ITAD BENCHMARKING REPORT 2025

What's Trending in IT Asset Disposition Practices

SECURITY

SUSTAINABILITY & REUSE

RISING RESALE VALUES

CASCADE ASSET MANAGEMENT

ABOUT THIS REPORT

55 ENTERPRISES

343,000 EMPLOYEES

1.6M IT ASSETS

This eleventh edition of the Cascade Asset Management Annual Benchmarking Report offers helpful insights into security, environmental, and financial issues related to IT Asset Disposition (ITAD) and the broader field of IT Asset Management (ITAM). The findings are based on data gathered from our Annual Benchmarking Survey and Cascade's IT asset processing activities.

SURVEY RESULTS

Cascade's Annual Benchmarking Survey compiled detailed responses from 55 enterprises and organizations collectively representing over 343,000 employees.

ASSET PROCESSING DATA

Nearly 1.6 million assets processed by Cascade Asset Management between 2020 - 2024 were evaluated and analyzed for disposition trends.

MARKET RESEARCH & INSIGHTS

An analysis of key topics impacting ITAD decisions is presented throughout this report.

IDENTIFY BEST PRACTICES

Use the benchmarking information to help you understand how your ITAM/ITAD program compares to others and how you can further improve your systems.

CASCADE
ASSET MANAGEMENT

cascade-assets.com
info@cascade-assets.com
888-222-8399

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OBSERVATIONS

NEIL PETERS-MICHAUD
CO-FOUNDER & CEO

BACK TO NORMAL

It is with great relief to report that the findings of this Benchmarking Report indicate a return to pre-pandemic days for IT asset disposition (ITAD) programs. After four years of struggling with changing workforce needs, wild swings in secondary market prices for refurbished equipment, and a bout of 9%+ inflation, we are seeing business trends stabilize.

This report combines information gathered from a wide cross-section of IT asset management (ITAM) practitioners backed up by processing activity data from Cascade. Through these two perspectives, we see a growing confidence and evolution of organizations' ITAM programs and improved resale returns for retired, refurbished devices.

Some things remain consistent in our surveys with clients. Security is still the top priority in ITAD decisions, and organizations are increasingly adopting robust data sanitization standards like NIST 800-88 and IEEE 2883 into their practices. In addition, sustainability is gaining importance, with 34% of respondents now promoting their ESG initiatives, up from 19% in 2023.

We hope this report helps with planning your own programs so that you can better manage your IT program costs, maintain data security, and support the environment. **Let us know if we can compare your program to the benchmark and help you make the most of 2025.**

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

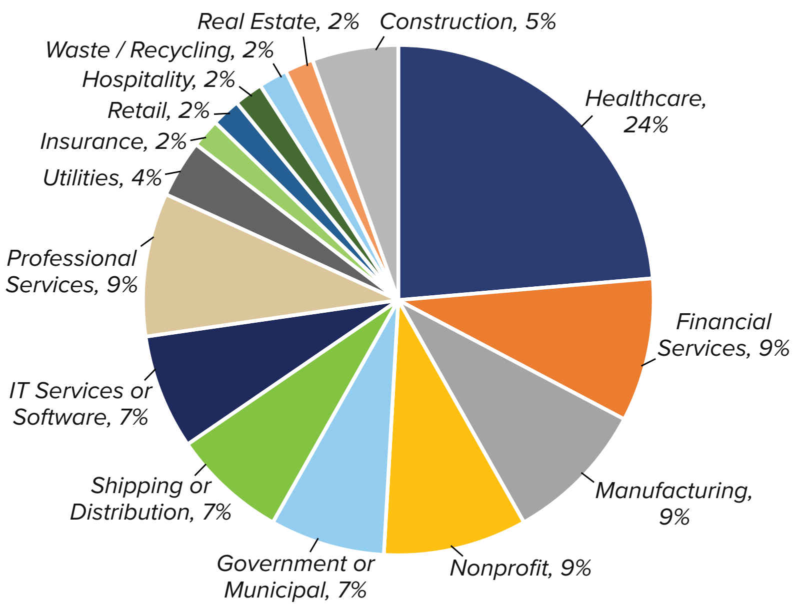
Industries: Participants in this year's benchmarking survey identified with 14 industries, spanning from highly-regulated sectors such as healthcare, financial services, government, and insurance to manufacturing, nonprofit, and several service categories.

Job Responsibilities: Regarding their organizational roles, a majority of respondents were part of the IT (45%) or IT Asset Management (22%) Department. The next largest category, at 15%, was Management, including Owner or President. Another 14% consisted of Environmental Health and Safety, Facilities Management, and Operations, while the remaining 4% were part of the Purchasing Department.

Organizational Size: The survey encompassed a wide range. The largest category (36%) was medium-sized firms, ranging from 100 - 1,000 employees. The next largest category, at 27%, was small enterprises (less than 100 employees). The larger brackets of 1,001 - 5,000 and 20,000+ each comprised 15%, while 7% of respondents were in organizations of 5,001 - 20,000 employees.

Number of Workstations *(desktops and laptops)***:** Our survey respondents' workstation counts closely aligned with organizational size, indicating most employees use company-issued devices.

Which term best describes your industry?



14
industries represented

67%
of respondents work in an **IT-related job role**

36%
work at a **medium-size company** *(100 - 1,000 employees)*

22%
manage 5,000+ workstations *(laptops & desktops)*

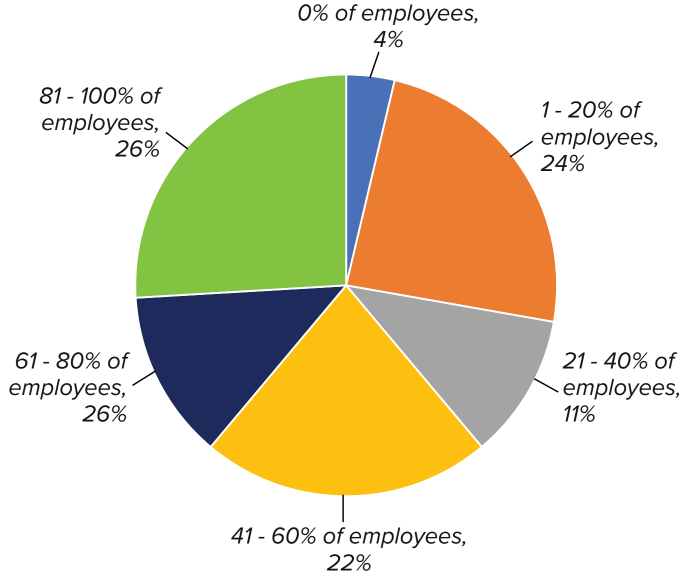
WORKPLACE TRENDS

Today's workforce operates across various environments: in-office, work-from-home, and hybrid. These diverse setups have added layers of complexity for IT leaders in managing and disposing of IT assets. As one survey participant highlighted, a top issue in the coming year is "reclaiming devices from remote associates and remote office locations ready for disposal."

Work Location Trends: Respondents identified the percentage of employees working primarily in-office, remote, or hybrid. As noted in the chart at the right, 26% reported most employees (81–100%) work primarily in the office, while 4% said none of them do. These findings emphasize the need for robust, flexible IT asset management strategies to accommodate a dispersed workforce.

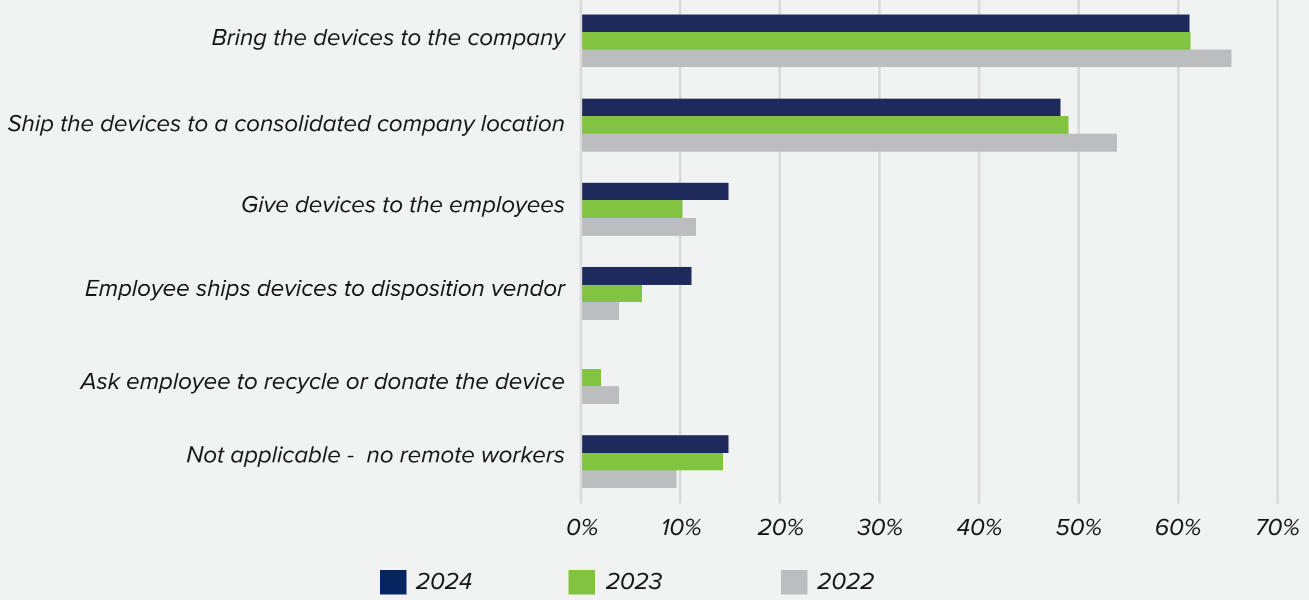
Device Recovery: IT asset recovery practices have evolved over the last three years. In 2024, there is a slight decline in employees shipping or delivering devices to company locations. Instead, 5% more organizations than in 2023, and nearly 8% more than in 2022, are using direct shipping to IT asset disposition providers. This trend could be aided by "box programs" designed to simplify the return process. There was also a modest rise in allowing employees to keep devices, although none opted for employee-driven recycling or donations. If devices have access to sensitive data or networks, IT managers should carefully consider employee-managed disposition options as they can open the company to risks.

What percentage of your organization's employees primarily work in the office:



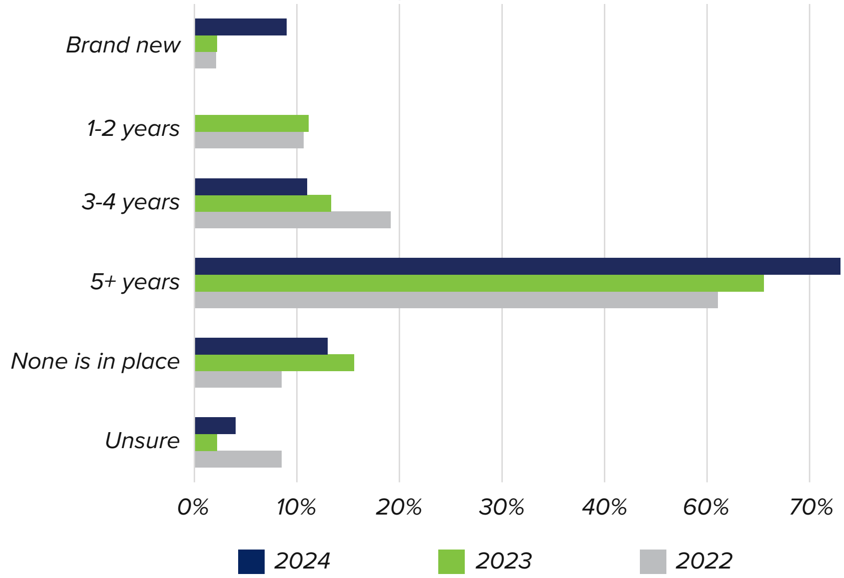
How do remote workers return their devices?

Choose all that apply

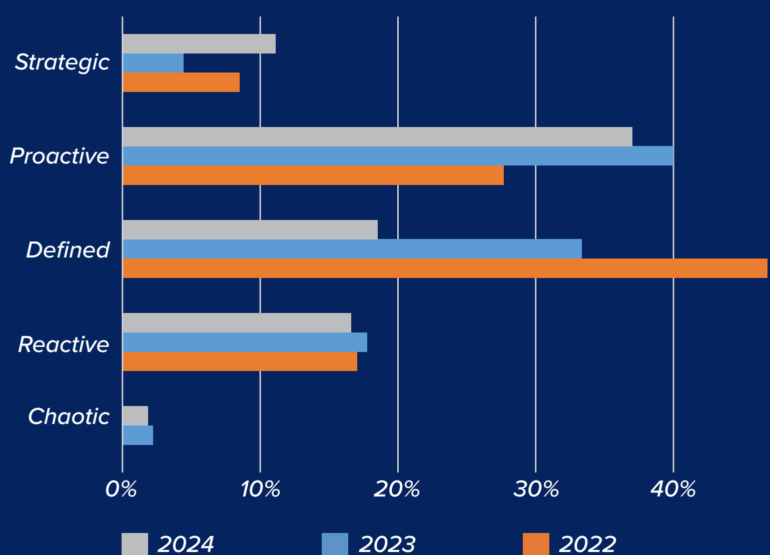


IT PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

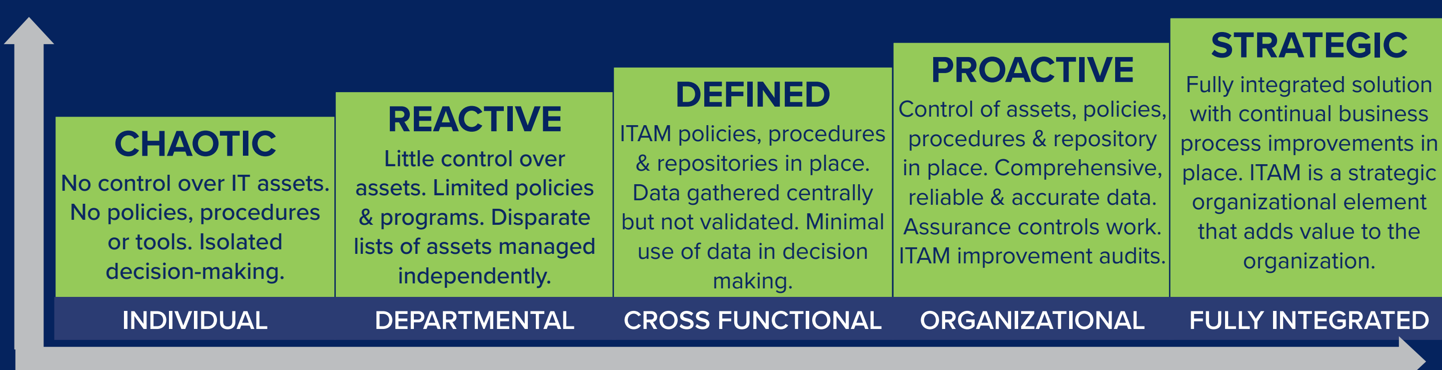
How long have you had a formal IT Asset Management program in place?



What stage of the "ITAM/ITAD Process Maturity Model" would you place your organization in?



IT Asset Program Management: Advancing an organization's IT asset management program to the "Strategic" level is a key objective for many. This year's survey revealed progress toward that goal, with an eight-point increase (11%) compared to last year. Although the "Proactive" category saw a slight decrease, it remained the second most selected response, with 37% of participants placing themselves in this category.



HARDWARE TRENDS

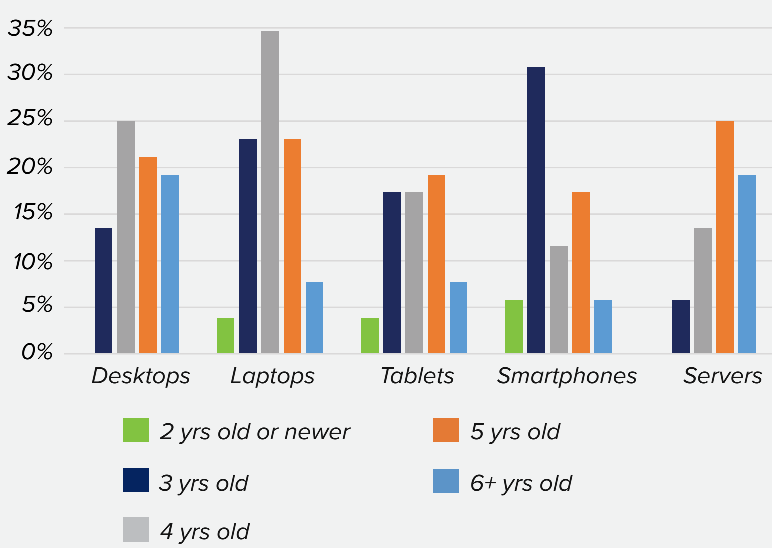
Smartphones: Our question on company-owned smartphones versus bring-your-own-device (BYOD) policies revealed a nearly even split in the weighted average of responses. Most organizations reported using a hybrid approach. Regardless of whether the company or the employee owns the smartphone, IT managers must consider the security implications for devices that are accessing sensitive data and company networks.

Data Storage: The trend toward outsourcing data center operations continues to grow. This year, 14% of respondents reported they no longer own or manage a data center. Among those who do, 33% plan to outsource the service in the future.

Device Retirement: Since the 2020 pandemic, there have been minor changes in the retirement ages of computers, with laptops showing the most variability. This survey question on device retirement ages also shed light on desktop usage trends. In 2022, we introduced the “not applicable” option and discovered that 23.4% of respondents had phased out desktops. The percentage shifted to 11.4% last year and was at 21.1% this year. In comparison, only 7.7% of this year’s respondents said they do not use laptops.

DEVICE TYPE	AVERAGE AGE AT RETIREMENT		
	2020	2022	2024
LAPTOPS	4.1 years	4.4 years	**4.1 years**
DESKTOPS	4.5 years	4.7 years	**4.6 years**

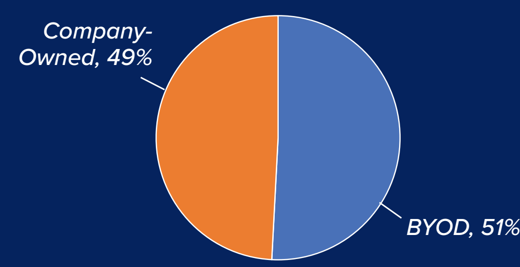
On average, how old are the assets you expect to retire in 2025?



SMARTPHONES

Company-owned Smartphone or Bring-Your-Own Device?

Weighted Average



SERVERS

33%

expect to **outsource** data services

2022: 13% | 2023: 22%

8%

expect to **expand** data center investments

2022: 2% | 2023: 13%

LAPTOPS

4.1 YEARS

average retirement age

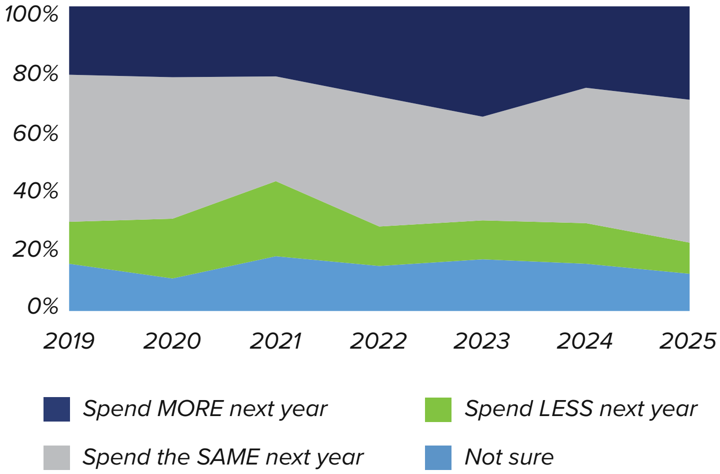
DESKTOPS

4.6 YEARS

average retirement age

IT ASSET MANAGEMENT

What is your expected investment in IT hardware next year?



IT BUDGET PROJECTIONS

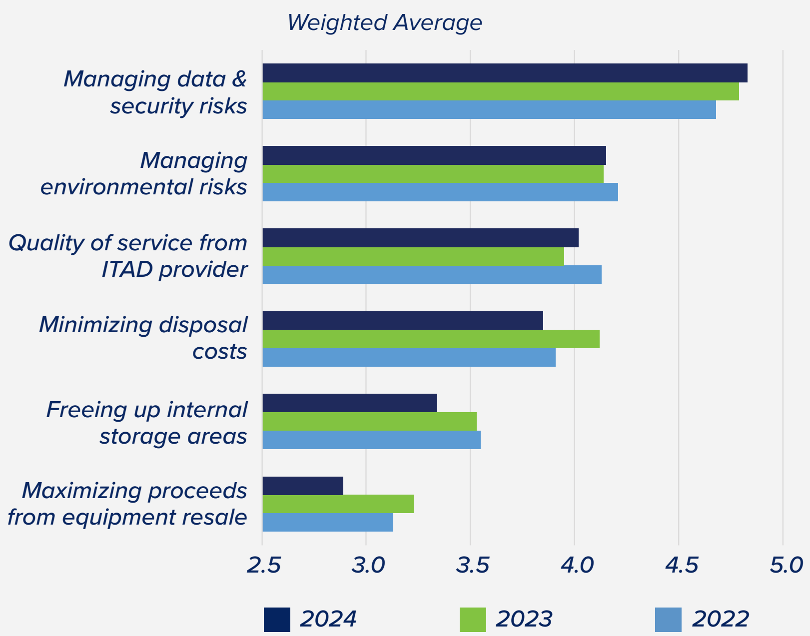
47%

expect to spend the **same** as 2024

IT Hardware Investments: According to this year's survey, 47% of respondents anticipate maintaining the same level of IT hardware investment in 2025 as in 2024, while 31% project an increase in spending. Only 10% expect to spend less, the lowest percentage we've seen in the seven-year trend shown above.

Observations: Although the survey did not capture specific reasons for IT spending predictions, respondents commented on several potential drivers. Some highlighted replacing devices as Windows 10 support ends. Others mentioned the need to refresh leased equipment, which may be related to devices acquired during the pandemic that are due for a refresh. AI technologies could also be influencing decisions related to hardware performance, storage, and security. Lastly, we are aware of situations where organizations need to catch up on deferred refreshes.

Rank the criteria used when disposing of technology:



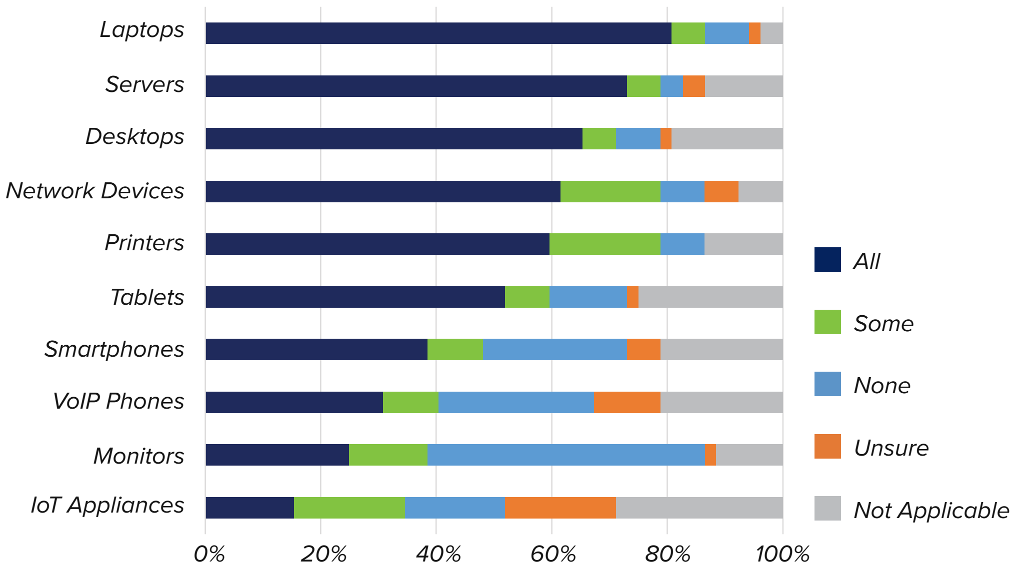
IT Asset Disposal Considerations:

Throughout the 11-year history of our Benchmarking Survey, respondents have consistently prioritized managing data and security risks, followed closely by addressing environmental concerns. Maximizing returns from re-marketed equipment remains in last place, with its lowest weighted average of 2.9 this year. This may stem from limited awareness about an ITAD provider's ability to securely wipe data, refurbish, resell, and re-purpose retired assets. These services reduce disposal costs, which is in fourth place on the list, along with the criteria ranked above it. For further insights, see the Sustainability section (page 11) and Resale Value details (pages 12-13) of this report.

ASSET TRACKING

Given today's dynamic technology and dispersed workforce, tracking devices throughout their life cycle offers proof that a device, and the data stored on it, was properly managed until retirement.

What types of assets do you track?



TRACKED ASSETS*

81% LAPTOPS

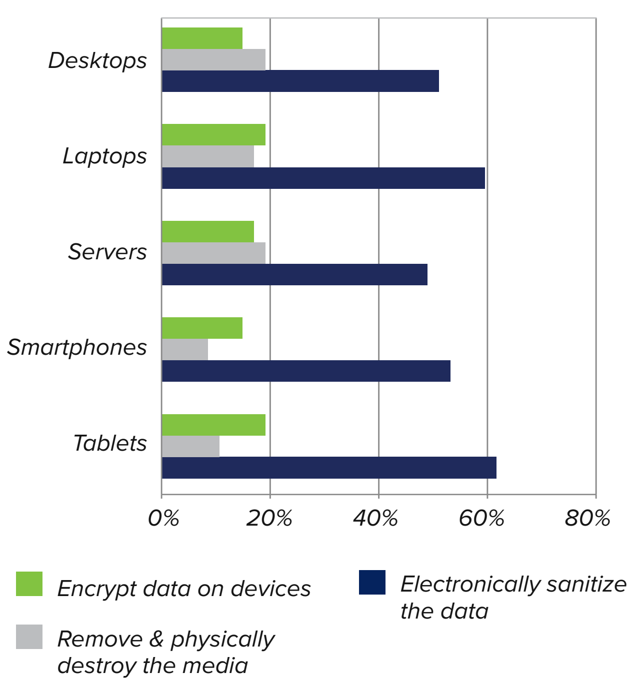
79% SERVERS

71% DESKTOPS

*Percentages show the sum of respondents who marked "All" and "Some"

DATA SECURITY

How do you secure the data on devices before sending them off-site for disposal?



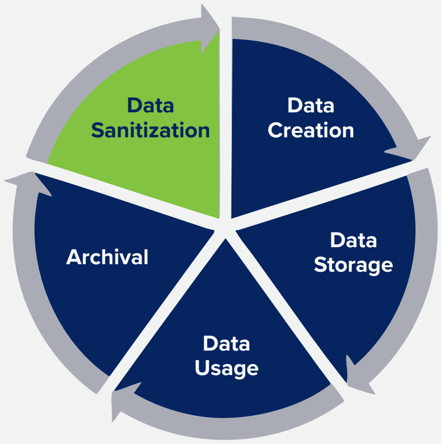
Layered Data Protection: Our survey reveals that organizations rely on both internal controls *and* trusted IT asset processors to prevent the loss of data from retired devices. The majority of survey respondents take the time to wipe data from their computer equipment before handing it off to an IT asset disposition (ITAD) vendor, which is then expected to also sanitize the devices. This provides an extra layer of accountability, along with auditable records and reporting, to demonstrate how each data storage device was sanitized.

The survey also showed that about 20% of the respondents removed and physically destroyed the drives from many of their devices. Similarly, 30.4% of the assets tested by Cascade in 2024 came from clients that required their drives to be pulled and shredded before selling the rest of the device.

DATA SECURITY STANDARDS

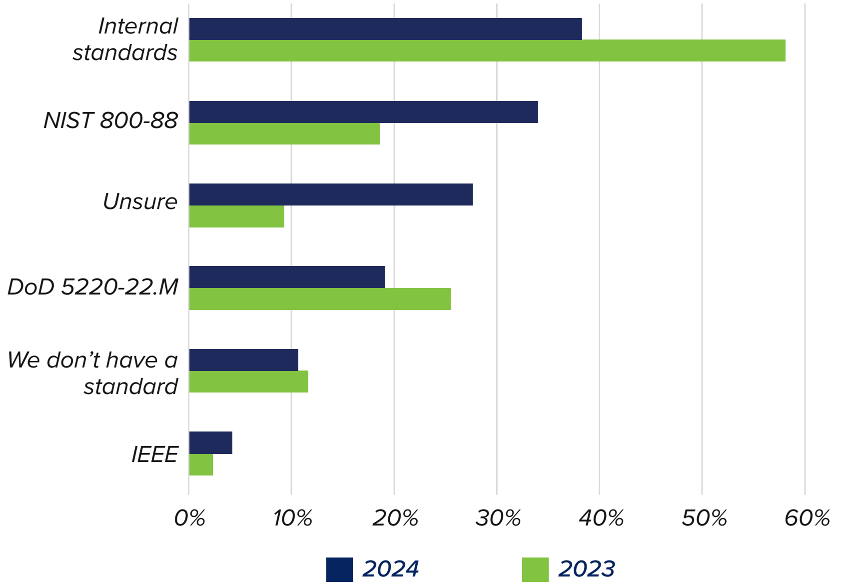
As data breaches become more costly, protecting sensitive information on retired IT assets has become more urgent than ever, especially for companies operating in regulated industries. This year's findings indicate a reduction in reliance on internal guidelines, outdated protocols such as DoD 5220-22.M, or no standards at all. Instead, the industry is increasingly turning to robust specifications like NIST 800-88 and the newest IEEE 2883 standard.

At Cascade, we adhere to the NIST 800-88 Guidelines for Media Sanitization (Revision 1) and hold NAID AAA certification. We're also integrating the IEEE 2883 standard into our practices. For an in-depth look at this new standard, explore the insights shared on our blog: *Cascade-Assets.com/IEEE2883-Future-Of-Data-Sanitization/*



Data sanitization is typically the last phase of data life cycle management and is necessary to avoid data breaches and meet compliance requirements.

What data sanitization standard(s) do you follow when retiring IT assets?
(Check all that apply)



METHODS

CLEAR
Prevents against simple non-invasive data recovery

PURGE
Infeasible data recovery with state-of-the art techniques

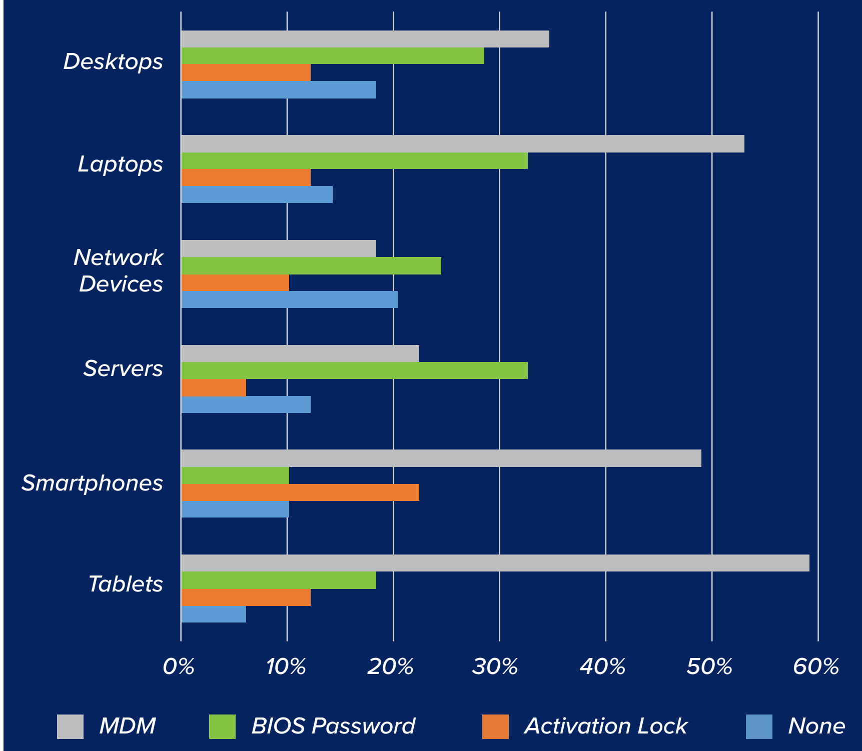
DESTRUCT
Leaves device in unusable state

Sanitization Standards listed from oldest standard to newest:

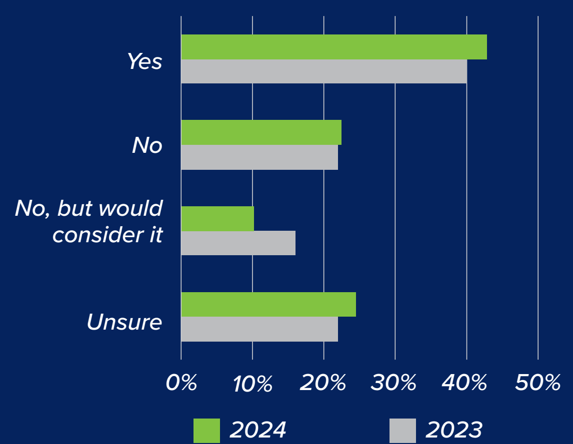
STANDARD	YEAR INTRODUCED	METHODS	NOTES
DOD 5220.22-M	1995 & 2006 update *Now obsolete*	3 or 7-pass overwriting	Not effective for SSD storage
NIST 800-88	2006 & 2014 update	Clear, Purge, & Destroy using various techniques	Addresses a variety of storage devices & interfaces
IEEE 2883	2022	Clear, Purge, & Destruct using various techniques	Addresses a variety of storage devices & interfaces including newer technologies

DEVICE UNLOCKING

What types of security locks do you use on your devices?



Do you allow your ITAD vendor to remove security locks so the devices can be re-marketed?



UNLOCKING VALUE IN SECURED IT ASSETS

Organizations implement security features like Mobile Device Management (MDM), BIOS passwords, and activation locks to protect their IT assets, networks, and data. These measures are vital for security but can create barriers for IT asset disposition (ITAD) providers when devices are retired.

An ITAD provider can securely and effectively remove these security controls to allow you to unlock the value of this asset and give it a second life. This not only creates opportunities for organizations to profit from resold devices but also supports sustainability goals.

Over the past three years, Cascade processed over 25,800 security locked assets, which is up over 61% from the prior period. In coordination with our customers, we securely unlocked over 67% of these assets, resulting in over $647,000 in resale revenue shared with our clients. However, it is becoming more challenging to unlock these devices. Previously we could unlock over 74% of them.

REASONS TO UNLOCK RATHER THAN RECYCLE

- Reusing or reselling a device provides value
- Deactivating locks saves on software subscription costs
- The environmental impact of extending a device's life is greater than recycling it
- Unlocking and electronically sanitizing a device is more secure

*Scan to learn more about how to unlock value from retired devices or visit **cascade-assets.com/remove-security-locks**.*

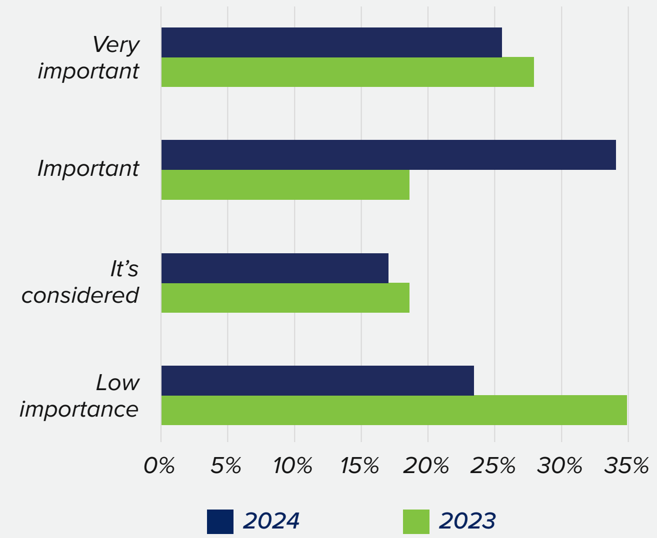
SUPPORTING SUSTAINABILITY

ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance)**:**
As global and regional regulations evolve, organizations are placing greater emphasis on e-waste management, energy efficiency, and IT sustainability. In the 11 years of our survey, respondents consistently ranked "managing environmental risks" as the second-most important factor in technology disposal (page 7). However, an IT asset manager's influence can extend even further by procuring sustainable technology, adopting circular economy strategies for hardware, and optimizing energy use.

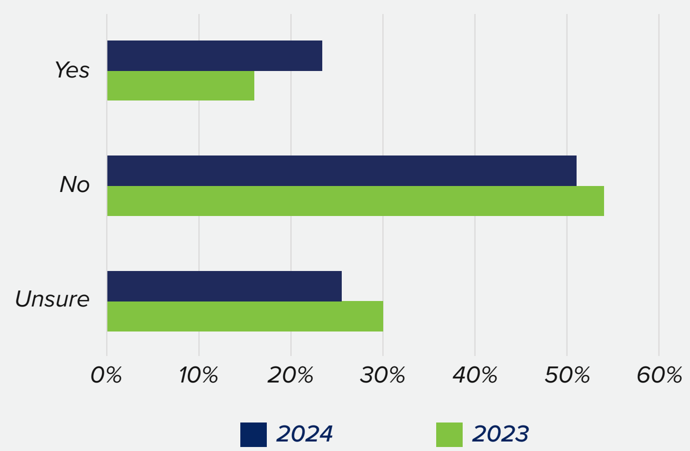
The 2024 Benchmarking Survey highlighted some shifts, with 34% of respondents marking ESG initiatives as "Important," a notable increase from 19% in 2023. Additionally, the number of businesses generating ESG or sustainability reports climbed to 23%, compared to 16% last year.

IT asset disposition (ITAD) companies, like Cascade, can immediately contribute to an organization's ESG goals. They often offer reports about processing activities, including the number and weight of devices reused and recycled as part of their disposition processes. This information can be fed into environmental impact calculators that generate data about the carbon emissions avoided by recycling and reusing electronics instead of mining virgin minerals to manufacture new products.

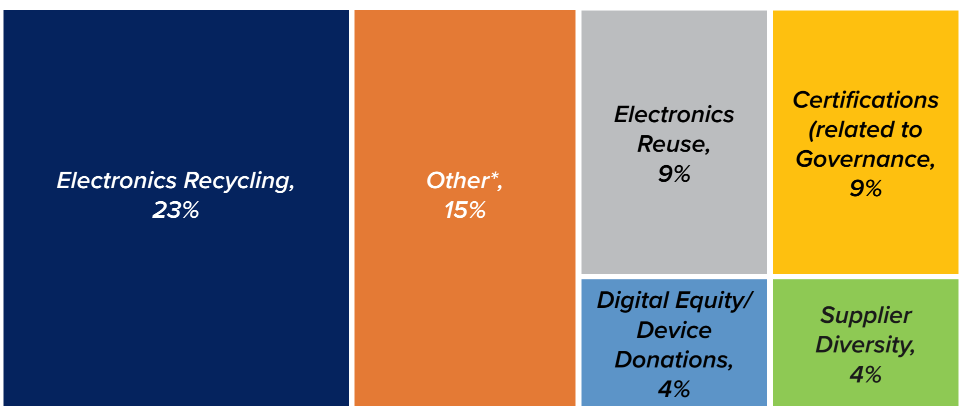
Rate your company's level of importance on ESG initiatives:



Does your company produce a public ESG or sustainability report?



What types of information is included in your company's ESG report?
(check all that apply)



**Comments regarding the "Other" category: One survey participant highlighted their organization's efforts in renewable energy, emissions reduction, cybersecurity, and social initiatives like employee diversity awareness and education, along with social impact investment. While another respondent admitted they were unaware of the topics featured in their company's report. IT departments that align their efforts with corporate ESG initiatives can benefit their organization, stakeholders, and the environment.*

RESALE VALUE TRENDS

Influencing Factors: The average price paid for refurbished devices is dependent on the following factors:

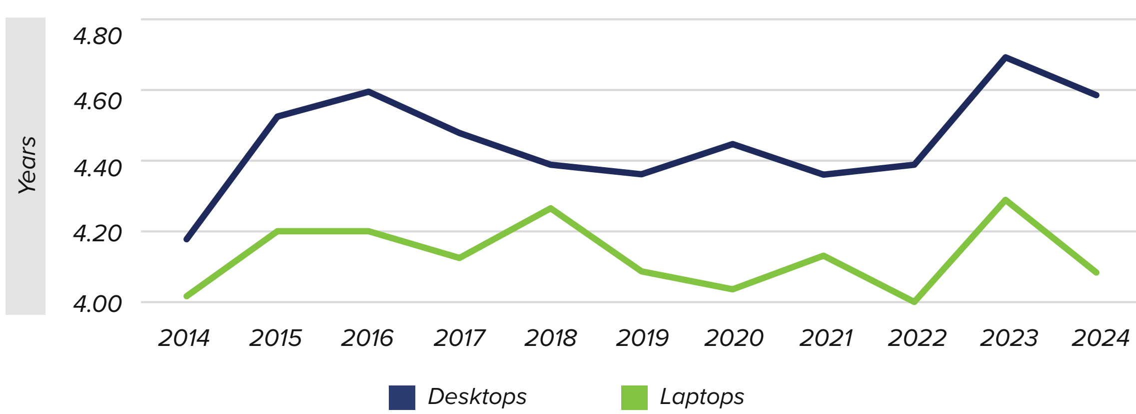
- Age of equipment
- Condition and quality of devices
- Global and local resale markets
- Demand for substitute products

Resale values in 2024 rebounded from the steep drop in prices that bottomed out in late 2022. Looking back to 2022 and 2023, the secondary market for refurbished devices suffered from delayed refresh activity that reduced the quality of products available to resell. Higher inflation caused organizations to curtail some of their IT purchases, which meant companies held onto their devices longer. When devices were retired, they were older and commanded lower resale prices. In 2024, as companies needed to upgrade their device fleet, they returned to a more regular IT asset retirement cycle resulting in a higher quality and more consistent stream of devices entering the secondary market.

The overall U.S. economy also returned to a more normalized level of business activity and inflation after being dramatically disrupted by COVID-19. Average resale values for all refurbished devices sold at Cascade grew by 14.4% since the pre-pandemic days of 2019. That represents an average annual growth rate of 2.7% over the past 5 years, which is a return to a normal growth rate, despite all the price swings of the intervening years.

We expect average refurbished computer resale values to continue to grow at a modest pace in 2025 as more companies indicate an increased investment in new IT equipment (page 7) and as the demand for Windows 11 capable devices, with a minimum Gen 8 processor, will kick into high gear by the end of 2025.

Average Age of Devices at Retirement



2024 AVERAGE RESALE VALUES

DESKTOPS

$ 38.54

2023	$ 33.55
2022	$ 54.90
2021	$ 72.82
2020	$ 52.83
2019	$ 45.88

LAPTOPS

$ 93.50

2023	$ 69.56
2022	$ 93.40
2021	$ 126.80
2020	$ 113.38
2019	$ 95.57

MOBILE DEVICES

$ 66.53

2023	$ 65.44
2022	$ 24.48
2021	$ 72.11
2020	$ 69.09
2019	$ 55.84

SERVERS

$ 190.89

2023	$ 181.70
2022	$ 204.30
2021	$ 235.66
2020	$ 203.95
2019	$ 146.32

RESALE VALUE TRENDS

DESKTOPS

A desktop's average resale value has not rebounded to pre-pandemic levels like laptops have. Many of the desktops retired from use right now are small form factor PCs with less relative computing power. These devices were easy to deploy during the pandemic. While the average price for a desktop rose by 14.8% from last year, the current values are 23.5% below their 6-year average.

LAPTOPS

Annual laptop resale values increased by 37.3% over the past year. This was the largest increase of any product category. A combination of better quality equipment, stronger domestic and international demand, and a more aggressive retail sales strategy from Cascade helped boost the values.

MOBILE DEVICES

The resale trend for smartphones and tablets is staying fairly level, with average values for this category rising by just 1.7% this year. Cascade saw a significant increase in the number of tablets retired this past year, as enterprises find more ways to integrate this form factor into their business operations.

SERVERS

The category of refurbished devices with the highest average value is servers. The average resale value of Cascade refurbished servers grew by 5.1% last year. We expect there to be significant changes and disruptions of data center equipment retirement driven by the adoption of AI in the marketplace.

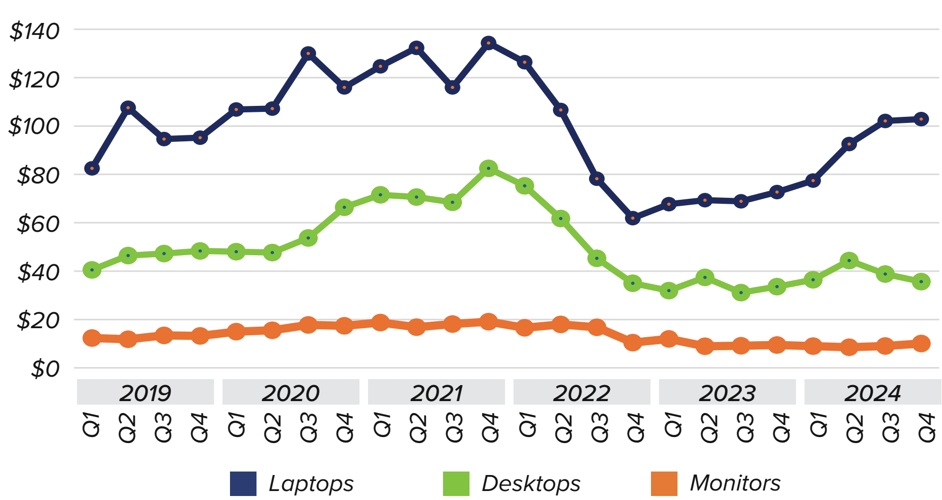
RESALE VALUE TREND ANALYSIS

For clients who authorize the reuse of their retired equipment, Cascade focuses on maximizing asset value. We work with the customer on effective refurbishing methods and then re-market the items via popular retailers like Cascade Marketplace, eBay, Amazon Renewed, and Walmart Restored, as well as our global dealer network.

The refurbished IT market has rebounded strongly since it bottomed out in the summer of 2022. The average base prices for laptops, desktops, mobile devices, and servers rose 29.2% in the fourth quarter of 2024 compared to the same quarter in 2023. Laptops drove most of this growth with a 41.5% increase in base sales prices over this period.

This growth in resale values is due to the stronger global market demand for refurbished products, a lower average age of retired devices (see page 12), and increased retail channel sales by Cascade. In 2023, 8.2% of our sales went through direct-to-consumer sales. That rate rose to 15.9% in 2024. The market for refurbished products through domestic retail channels is stronger than ever.

Average Resale Values of Retired Assets



The prices shown in this graph represent the average cash price paid to Cascade after all fees are deducted from the sale. We share a percentage of the resale earnings with our clients. These values do not include optional upgrades or software application installations.

TOP ITAD CHALLENGES

Survey respondents offered the following comments when asked about their top IT asset disposition challenges for the coming year.

SECURITY

- *"We are currently in the process of closing our business and transferring things to buyers of parts of our business. There is a lot of work and focus on device return, wiping and destruction to ensure there are no issues with PHI still left on stale devices."*
- *"Making sure all data is destroyed."*
- *"Chain of custody verification."*
- *"Preventing data loss."*

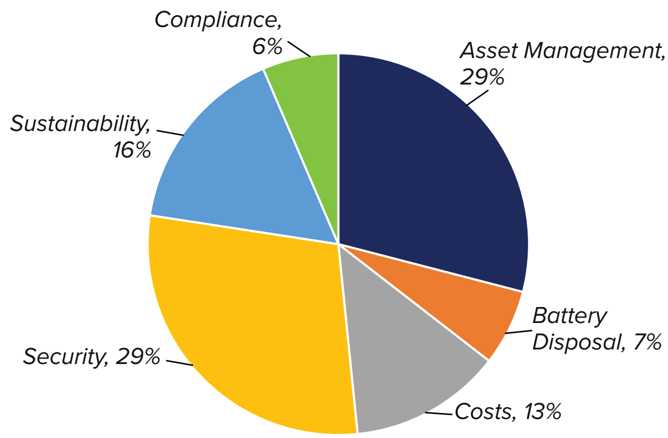
SUSTAINABILITY

- *"Maintaining environmental consciousness, keeping costs in check, as well as maintaining high data security."*
- *"Looking at maybe adding a bin for our employees to be able to bring stuff from home to dispose of properly."*

BATTERY DISPOSAL

- *"Potentially more concerns with Lithium-Ion Batteries especially as it pertains to UPS."*

Most important ITAD issues you'll be facing in the next year:



ASSET MANAGEMENT

- *"Keeping pace with upcoming EOL [end of life] of Win10 and replacement of devices to meet Win11 requirements."*
- *"Tracking and collecting remote assets."*
- *"Reclaiming devices from remote associates and remote office locations that are ready for disposal."*
- *"The return of leased equipment coming off lease and replacing with new."*
- *"Having the time/manpower to deploy the older gear that we want to replace is a challenge and will likely remain that way."*

COSTS

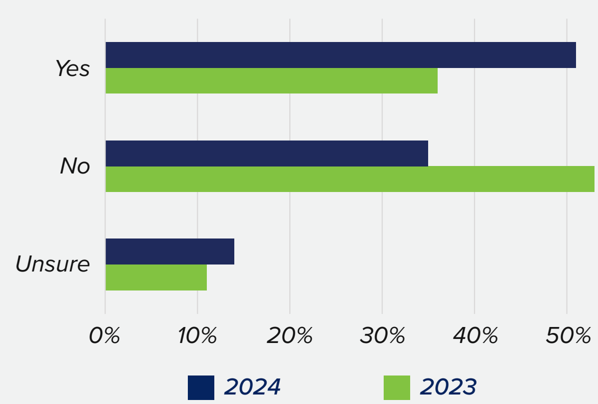
- *"Balancing security risk with cost."*

LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES

Lithium-ion batteries are common in electronics, making it essential for IT asset managers and ITAD providers to recognize their risks. This year, 51% of respondents said they've implemented handling procedures—a 15% increase from last year.

Li-ion batteries require special handling to prevent fires and meet Department of Transportation shipping requirements. If you encounter swollen or damaged batteries, order a special kit from *Call2Recycle* or contact Cascade for safe, legal packing service. Meanwhile, store the batteries away from flammable materials.

Do you have a process to identify, store, and dispose of damaged Li-Ion batteries?



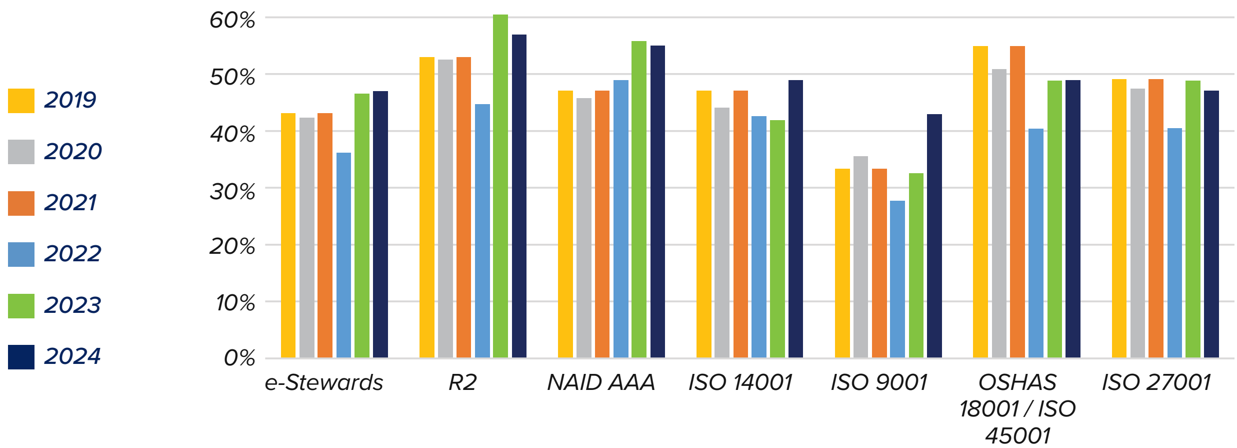
ITAD CERTIFICATIONS

THE VALUE OF INDUSTRY CERTIFICATIONS

As highlighted on page 7, the top considerations when retiring technology are security, sustainability, and the IT asset disposition (ITAD) provider's quality of service. A reliable way to ensure an ITAD vendor meets these needs is by reviewing their certifications. These certifications are crucial because they confirm third-party evaluations on strict criteria rather than self-attested claims.

However, our survey reveals that certifications' value remains largely unfamiliar. In 2024, over 40% of respondents said they don't know what these certifications are. This topic requires continued education by ITAD providers and industry partners.

I don't even know what that certification is!



CERTIFICATION TYPES

All of the certifications listed below are issued and audited by a third party.

Certification Principles					2024 Survey Results: Importance of Certifications				
Certification	Quality	Safety	Security	Sustainability	Critically Important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	I don't even know what that is!
e-Stewards CERTIFIED		✓	✓	✓	6%	34%	4%	9%	**47%**
R2		✓	✓	✓	6%	23%	2%	11%	**57%**
AAA NAID CERTIFIED			✓		11%	21%	2%	11%	**55%**
ISO 14001 CERTIFIED				✓	9%	26%	2%	15%	**49%**
ISO 9001 2015 CERTIFIED	✓				15%	26%	9%	9%	**43%**
ISO 45001:2016		✓			6%	28%	4%	13%	**49%**
ISO 27001			✓		13%	23%	9%	9%	**47%**

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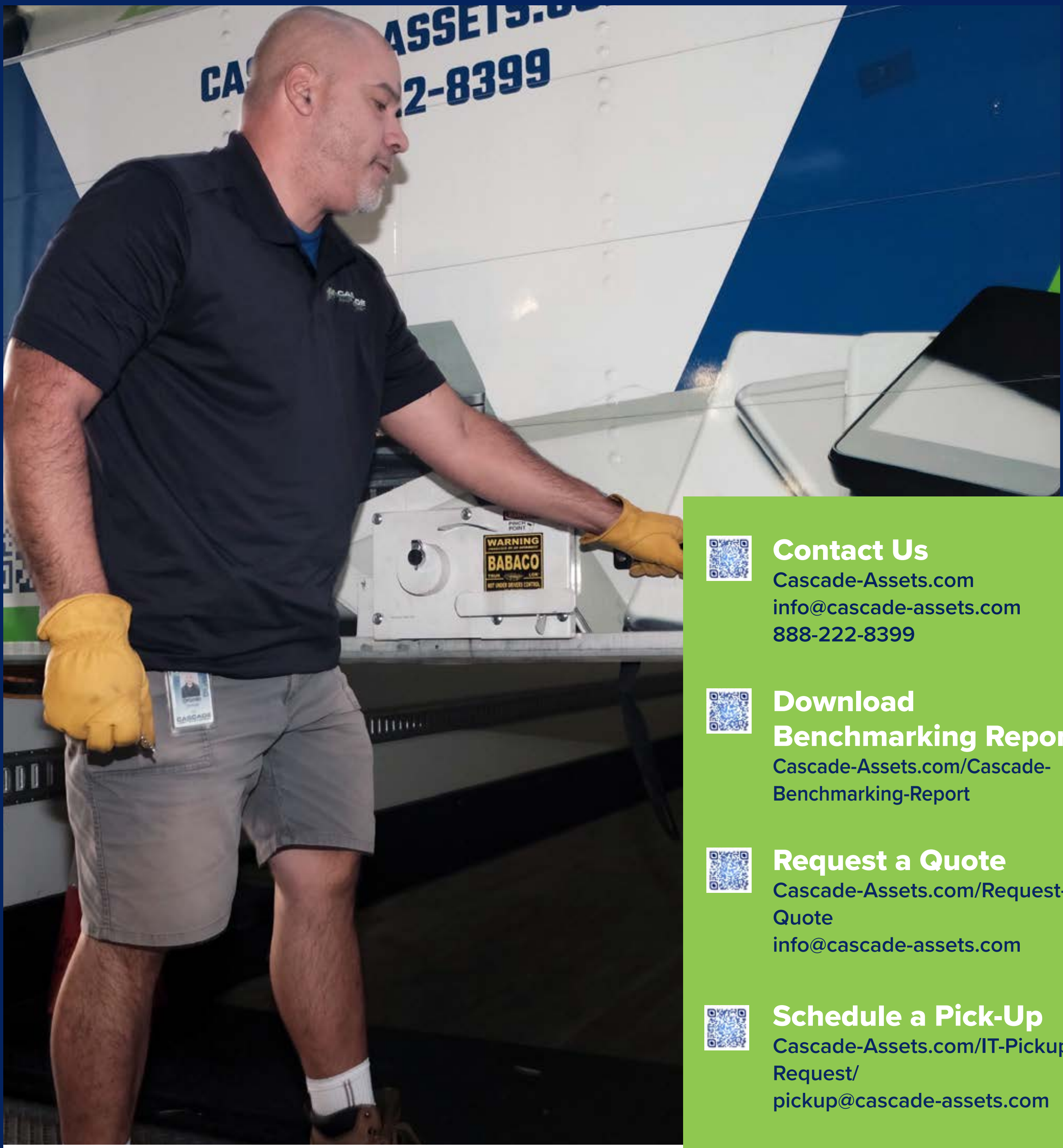

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