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GETTING YOU BACK TO WORK

Before You Give Away Your Old Computer

So what do you do with that old pile of computers that may have some use left, even though they no longer meet the requirements for your organization? What are the security risks in either selling or disposing of the systems? In this article we will cover how to minimize these risks to your organization, and the best ways to get that old computer ready for its new owner, or the dumpster.

Many organizations maximize the return on their computer investments by replacing them every three to four years. Once the system end-of-life has been reached, a decision needs to be made with regards to the best approach in disposing the equipment. The most common approaches to this are:

- Recovering costs by selling to internal staff or general public
- Donate to local charity (you may receive a tax receipt)
- Donate to students or other individuals in need of a computer
- Dispose of the equipment at the local recycling centre

Here are some considerations that you will want to be aware of before letting go of your equipment.

Security Considerations

The hard drive is the most common component for security risks to your organization. It has stored a lot of important data while in use for your organization, and that information is not easily erased. Using software utilities, it is possible to extract the data from the hard drive, even after it has been deleted. Here are some guidelines for securing your information:

- Good: the hard drive should be reformatted (erased) and a fresh copy of licensed Windows should be installed and configured
- Better: Use special software utilities to “clean” the hard drive, and then install and configure a fresh copy of licensed Windows. Look for utilities that have been certified or recommended by the Department of Defense

Licensing Considerations

There are some general guidelines when it comes to either keeping software or bundling it with the computer you are disposing of. First, if your computer came with Windows and / or Microsoft Office pre-installed, you can transfer the ownership of it with the computer. If there were any restore disks or utilities that came with your computer, make sure you keep them with the machine as well. When in doubt about what to do with your software, check your licensing agreements.

Trinus Technologies can supply your organization with the tools and services necessary to dispose of your equipment properly. Contact Jason Vance through the Trinus office at 877-489-9985 or via e-mail jvance@trinustech.com for a custom solution that will address your needs.