Computer Re-News

CASCADE
ASSET MANAGEMENT, LLC

Keeping your IT Equipment Safe and Sound

Companies and individuals need to employ processes that secure their data on site and through disposal.

In order for an enterprise to operate a truly secure information system it must have a method of disposal for obsolete equipment that prevents data from being recovered. For many industries, this is also a legal requirement (e.g., HIPAA & FACTA).

To overlook this critical phase of the system life cycle is to waste all of the efforts to develop and maintain on site security of the equipment. Expensive consultants, sophisticated software and powerful hardware will have done you no good if data is retrieved from even one data storage device and used against you maliciously.

Physical access during the beginning phases of equipment is intuitive and controlled by registering the asset and placing it in a secure environment or populated work area. Firewalls, password protections and security protocols are integrated with all new hardware installations and upgrades.

But what happens to the obsolete equipment the day after the big rollout? In too many cases this equipment is stored in public access hallways, garages, or unlocked basements until decision makers can schedule its disposal, leaving critical information available for employees, visitors and customers to view, copy or steal. Simple data retreival programs can often hack into information left unprotected by firewalls and network protocols. Often, users leave sticky notes with their passwords on the equipment making the process more convenient to unscrupulous users.

There are simple strategies firms can employ to better manage their data security needs when they retire IT equipment. To help enterprises integrate these solutions, Cascade published a White Paper titled, "**Closing the Back Door: Managing IT Data Security During Equipment Disposal**." Contact us for a copy. ■

Since Cascade opened in April, 1999, we've:

* Collected over 12.6 million pounds of old electronics

* Refurbished and resold or donated over 504,000 monitors, computers and printers

* Demanufactured and recycled over 167,620 cathode ray tubes

* Kept more than 670,000 pounds of lead out of landfills

* Donated more than $133,000 worth of equipment to local charities and causes in developing countries

* Paid more than $2.0 million in rebates to customers

Contact Us . . .

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Detailed reporting demonstrates legal disposal

Many institutions are required to demonstrate their retired electronic equipment is recycled or reasonably reused and that any data on or with the equipment is secured and/or destroyed. A Certificate of Destruction or Certificate of Recycling is often the industry's way of providing documentation that equipment is handled according to these requirements. Unfortunately, without relating this information to individual assets, it may be difficult to prove compliance if a problem arises later.

For companies with an established internal asset tracking system, it may be possible to interface with the asset retirement company's inventory management system. Cascade often receives electronic reports of asset details from customers and uses this information to compare with the actual assets received. Cascade imports this data into its tracking system and can report final disposition values and data destruction activity to the customer.

For institutions without an asset tracking system, Cascade will tag items with a barcode and input asset information to report back to the customer. Data can be shared electronically or through customized report processes.

Finally, be sure you and your service provider maintain an archive or previous disposal activity to demonstrate compliance. ■

Cascade investing $2.5 million in new facility

The 30,000 square foot facility scheduled for August completion

Cascade secured funding to purchase 5.5 acres of land in Madison and construct a new processing facility to better serve the growing needs of its clients. In addition, new investments in testing and processing equipment will add efficiency to the operation. The building is located near Hwy 51 and Interstates 90-94. Cascade will move from its existing building on Seiferth Road into the new facility later this summer. ▪

Plastics research continues - BFRs the focus

Dr. Tim Oswald of the Polymer Engineering Center secured additional funding to study the health and safety aspects of extruding plastics from old electronics. This continues earlier research that successfully demonstrated how high quality styrene products could be manufactured with plastic housings generated at Cascade from electronic scrap. The results of this study were presented at the 2004 E-Scrap conference in Minneapolis.

This new study will take a closer look at how to safely manage the brominated flame retardants (BFRs) present in most computer equipment housings through the recycling process. Several studies have indicated dangerous exposure issues arise when BFR plastics are volatilized or granulated and become airborne. ▪

Asset retirement cost calculator available

Cascade has developed a tool to assist customers and other enterprises with understanding the cost to manage their IT assets through retirement. The Gartner Group estimates the typical cost to dispose of an IT asset is $140.00. Cascade's toolkit helps identify what goes into this cost and assists organizations with understanding how they can reduce the time and expense they dedicate to retirement projects.

The toolkit is also a useful way to determine the Return on Investment of various disposal options. You can consider the advantages and challenges to redeploy equipment internally, resell it on the market, donate equipment to charity, or destroy and recycle it. ▪

Yes, we can do that . . .

Over the years, customers ask Cascade to provide a wide variety of solutions to address asset retirement challenges. We pride ourselves on our flexibility and commitment to finding innovative solutions with a lasting positive impact. Here are some examples of our recent work:

√ Cascade staff travelled to Pennsylvania to pack and haul away computers, servers, mainframe cabinets and other assets located throughout a hospital.

√ Cascade designed and hosted an online sale of refurbished computer assets to a customer's nationwide base of employees.

√ Cascade inventoried and immediately shredded individual hard drives pulled from hundreds of computers at one client's facility.

√ Cascade created a custom, interactive web based asset declaration program enabling over 2,000 retail stores to record and track the retirement of their electronic assets with easy bar code scanning technology. ▪

State Legislatures and even the federal government have been active crafting new legislation relating to electronics disposal. Initiatives in Canada, Europe and Asia are being implemented at a faster pace, and influence the direction of US requirements. While bills have been introduced in the US House and Senate, there is little interest by the EPA or the administration to create a national solution to electronics recycling.

Most laws being developed focus on landfill bans and establishing a financing system for recycling consumer generated electronics (as opposed to business generated waste - which is already regulated.)

Two competing approaches to pay for the recycling of electronics include the Advanced Recovery Fee (ARF) and the Producer Responsibility model. The ARF is a charge added to the purchase price of new computer equipment. This fee would be managed by the government or a third party organization to be distributed to haulers and processors who recycle old electronics. California recently implemented this model starting on January 1, 2005. Under Producer Responsibility, manufacturers pay for and manage the cost of collecting and recycling their old equipment. Of course, this cost would be passed on to consumers.

For a more comprehensive overview of legislative activity and how it impacts Cascade customers, go to our web site. ▪

Resources for Customers

Look to our web site for tools and information to help with your own IT Retirement Solutions.

www.cascade-assets.com

- Freight Zone Calculator - look up hauling costs
- Health Care Industry Focus - specific resources related to hospitals, clinics and those that serve them
- Legislative Round-up
- Fact Sheets on Data Security, HIPAA, and FACTA
- Tips for improving your ROI through effective retirement solutions
- Archives of Previous Newsletters
- And much more . . .