



# Transforming the digital customer experience:

4 STEPS TO IT ASSET  
MANAGEMENT MATURITY

EBOOK

# Introduction

Over the last few years, enterprises have been rapidly migrating their IT network infrastructure from traditional hardware-based devices to software-defined networks, composed of both hardware and software assets.

Managing this evolving environment presents new levels of operational complexity due to the interaction between IT hardware and software consumption, along with the introduction of new subscription vehicles such as enterprise agreements. This represents new challenges for Technology Partners – such as Service Providers (SPs), Value-Added Resellers (VARs) and Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) – when selling products and services to their Enterprise Customers.

The introduction of next generation IT Asset Management (ITAM) technology and governance is critical if these players are to successfully navigate this inflection point and implement the appropriate controls and personnel to properly validate, cleanse and optimize their data.



*By incorporating a mature ITAM practice into your offering, you are building a sustainable, trustworthy foundation that will enhance the customer experience and drive business outcomes for both you and your Enterprise Customers.*

# THE FOUR STEPS TO IT ASSET MANAGEMENT MATURITY

When managing complex IT networking environments, one of the major obstacles that stakeholders often must overcome is a lack of data alignment across their connected channel ecosystem. While the OEM may have their own in-house database of assets sold or under maintenance, this often represents a different view from that of the Technology Partner and the Enterprise Customer. The resulting data misalignment is a common source of frustration and cost, as all parties burn significant cycles in an attempt to establish a position of mutual trust.

Inaccurate and untrustworthy data can result in serious consequences for every stakeholder, including loss of revenue, missed business opportunities and an inability to meet customer expectations.

Fortunately, there's a way to prevent these problems. Technology Partners and OEMs can follow these four simple steps to solve their customers' operational issues, enhance their customer experience (CX) and grow their top line:

- Visibility
- Accuracy
- Control
- Optimization



## Visibility

The ITAM maturity journey starts with visible and accessible asset data. Visibility is essential to understanding exactly what type of asset data organizations have and where it resides. Most IT departments attempt to achieve this by maintaining their own configuration management database (CMDB); a repository used to store a list of all their assets and the relationships between them. This is a prerequisite to understanding their network environment and running effective internal operations.

However, in order to build a mature ITAM practice and obtain a complete view of their asset install base, all stakeholders, including Technology Partners, OEMs and Enterprise Customers, must have access to this data. They have to be able to share and exchange this data so that when something is changed in one system, it translates to the others. Without this capability, all organizations will hold disparate views of the Enterprise Customer's asset data. This could result in wasted resources, leading to contract management problems and issues with renewals in the future.

It's vital that Technology Partners and OEMs have this single, homogenized view of all the data in their channel; a "Single Source of Truth" (SSOT). It will help them not only identify new business opportunities, but also increase customer satisfaction and enhance the overall customer lifecycle experience.

## Accuracy

Accuracy and validation are the next core components of a mature ITAM practice. All too often, organizations overlook this step, jumping from visibility straight to governance. It is important to remember that no matter how visible and accessible data is, if it's inaccurate and unvalidated, it's unusable.

Asset data is constantly changing as it passes between organizations and as individual stakeholders make their own updates and adjustments. Data also changes with the simple passage of time; consequently, it will automatically become inaccurate unless managed on an ongoing basis. A mature ITAM practice ensures data across all stakeholder systems remains accurate and validated so that it can be acted upon with confidence.

Successful Technology Partners and OEMs will have automated systems and processes that automatically correlate, audit and validate data across multiple different systems. This ensures that when any stakeholder throughout the channel accesses the data, they are accessing the most accurate and up-to-date version. This crucial step creates a "Unified Source of Truth" - a baseline of accurate data properly aligned across all stakeholder systems.





## Control

Accurate data will not remain so forever. Unless continuously governed, asset data can become inaccurate extremely quickly. Therefore, organizations must have the proper control and governance protocols in place to maintain data accuracy over time.

Many Technology Partners and OEMs operate with manual governance processes that are time-consuming, requiring huge teams to execute them successfully. Worse than the time and cost drain, however, are the missed opportunities, inaccurate quotes and customer satisfaction issues that arise.

It's essential that Technology Partners and OEMs have an automated system of governance to ensure their data is consistently updated and kept accurate. Organizations that use automation to achieve this stand to benefit from considerable cost savings, due to the reduced amount of time and number of people needed to maintain data governance. Automated governance systems also ensure better outcomes for Enterprise Customers, strengthening long-term business relationships.

By instituting the right governance processes, Technology Partners and OEMs can maintain their Enterprise Customers' Unified Sources of Truth over time and gain control over the integrity and quality of their data.

# Optimization

The final step to ITAM maturity is essential because it allows organizations to actualize the value of their mature IT Asset Management practice. Without taking the final step to complete the process, the value derived from the previous three is greatly diminished and organizations risk missing out on the benefits gained from a mature ITAM practice.

After completing the first three steps, organizations can leverage the data from their Unified Source of Truth to achieve meaningful business outcomes that are relevant to their organization. For example, the data can be used to identify uncovered assets and assets nearing their end of life. By utilizing these insights, Technology Partners and OEMs can help reduce their Enterprise Customers' risk of non-compliance and network downtime.

By optimizing their ITAM practice, Technology Partners and OEMs are able to drive new customer experiences, increase customer satisfaction and ensure that all stakeholders' understanding of the data is aligned and unified. The resulting data integrity enhances trust, leading to additional monetization opportunities and increased customer stickiness.

# OUTCOMES

## For Technology Partners and OEMs

Organizations can ensure that asset data throughout the channel is kept accurate and actionable by adopting a mature IT Asset Management practice. A mature practice enables Technology Partners and OEMs in the networking industry to:

- **Increase topline revenue** by identifying new revenue-generating opportunities within their data, including new product sales, enterprise agreement growth and contract/subscription renewal opportunities.
- **Reduce revenue leakage** by identifying root causes of the leakage and creating actionable strategies to minimize unnecessary revenue loss.
- **Increase internal efficiencies** through the automation of manual processes to save the amount of time and personnel devoted to completing core tasks.
- **Reduce OPEX spend** by outsourcing key aspects of their ITAM solutions to a trusted third-party expert to drastically reduce operational expenditures.

## For Enterprise Customers

ITAM also enables Technology Partners and OEMs to enhance customer experience (CX) and satisfaction by helping their Enterprise Customers achieve their desired business outcomes, including:

- **Reducing maintenance overspend** by identifying over- and underutilized software licenses to adjust and reduce license overspend.
- **Reducing risk of network downtime** by proactively ensuring that critical network devices have proper service coverage before costly downtime events occur.
- **Reducing risk of software license non-compliance** through the proper management of software licensing consumption and ensuring that licenses are being reused correctly.
- **Preventing enterprise agreement misuse** by proactively managing consumption and by implementing processes to avoid costly True Forward events and restrict access to enterprise agreement licensing by unapproved sources.



# Conclusion

A mature ITAM practice enables Service Providers, Value-Added Resellers and OEMs to derive maximum value from their asset data and enhance business outcomes. This can look different for Technology Partners and OEMs:

- **Service Providers and Value-Added Resellers:**  
The rise of a software licensing model within the networking industry gives SPs and VARs an opportunity to leverage a mature ITAM practice to create new service offerings for their Enterprise Customers. This enables them to identify problems and build solutions that exceed customer expectations.
- **Original Equipment Manufacturers:**  
The shift away from hardware-based networking devices has caused revenue streams for manufacturers to move from hardware product sales to the utilization and consumption of features. A mature ITAM practice ensures that OEMs can maximize their recurring revenue and identify new revenue opportunities at scale.

Mature ITAM practices have the power to transform the digital customer experience. By investing in a mature ITAM practice, Technology Partners and OEMs are investing in the future of their and their customers' businesses.

The legacy approach of "making do" with spreadsheets, manual processes and siloed data will no longer suffice. Automation, mature ITAM practices and an accurate Unified Source of Truth are paramount for success in the digital economy.

RAY ALLEN has the technology, solutions and expertise to help you transform your IT Asset Management practice and achieve full ITAM maturity. **Contact us** today to learn more.



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