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Return to Business

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Comment on this story

Previous story Next story

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## SITE INDEX

Homepage  
Search  
CyberSurveys  
News Talk  
Sports Talk  
Lions Talk  
Wings Talk  
Car Talk  
Tech Talk  
Horoscope  
Hot Sites  
Lottery  
Weather  
Staff

## NEWS

Autos  
Joyrides  
Business  
Careers  
Columnists  
Commuting  
Detroit History  
Editorials  
Health  
Metro/State  
Livingston  
Macomb  
Oakland  
Wayne  
On Detroit  
Nation/World  
Obituaries  
Death Notices  
Politics  
Real Estate  
Religion  
Schools  
Special Reports  
Technology

## SPORTS

Sports Home  
Lions/NFL  
Pistons/NBA  
Red  
Wings/NHL  
Shock/WNBA  
Tigers/Baseball  
MSU  
U-M  
More Colleges  
Golf  
High Schools  
Motor Sports

## Construction boosts mobile office firm

Leased trailers first on building sites and often last to leave

By Maureen McDonald / Special to The Detroit News

**SOUTHFIELD** -- It's a double-wide world for McDonald Mobile Offices, thanks to a strong economy and a building boom in Detroit.

"Nearly every new building under construction needs someone on site to supervise the job, inspect the steps or meet with clients," said Bill Duffield, assistant general manager of the 68-year-old company on Eight Mile Road in Southfield.

The double-wide trailers, at 12 by 60 feet, are by far the hottest item. The units can be transformed into temporary classrooms, day care centers, offices, souvenir shops for a college football team or a scoring booth for the ITT Detroit Grand Prix.

"Our stuff goes in early, sometimes before the ground breaking, and comes out late, after everything else is done," Duffield said.

The biggest order came from the general contractor teams working on the midfield terminal at the Wayne County Metropolitan Airport. The contractor requested nine 14-by-68-foot trailers that had to be shipped as extra-wide loads and then joined together. Within two weeks, the contractor requested two more trailers to make a conference room.

The mobile units stay put for as little as a weekend or semipermanently, for 10 years and beyond. Tenants pay by the square foot and the duration of the lease. Some people want a building as fast as one week, while custom orders take as much as 16 weeks to plan and build at the factory owned by a McDonald subsidiary.

"With lead time getting shorter, people look for temporary solutions. That can only help our business," Duffield said. He said his company is certified to meet industry standards.

"It's one thing to have a trailer, it's another to make sure it is right for the job."

*Maureen McDonald is a Metro Detroit free-lance writer.*



Ricardo Thomas / The Detroit News

**Bruce McDonald, center, CEO of McDonald Mobile Office in Southfield, and managers Bill Duffield, left, and George Zambiasi lease and sell double-wide trailers that are used as both temporary and semi-permanent office space.**

### Space to work

**What:** McDonald Mobile Offices, 23800 W. Eight Mile, Southfield

**Employees:** 22

**Sales:** \$10 million projected in 2000 based on 2,200 units for lease or purchase

**Contact:** (800) 221-4297

**Specialty:** The company provides modular buildings, temporary trailers and containers for construction and industrial applications.

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