

“The Hidden Home Office” -- by Sarah Day

At San Luis Kitchen Co. we were recently presented with the challenge of combining a dining room and a home office. The space is used for entertaining, is visible from both the kitchen and the living areas, and thus we needed to provide a formal look while hiding the clutter of a desk and computer.

The homeowners were remodeling their entire house and were very concerned that they would lose precious storage space. What had been their home office was becoming a gracious second bedroom and a much-used closet was being integrated into a larger second bath and separate laundry room. So, when they came to us, they wanted to build a wall unit in their dining room that would be both a multi-function office/storage space and also a beautiful showpiece.

How to accomplish this?

First, we had the clients think about and list all the items and functions that they needed to have included. The list included: closet storage deep enough for uniforms and outerwear, storage and use space for a large sewing machine, bookshelves, file drawers, miscellaneous storage of small items, a computer workstation with fax & printer, storage for office supplies, shelving for large binders, and generous general household storage.

Next come prioritization. The deep closet was a must while the sewing machine could be lifted out for use. We definitely needed bookshelves, file drawers, & general storage



but it would be nice to not see all the computer paraphernalia.



Now comes the solution. We created a 30” deep cabinet on one side that had adjustable shelves in the top and a clothes rod for hanging garments. The bottom of this cabinet was a perfect depth to store the sewing machine. Bookshelves were obvious as they are both practical and decorative – we added an arched valance as a finishing detail. We also included an 18” deep tall cabinet with adjustable shelves to allow lots of miscellaneous storage. Four file drawers look fine below the bookshelves with what-not drawers between and a beautiful matching wood top.

All that’s left is the computer gadgetry and desk area. We all decided that we did not want to see office equipment in the formal dining room. So, for the desk and monitor we built an 18” deep cabinet that was open to the wood counter at the bottom. It has doors which open extra wide for easy access to the work space but also close to hide away the clutter. The knee space was treated similarly with doors (with attached toe trim) that open wide for use but blend right into the cabinetry when closed.

As you can see from the photos, when the cabinet doors are closed, one would never guess all the uses this wall unit accommodates. The formal dining area is maintained while the needs of the homeowner are met in one compact space.

