Is it okay to leave the side panels of the network cabinet out

Overview

What is the impact of removing side panels between enclosures?

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I just purchased some NetShelt.

Key Takeaways

Yes, the side panels of most network cabinets can be removed, often easily and sometimes without tools, depending on the cabinet design.

Panel Removal Options

Modular and quick-release designs: Many modern network cabinets, such as the Nexpand and Tripp Lite models, feature side panels that are subdivided or split horizontally, allowing them to slide between frames and be removed quickly for maintenance or airflow adjustments. Some panels are designed to be removed toollessly in seconds, without disconnecting cables first. Tool-required removal: Certain cabinets, especially those with internally mounted panels for enhanced security, require access to the inside of the cabinet and removal of mounting screws to detach the panels.

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This method prevents unauthorized access while still allowing maintenance when needed. Hinged or lockable panels: Cabinets like the NavePoint Swing Gate Series include removable, lockable side panels that provide both security and easy access to equipment. These panels can be detached for installation or servicing and then re-secured.

Practical Considerations

Airflow and cooling: Removing side panels can affect airflow and cooling efficiency, so it is often recommended to only remove panels temporarily during maintenance. Grounding and safety: Some cabinets ensure that side panels provide a ground connection when locked in place, so proper reinstallation is important for electrical safety. End cabinets: For cabinets at the end of a row, side panels may need to be installed or removed to maintain a finished appearance and proper enclosure coverage.

In summary, side panels are generally removable, either via quick-release, sliding, or screw-mounted designs, with some cabinets offering tool-free removal and others prioritizing security with internal mounting. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions to maintain safety, grounding, and airflow efficiency.

Article Content

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