Data Security and Privacy is Extremely Important to IT Asset Disposal Programs

IAITAM Reveals Data from Its "What's Happening with ITAD" Survey at IAITAM 2010 Conference & Expo

Nashville, TN and Suffield, OH (PRWEB) October 20, 2010 -- Data security and privacy is a high priority in IT asset disposal (ITAD) programs, while cost savings is a middle of the road priority, according to a survey by International Association of IT Asset Managers, Inc. (IAITAM).

This survey, "What's Happening with IT Asset Disposal?", asked about the importance of risk reduction by securing data and privacy in terms of the hardware asset disposal program and 74% felt it was extremely important. This emphasis on data security and privacy accounted for the nearly 65% that said their organization destroys the data internally versus the quarter who relied on a vendor. Drive drilling, shredding or breaking is the most popular form of data sanitization, followed by overwriting and then degaussing.

In contrast, attention to cost savings didn't seem as important. When asked about the importance of cost savings and making money with the ITAD program, it produced a mid-level ranking between being the most and least important within the survey. Furthermore, more than a third (37%) rated timely return of leased assets – which would lead to late fees – as not important.

"With all the new and changing regulations, it is no surprise that data security and privacy is top of mind among IT asset managers as well as throughout organizations no matter what industry," said Barbara Rembiesa, President, IAITAM. "Just look at Sarbanes-Oxley, HIPAA or PCI and the tightening regulations on consumer and corporate information. With a good ITAD program, it's likely that your IT assets may have a second life, but no one wants their data to have a second life in someone else's hands.

"What's becoming apparent to organizations recently is that ITAD plays a vital role within the IT asset management process as well as the enterprise, as a whole. More than half (56%) of the people we surveyed consider disposal of hardware and harvesting of software a priority in 2009 and 2010."

What are organizations doing with ITAD?

Over 75% of organizations review their hardware assets for retirement or disposal either annually or semi-annually. However, only 65% thought they could prove that their hardware asset disposal processes support compliance within 90 days. So, what are IT asset managers doing with their ITAD programs?

•   Revitalizing assets: More than half (51%) refresh assets on a schedule, while slightly more than a third (35%) said their organization's asset refresh strategies vary across the organization and 14% replace assets when they break.

•   Which hardware assets?: Not surprisingly, majority included desktops, monitors, laptops, servers and network equipment in their disposal process. However, only 56 percent included mobile or wireless devices and only 51% included faxes in their hardware asset disposal processes.

• Software license harvesting: Nearly two-thirds (63%) harvest software licenses as part of a process when hardware is being disposed. A whopping 92% surveyed harvested Microsoft followed by Adobe (82%), Oracle (44%) and SAP (21%).

• Business aids: More than 80% said that they used electronic discovery, asset tagging and tracking to individuals, departments or responsible parties to help with the disposal of assets. Three-quarters used an asset repository and nearly 60% used bar coding.

• Outsourcing: More than two-thirds (69%) of organizations outsource their ITAD program. Of those organizations surveyed, 77% use the physical removal services and 76% use data destruction services. Other popular outsourced ITAD services being used include recycling component recovery (68%), electronic disposal report including asset tags (68%), evaluation of residual asset value (60%) and resale of equipment for profit (57%). To insure compliance with environmental regulation, half contract with a reputable vendor.

"The need to outsource all or part of the ITAD is understandable as two-thirds of IT asset managers believe that hardware asset disposal processes have become increasingly complex as most devices – such as mobile, laptops, iPads – have entered the scene," said Ms. Rembiesa. "Even when outsourcing ITAD, data security is still top of mind with 76% saying that data security is either an extremely or very important criteria when selecting an asset disposal vendor."

This survey was conducted electronically with a total of 116 IT asset managers or people involved in ITAD directly or indirectly.

About IAITAM
To learn about IAITAM (International Association of IT Asset Managers), go to http://bit.ly/d2vQrp or www.iaitam.org.

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