

eCS Planet

N° 9
June
2008

News from ECS Group

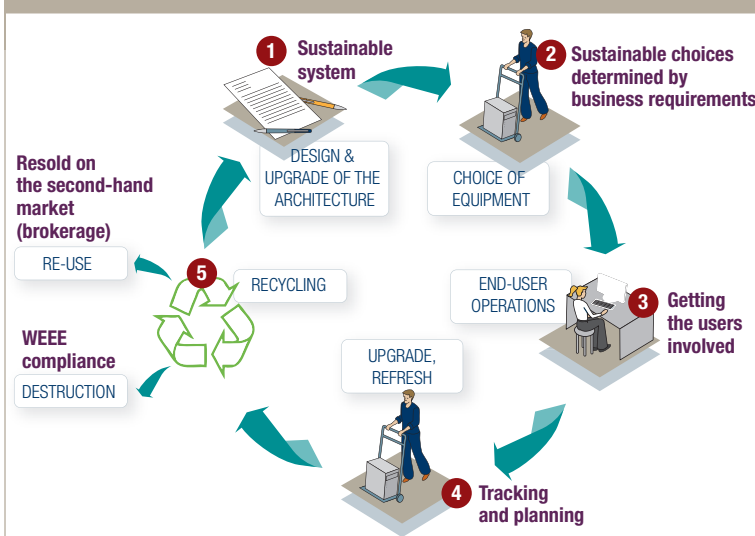


→ FEATURE

WEEE: from legal requirement to sustainable IT management strategy

The legal requirements for recycling equipment are not just an afterthought but the final stage in an overall end-of-life management process which should be planned from the moment the hardware is purchased. Although ostensibly a burden or chore, the European WEEE directive should be seen as an incentive to encourage companies to adopt a more sustainable, environmentally responsible approach, for which they can rely on the combined administrative and technical expertise of a partner such as ECS.

INCLUDING THE END-OF-LIFE PROCESS IN AN OVERALL SUSTAINABLE IT RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY



Almost three years after it came into force in August 2005, the European Community directive 2002/96/EC on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) is beginning to have an impact on companies: the legal obligation to recycle IT and electronic equipment often results in a considerable rise in the total cost of ownership, as the collection and recycling costs of obsolete equipment now have to be factored into the TCO. For equipment purchased before 1st August 2005, these costs are borne by the user companies, whereas for any equipment purchased thereafter, producers are required to finance the collection and processing of EEE. WEEE compliance requirements vary slightly from country to country in the EU: for example, in France, consumers must pay an





→→ “eco-tax” on electrical and electronic goods; this system has yet to be implemented in other member states, although some UK manufacturers have been urging the UK government to allow them to impose a similar visible fee on products to cover disposal costs.

Hidden costs

The WEEE directive is all about anticipating: eco-tax-type systems, for example, are designed to provide for the cost of end-of-life recycling at the very beginning of the lifecycle. One mistake often made by companies is to treat end-of-life management as separate from the overall equipment lifecycle process. From both an administrative and technical vantage, end-of-life equipment tends to be somewhat overlooked in favour of more recent, value-add producing equipment. Yet it is this lack of a consistent approach to equipment management that is one of the main causes of spiralling costs and increasing workloads for IT departments when it comes to the recycling and disposal stage: a great deal of crucial information concerning the location, hardware configuration etc, is lost, generating extra packaging and assembling costs. If end-of-life management is seen as a

chore and a financial burden, this is largely because companies have failed to grasp the extent of its strategic importance.

A virtuous circle

Environmental legislation has broader, more long-term implications than a company's image with respect to clients and investors: the European directive ultimately aims to encourage companies to embark on a virtuous circle of sustainable, ecologically responsible IT resource management. Implementing such a project

For more info

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ECS Solutions

Refresh audit

By conducting an inventory of their assets, ECS' experts can assess companies' equipment needs and help them build a refresh strategy for each category of equipment.

Logistics management

Assisted by a European network of IT transport specialists, ECS provides an end-to-end logistic service for obsolete equipment, from packaging

→ INTERVIEW

Pascal Goyer,

IT Director
ORCOM (France)



ORCOM (FRANCE)

« ECS helped us virtualise our storage servers »

Orcom is one of France's top twenty accounting firms, with a turnover of €25 million. Created in 1979, Orcom has since pursued an extensive, sustained external growth strategy. In 2006, the integration of two new companies with around a hundred new employees meant that Orcom's IT Director Pascal Goyer had to reorganise the company's IT infrastructure; to assist him, he called upon ECS' consolidation and virtualisation expertise.

What were the IT implications of Orcom's inorganic growth?

In 2006, Orcom Group bought out 3 firms of chartered accountants, thereby pushing the number of users up from 230 to 330.

Historically, we had only ever had physical servers, each of which was dedicated to a particular application. But in view of other future acquisitions, it became necessary to adapt the architecture. We therefore decided to consolidate using server and storage virtualisation technologies.

successfully requires expertise in both the administrative and technical management of IT assets: IT asset leasing offers a number of advantages in this area, such as roll-out and maintenance tools, guidelines for users, and real-time technical and administrative tracking capabilities. ECS has considerable experience in the fields of reusing and recycling equipment, and can help IT Directors lead the way in their companies with environmentally sound best practices, focusing on re-assigning or recycling equipment within the company or selling it on the second-hand market.

and collecting to assembling. Whenever new machines are deployed, the old equipment destined for the second-hand market is collected.

Tracking

Each piece of equipment can be tracked at every stage of the recycling process via its serial number, right up until certified disposal by an accredited recycling partner chosen by ECS. Customers can therefore provide proof of their WEEE compliance.

ECS Solutions

What the expert says



MATHILDE SAINT-POL

As Director of Leasing Services Marketing at ECS, Mathilde Saint Pol is in charge of devising leasing offers including financial engineering solutions and developing related services. A graduate of the Lille School of Management, Mathilde joined ECS with 15 years' experience in technology funding, having previously worked for various finance houses and IT service companies.

Draft IT resource user guidelines

Sustainable IT equipment management is not the sole responsibility of a company's IT department: the onus is also on the user to prolong the useful life of the asset. By drafting a set of guidelines for use, the IT department could convey a certain message to users, starting with the simple fact that an IT asset is the company's property and is acquired for the sole purpose of achieving that company's business objectives. The guidelines could point

out that users are not necessarily the best judges of when a computer is obsolete, as well as raising awareness of ways in which to prepare equipment for future re-use, such as regular cleaning. The document could also formalise the regulations governing personal data or software management, with a view to simplifying migration at the end of the equipment's useful life and deleting confidential data before it is put out for recycling.

→ For more info: www.ecs-group.com/solutions

What influenced your choice of solution?

Our IT structure is relatively small so, above all, we were looking for a solution that was suited to our size without generating extra workloads. Our choice was largely influenced by other IT Directors' experiences. For virtualisation, we opted for VMWare technology as this offered all the features and benefits we were looking for, and to roll out the new infrastructure, we chose ECS as they understood our infrastructure consolidation needs.

In what way was ECS' expertise a key advantage?

Server and storage virtualisation are two very different areas, each with their own specific issues and requirements, and what impressed us about ECS was their expertise in both. ECS' engineers integrated the solutions in two phases: the least mission-critical servers first, followed by the rest. Both phases were completed within the agreed timeframe and have already delivered in terms of the benefits we were expecting: our IT

infrastructure can now accommodate – without making any further changes – 30% more users, and it only takes a few hours to integrate the users from a new company: we just need to carry out the basic systems operations (for example, creating and configuring the user accounts).

INTERVIEW



Is green IT a thing of the near future?

Driven both by public opinion and legislation, the green IT trend is progressing as manufacturer technology evolves. But by adopting a more environmentally responsible attitude, companies can also make considerable cost savings.

The green IT wave is upon us. Prompted by increasingly ecologically friendly government legislation, software and hardware manufacturers are favouring more energy-saving manufacturing processes and avoiding the use of hazardous substances in compliance with the RoHS directive. Every day sees the arrival of new low-energy hardware or processors, and some computers already contain biodegradable materials. But such measures can also prove advantageous for the company, both in terms of image and cost-savings.

Companies play an essential role

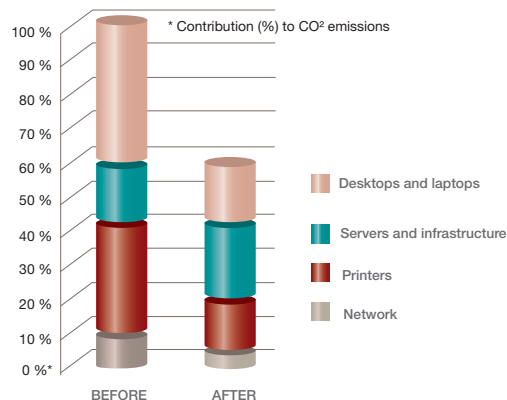
Green IT measures consist largely in implementing environmental best practices for use of IT resources. An obvious and simple example would be urging users to switch off their PCs when not in use. But companies can take this approach much further by

making environmental considerations an integral part of their technological choices and refresh strategy. For example, systems with dual or quad-core processors consume less energy than mono-core CPUs; similarly, LCD and LED monitors use considerably less electricity and produce less electromagnetic radiation than CRT screens. The IT architecture can also be reviewed along more ecological lines: using the same amount of electricity, server and storage consolidation using virtualisation solutions means at least 50% of the resources are used all the time, whereas a web server, for example, typically uses only 15% of the infrastructure capacity. To assist them in implementing such a strategy, companies can call upon ECS, whose financial engineering and asset management expertise can help them anticipate and spread out the costs of equipment refreshes and quickly roll out sustainable solutions. ECS' technical expertise can help its clients identify and implement more effective, sustainable technologies.

CONSOLIDATING AND REFRESHING THE INFRASTRUCTURE TO REDUCE CO² EMISSIONS

By using the most up-to-date and least energy-consuming technologies, equipment refresh and infrastructure consolidation strategies can help reduce companies' carbon footprint

SOURCE: ECS ESTIMATION



High satisfaction rates among ECS service customers

Launched in 2004, the annual ECS customer satisfaction survey is conducted across Europe for business continuity services and ad hoc professional services. ECS achieved a 100% satisfaction rate for business continuity services in Belgium and Italy and 93.8% in France. For one-off services, French customers awarded an average score of 16.2 out of 20, whilst Spanish clients gave 16.6/20 and Italians went as high as 17.8/20. For the very first time in 2008, the survey included ECS' housing services, and 100% of the clients questioned expressed satisfaction with the service delivered. These results reflect ECS' ongoing commitment to quality and listening to customers in order to better meet their needs.

ECS supports the CIST



In 2008, ECS Group continued its partnership

with CIST (Center for Information Systems Training), an IT training college for disadvantaged young people in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. As part of a corporate volunteering scheme, ECS sent 4 of its employees to help the school implement its IT infrastructure; two more volunteers are due to take part in the project later this year.