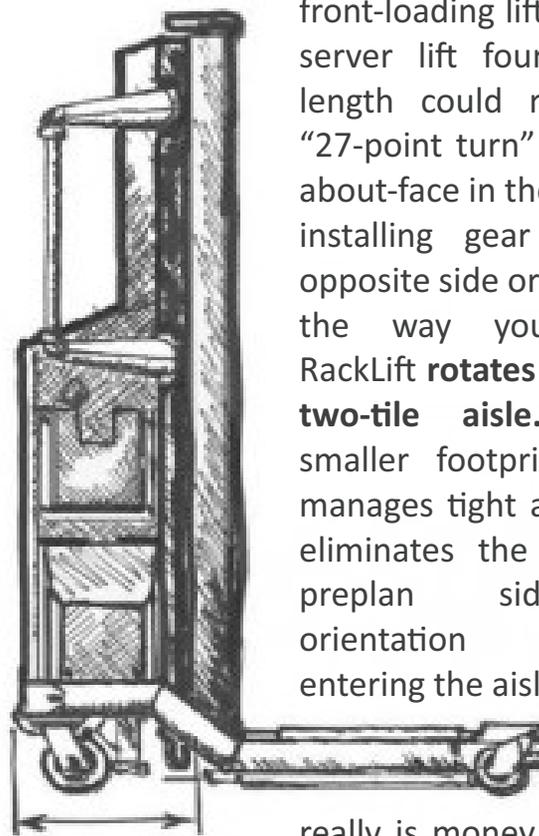
So how do you move the load beyond the six inch insertion? You grunt, push and drag it the rest of the way.

C) Picture the journey that communications gear makes as it travels from the warehouse to the data center. Vibrations and bumps along the way can **cause the load to bounce and shift**. Remember gravity? The same **safety straps** used to fasten RackLift to the cabinet are also used to **secure the load when in motion**.

## 3. The Server Lifter's Footprint Size And Shape Actually Matters

A big footprint is a big problem. Some server lifts are the Sasquatch of the

industry with a rectangular footprint **nearly four feet long!** They are typically side-loading devices. RackLift has a **28 inch square footprint** on which a **"tower style frame"** is mounted to support the front-loading lift table. A server lift four feet in length could require a "27-point turn" to do an about-face in the aisle for installing gear on the opposite side or to return the way you came. RackLift **rotates 360° in a two-tile aisle**. The smaller footprint easily manages tight aisles and eliminates the need to preplan side-loading orientation before entering the aisle. If time



**51% Longer  
Than RackLift**

really is money we just saved you a fortune!

## 4. The Lift Tool Has To Reach High Enough

General purpose lifters may not have the capability or safety features to lift heavy IT equipment to the height you'll need. A data center lift tool should be able to install equipment at the bottom or top of your racks without concern for equipment falling or **injury to workers**. It's that gravity thing again!

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## 5. Containment Access – It’s A Job For Shorty

If you use “POD style” server rooms or “hot/cold data rooms” you may find the **access door height a limiting factor** for some server lifts. Once inside the next hurdle is maneuverability. Try this – go inside the POD and imagine dragging around a **four foot server lift**. For cramped quarters like those, you will want to **insist on a “tower style” server lifter** designed specifically for PODS. The **RackLift RL600C** is just short enough to fit through the door.



## 6. Why Not Move The Entire Loaded Cabinet?

If you are pulling out servers to relocate cabinets and then reinstalling them you could avoid all that time and hassle with an electric Mass Lift. A Mass Lift is a server rack lifter that provides a safe method to **move fully populated server cabinets**, battery UPS, cooling units and anything that weighs up to 5,000 lbs. (Yup – that’s not a typo – we actually said five thousand pounds) It’s push-button powered by battery operated

synchronized motors. Using this type of Mass Lift, **one technician can move a fully loaded rack** unassisted from one location to another. The weight is spread across **eight dual castor wheels** to distribute the load evenly on raised floors.

**Moral -** Some data centers get a RackLift after their first mishap. The right time to start using one is before something bad happens. A RackLift could amount to a fraction of the cost and hassle of a minor incident or injury. In fact, getting a RackLift is no hassle at all! We make it easy and everybody here is fun to deal with. (Except Mirna in the cafeteria.)

**Summary -** A four-foot Sasquatch will be a serious problem in tight aisles especially when its lift table travels only six inches into the rack. Safety straps must be incorporated in the design to temporarily fasten the server lifter to the cabinet – no exceptions. These are important things you need to put on your server lift checklist. They’re often overlooked and lead to buyer’s remorse.

\*Information provided by ServerLIFT FAQ web page January 2016  
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