

Six Key Considerations for ITAD security

This Covenco guide will help ensure your chosen ITAD service provider will securely remove data from end-of-life IT assets, and dispose of them safely.



IT asset disposition, or ITAD for short, is the practice, method and location of IT hardware disposal.

Whether you're updating, upgrading, or otherwise getting rid of computer equipment, Covenco's ITAD Service supports your organisation's disposal needs - and can generate additional revenue towards replacement hardware.



Understanding Security in IT Asset Disposition (ITAD)

New methods for data protection are becoming increasingly crucial for business owners. Never more so than when an IT asset reaches the end of its useful life.

Only recently have businesses started to recognise the need to securely remove data from any IT assets when they are collected for disposal. Recent European and US legislation, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), has driven this need.

Those responsible for data within an organisation are already aware of a data breach's financial, legal, and reputational impact. Every organisation that collects, stores and processes data must always secure it, including when it is time to dispose of hardware and data-bearing assets.

Assets heading off for re-sale or disposal can be exposed to criminals that want to gain access to your business data.

Thankfully, Covenco is on hand to ensure that, at least during the disposition of your IT equipment, those gaps are filled.

Read on for our six-point guide to ITAD security.

This guide is designed to help you identify data and asset security requirements throughout the ITAD process, including things to look out for, what to ask your ITAD partner about and how to avoid losing control of your data during the ITAD process.



1 Confirm that data destruction is effectively carried out.

Various options for data destruction exist and Covenco uses the most effective and reliable solutions. When undertaken correctly, ITAD data destruction procedures are 99.999 percent effective, a percentage acceptable even for the U.S. Department of Defence, the German Federal Office for Information Security (BSI) and the UK HMG Infosec Standard No. 5.

An organisation can sanitise its own data using software - or even destroy it with physical destruction methods. However, most organisations opt to use third-party ITAD services such as that provided by Covenco because it includes a full and proper audit trail and recognised data destruction standards - and it avoids the time and resources needed to conduct data destruction on multiple devices.

In addition, Covenco has fail-safes in place to detect and mitigate any failures to completely sanitise an asset's data on the first pass.

Any organisation fully accredited with the requisite systems in place will be able to sanitise all types of data-bearing media, from spinning disks to solid-state drives.

Covenco has the operational systems and knowledge to deal with all types of data-bearing hardware. We offer secondary verification of your data-bearing assets to confirm that all data is removed beyond any possible recovery. This process guarantees the quality of our ITAD service and ensures data wiping accuracy.

Covenco can also help you evaluate the value of your drives to determine if wiping or physical destruction is the most cost-effective. If wiped, Covenco may also be able to offer a reuse and resale value for your drives.

2 Review your asset security during transit.

The theft of electronics in transit is a major crime factor in 2023. Since 2012, the theft of electronic goods in cargo has risen by 22%, with an estimated per-theft value of over \$400,000 (excluding the value of data held on the stolen devices). Doing everything possible to secure your data-bearing assets while being transported to an ITAD facility makes sense.

Covenco offers two levels of secure ITAD collection service. The sensitivity of the data will dictate which service is most appropriate for the customers' needs:

Secure collection

Our dedicated point-to-point courier services with a two-man vetted crew to ensure the cargo is never left unattended. All ITAD assets are secured from de-installation (lockable cages provided if required), and upon reaching our secure facility, they are segregated and sanitised. The vehicles are GPS tracked and meet the physical security requirements within our Asset Recovery Standard.

Secure customer delivery

Customers can choose to deliver their ITAD assets to our secure facility in Banbury, Oxfordshire. In this case, we require tracking details, and we maintain a specific delivery date and time. The consignment becomes Covenco's responsibility upon reaching our Banbury facility and following a formal handover process.

Transfer of custody

Covenco accepts custody at the point of delivery to our secure facility in Banbury, UK, or upon collection from the client site by authorised Covenco personnel.

Record keeping

Details of all ITAD assets collected will be kept on file, and a destruction certificate will be provided, including serial numbers and validation of the destruction.

Processing times

Covenco processes all assets received within 21 working days of collection.



3 Verify asset tracking and facility surveillance.

While it's essential to ensure the secure transportation of IT assets, the obligation to secure all IT assets continues within the ITAD facility. Covenco operates a range of security measures to ensure proper levels of security are consistently maintained throughout our facilities. These include the secure tracking of IT assets while they are processed.

The security features of our buildings include restricted access, 24/7 surveillance, CCTV, independently secured storage and processing areas, and more.

Covenco's facilities are designed to protect any confidential or proprietary equipment that could potentially exist. Additionally, Covenco applies thorough asset tracking through serial number capture, scanned barcodes and sophisticated internal reporting systems to allow customers to understand where their assets are in the process and track them for internal audit.

4 Applying appropriate standards to your IT asset disposition

Covenco operates within ISO/IEC 27001 to apply best practices for managing the security of data assets such as financial information, intellectual property, employee details, clinical and research data and more.

Covenco carries out forensic audits from time to time. These audits spot-check our data handling, disk erasure, and ITAD security processes to ensure we adhere to industry standards.

Our accreditations give businesses the confidence to know that Covenco operates to the highest industry standards and that we are managing and maintaining best practices for handling and processing IT assets at our Banbury facility.



“A majority (70%) of consumers would stop doing business with a company if it experienced a data breach, according to a [survey](#) of more than 10,000 consumers worldwide.

In addition, seven in ten consumers (69%) feel businesses need to take the security of customer data more seriously.”



5 Understanding the reuse and resale of IT assets

This is where asset 'disposition' takes priority over 'disposal'. Covenco works with customers to assess assets for disposition, reuse, and recycling where possible.

In many cases, a customer's assets may have a resale value. As such, we can offer our customers a fair market price to buy these assets after their data has been completely sanitised within ISO27001 standards.

In these circumstances, Covenco maintains the same level of best practice and a thorough standards-driven process for the sanitisation of all data from your assets.

These assets are treated to the same levels of strict data security and thorough processing to ensure that no data is recoverable, ever. In addition, Covenco tracks these assets from your initial enquiry right through to resale to ensure that no inventory questions can remain.

Covenco is also a member of the Association of Service and Computer Dealers and the United Network of Equipment Dealers Association (UNEDA). We have access to the current market valuations for all types of IT assets and can demonstrate the fair market value for your assets, so you can be assured of getting the right price.

Where your old assets are sanitised and resold, Covenco will carefully test, clean, and package them. We sell computer equipment in refurbished condition, and great care is taken to ensure that every asset is sold in the best condition possible and can maintain a warranty.

6 Destruction and recycling of end-of-life hardware

If all data has been destroyed and an IT asset no longer holds resale value, end-of-life disposition would be the next step. Understanding the final processing of your end-of-life IT assets is essential because if done irresponsibly, your company could suffer the repercussions.

Some parts of the developing world have used illegitimate recyclers to dump old e-waste. If your equipment ended up in a third-world country, someone could pull the asset tags and determine you were a company contributing to the toxic environment and wrongful disposition of e-waste.

So, when an asset reaches the end of its useful life, Covenco will follow a process that securely destroys it beyond recovery. That process follows the best practice and standards that are laid out in the ISO 14001:2015 quality assurance policy.

Depending on the nature of the item, we may crush or shred components or the entire asset. Where an asset consists of recyclable materials, we will remove any hazardous components, separate all commodities of value and then send the resulting parts to downstream specialist recyclers for processing. Those refined commodities are then sold to manufacturers to be made into new products.

Covenco can provide certificates of destruction and recycling, which can be helpful for compliance or security documentation and any reporting or recognition for your environmental efforts.

Covenco's data and IT asset destruction service also delivers peace of mind in knowing your old equipment is wholly separated and shredded - leaving near zero risk for data retrieval.

Conclusion

Choosing an ITAD partner requires careful research and due diligence. Your data security is at risk, as is the reputation of your business.

Covenco provides the necessary chain-of-custody control, data destruction options, compliant recycling, detailed reporting, downstream audit control, and solid re-marketing returns demanded by diligent customers.

Covenco can also uniquely offer additional managed IT services that create additional value, such as our asset inventory and management audit services, infrastructure design and deployment, engineering, and data management solutions.

Our ISO 27001 accreditation provides customers with complete peace of mind by delivering comprehensive audit-ready compliance and reporting at a forensic level.

By selecting Covenco as your chosen ITAD partner, you can rapidly improve the security and control of the data you manage while generating an additional revenue stream for your IT department.



About Covenco

Covenco connects data management services with IT hardware supply and support. With over 34 years of experience in the IT industry, our team offers a reliable source of expertise for data centre administrators.

Covenco supports businesses with world-class data protection, backup, and disaster recovery services. Our UK data centres have over two Petabytes of customer data under management at any time, and we are fully ISO27001 accredited for data security.

Covenco supplies new, unused, and refurbished computer hardware from leading vendors, including IBM, HP, Dell/EMC, Lenovo, and Cisco. With global same-day shipping available, we have everything you could require at a fraction of the retail cost.

Our lifecycle solutions include fully certified Asset Recovery and Disposition (ITAD) Services, and we regularly buy back hardware as a part of a data centre refresh. For more information, visit: covenco.com

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