5 Reasons Why Centralized IT Asset Discovery is More Crucial Than Ever

THE ILLUSION OF CONTROL

WHITE PAPER

Lansweeper

Are you really in control of your IT landscape?

30%

Of organizations admit they don't know which assets they own, where they are located and who is using them.

70%

The remaining 70% operates under an illusion of control.

The role of the IT leader is changing. The goal of IT has shifted toward aligning the right IT technologies with business strategy. In many cases, **IT leaders still operate under an illusion of control**: the information they base their strategic decisions on is top-down, inaccurate and comes from multiple disconnected sources.

In order to maximize the value of the systems your firm relies on for all its activities, it's ever more crucial to digitalize them. This means to connecting them, centralizing them, enabling them to interact and collaborate across silos, locations and departments to drive accurate business insights. However, as many as 3 in 10 organizations admit they don't know which assets they own, where they are located and who is using them (Gartner, 2013). The remaining 70% operates under an Illusion Of Control.

IT leaders take heed: **IT asset management is a core element of the 'single-source-of-truth' approach**. If you don't know what you have, it's impossible to use it wisely, safely and effectively. In this whitepaper, we'll explore the advantages that a bottom-up, centralized approach to IT asset management can bring your organization.
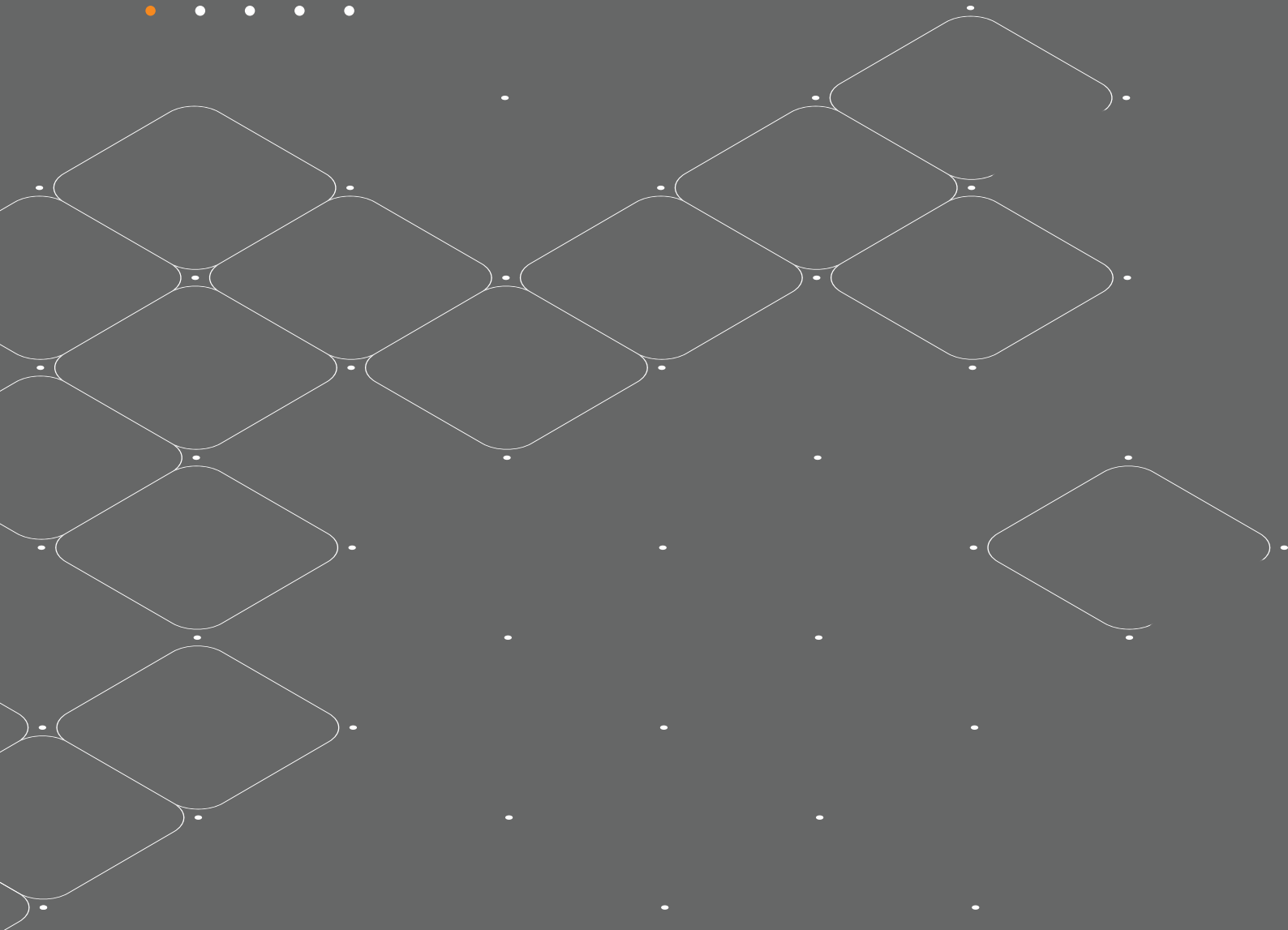
ITAM is the fundamental IT best practice.
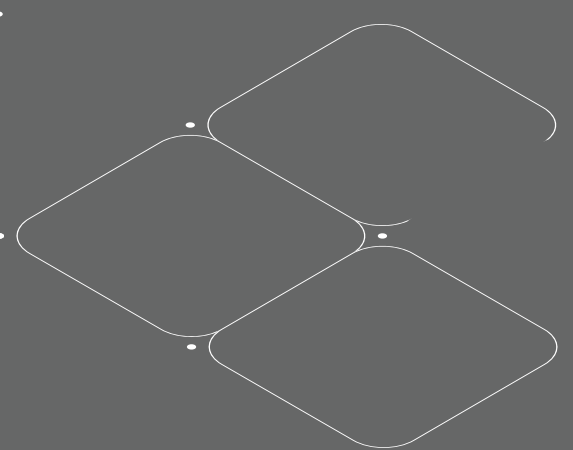
IT Asset Management is the fundamental IT best practice

Here's a scenario that's probably familiar to you. As an IT leader, you likely receive reports from different departments and stakeholders, each relying on its own data silo that is (more often than not) segregated from other data sources. You then use the insights in these reports to make high-level resource allocation decisions in a wide range of domains. The bigger your company is, the more delegation happens and the more fragmented the IT tool landscape.

The disadvantages of a top-down approach are clear – not only in terms of decision-making, but also security, compliance and process and operational efficiency (more about mitigating these risks later on).

The solution is to flip the entire model on its head by embracing a bottom-up strategy that relies on a single, unified overview of your IT estate available at any moment to every stakeholder. **Enter centralized IT asset management.**

IT Asset Management: constant, vigilant, proactive

In short, IT asset management refers to making optimal use of the technology assets your company has at its disposal by inventorying exactly what you have, its capabilities and its security, version and configuration status at any given moment. It's a core practice that has to be performed constantly, vigilantly and proactively – which is why many businesses fall short.

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Speak the same language, get the big picture

From another angle, centralized IT asset management enables every stakeholder who needs insights into your company's IT landscape to speak the same language, rely on the same information and **make decisions that align with corporate strategy**. This absolutely impacts your company's bottom line.
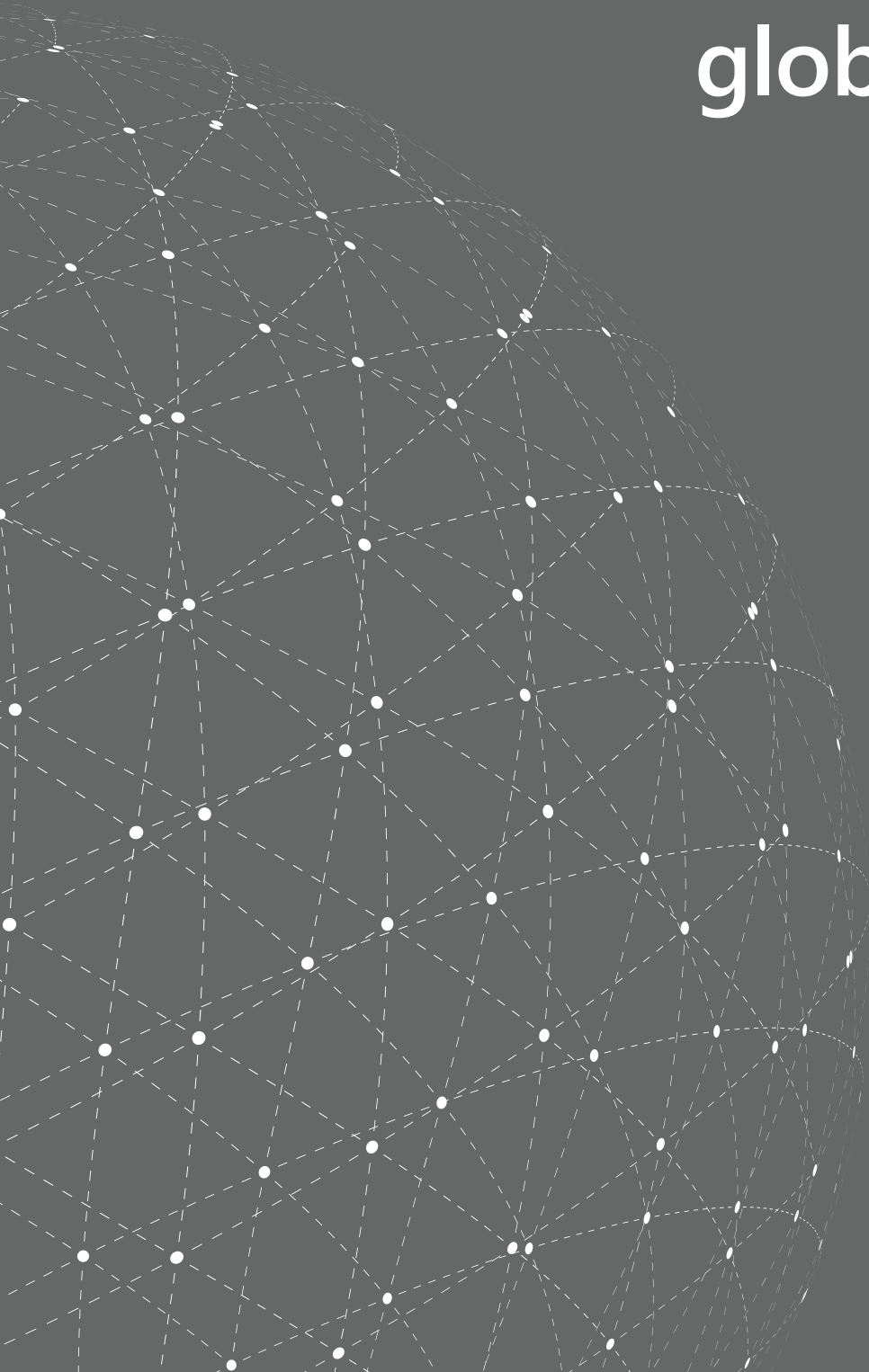
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Do you have to code-switch every time you speak to IT stakeholders in different departments? Are you sure that the report you just received from operations jives with the data the financial department is using to develop the budget? If there's any doubt in your mind, you can – and must – do better.

Base your IT security strategy on real-time global insights.

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It's a jungle out there, and vulnerability threats abound in the digital age. However, the investments you make in cybersecurity are only as functional as the visibility that you and your team have over your company's IT assets. The moment a single device on your network becomes vulnerable, the entire network is compromised – and you definitely don't want to become a high-profile victim of the world's next WannaCry.

Centralized IT asset management makes it easy to get up close and personal with comprehensive, real-time network insights without relying on mystery reports for security-related decision-making.

Get a complete device management overview

Never assume that your active directory is up to date. It's important to rely on **continuous scans of your network** to keep track of every single device – even if it only touches your network occasionally or operates behind a heavy firewall. Your company probably has a steady flow of incoming new devices and outgoing obsolete old devices. Failing to take these into account results in outdated network topology maps, efficiency losses and perhaps even security vulnerabilities.

Control who can manage your assets

Local administrative privileges – and their misuse – are the source of most unauthorized network access. Users with unlimited local admin rights can wreak havoc on your network by undoing the hard strategic work of your IT team and ignoring security measures. Unprotected web browsing and unauthorized installs leave the door wide open for network health risks. It's vital to the well-being of your infrastructure to implement a process to discover and manage local admins to **minimize disruptions and risks and maximize Windows security**.

Anticipate and minimize security threats.

Malware, ransomware, unauthorized access… if you've got data, you've got a valuable resource. This is why it's crucial to respond rapidly to threats by maintaining an awareness of **exactly which devices** or assets are vulnerable, improperly protected, unencrypted, etc.

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Keeping tabs on all of your devices – and the software and versions they are running – lets you proactively avoid security risks and respond rapidly to minimize any negative effects. Easily manage users, devices and admin privileges by relying on a central source of asset information.

Facilitate streamlined reporting & compliance processes.

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When it comes to IT practices, a 'close enough' mentality risks more than performance – it can lead to much more serious issues. The ratification of the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) has brought compliance to the forefront of every IT leader's mind – not just in Europe, but across the globe. If you aren't aware of every asset on your network, it's impossible to know the precise purpose and location of the data your company has, or to guarantee its security. Post-GDPR, the penalty for data breaches can reach as high as EUR 20 million.

Because it offers your business a detailed assessment of every device on your network, centralized IT asset management is an important driver of compliance – not just with laws and regulations, but also with the stipulations of software licenses.

Streamline internal and external audits.

Audits are more or less a fact of life for businesses active in every industry. Ensure that this process goes as **quickly and smoothly as possible** – and boost your outcomes – using detailed insights generated by a centralized IT asset management system.

Automate reporting using aggregated data.

Organized data is data that can be put to work for your business. Flexible reporting is an essential element of any IT asset management approach. However, in order for them to be effective decision-making tools, it is essential for reports to be based on **real, accurate, current visibility into the state of your network**. Reports based on inaccurate, siloed, irrelevant data aren't just useless – they can lead to poor decisions.
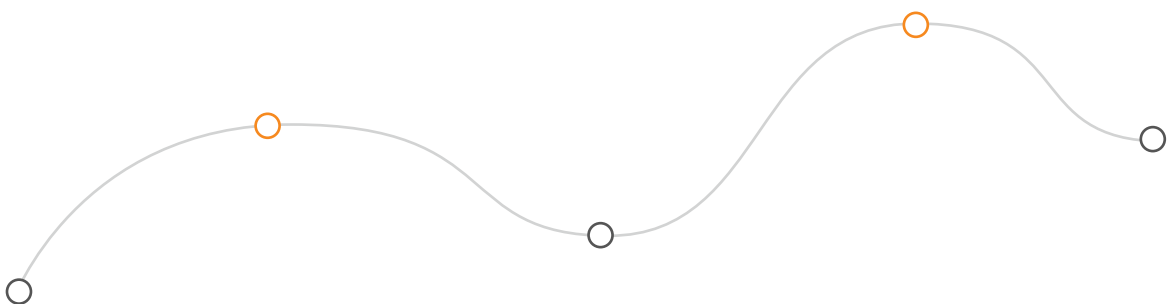
60%

Companies that fail to integrate and use inventory data overbuy software licenses for 60% of their portfolio.

50%

Almost 50% of all companies only track software assets on a project-by-project basis, rather than holistically.

Accelerate software and licensing audits

Never discount the value of your software – and the necessity of managing it effectively. Gartner estimates that companies that fail to integrate and use inventory data overbuy software licenses for 60% of their portfolio and are non-compliant on 30%. Add to that the fact that almost half of all companies only track software assets on a project-by-project basis (rather than holistically), and the potential for blind spots and waste is significant.

Internal and external audits often involve the identification of all software assets on the network. Even more, if you have enterprise agreements with software suppliers, knowing exactly how many licenses you have is a requirement for reporting. If you're missing licenses, this information can also help you predict the costs of becoming fully compliant.

On the flip side, locating unauthorized software installs quickly can help you maintain the security of your assets and avoid downtime and audit hiccups.
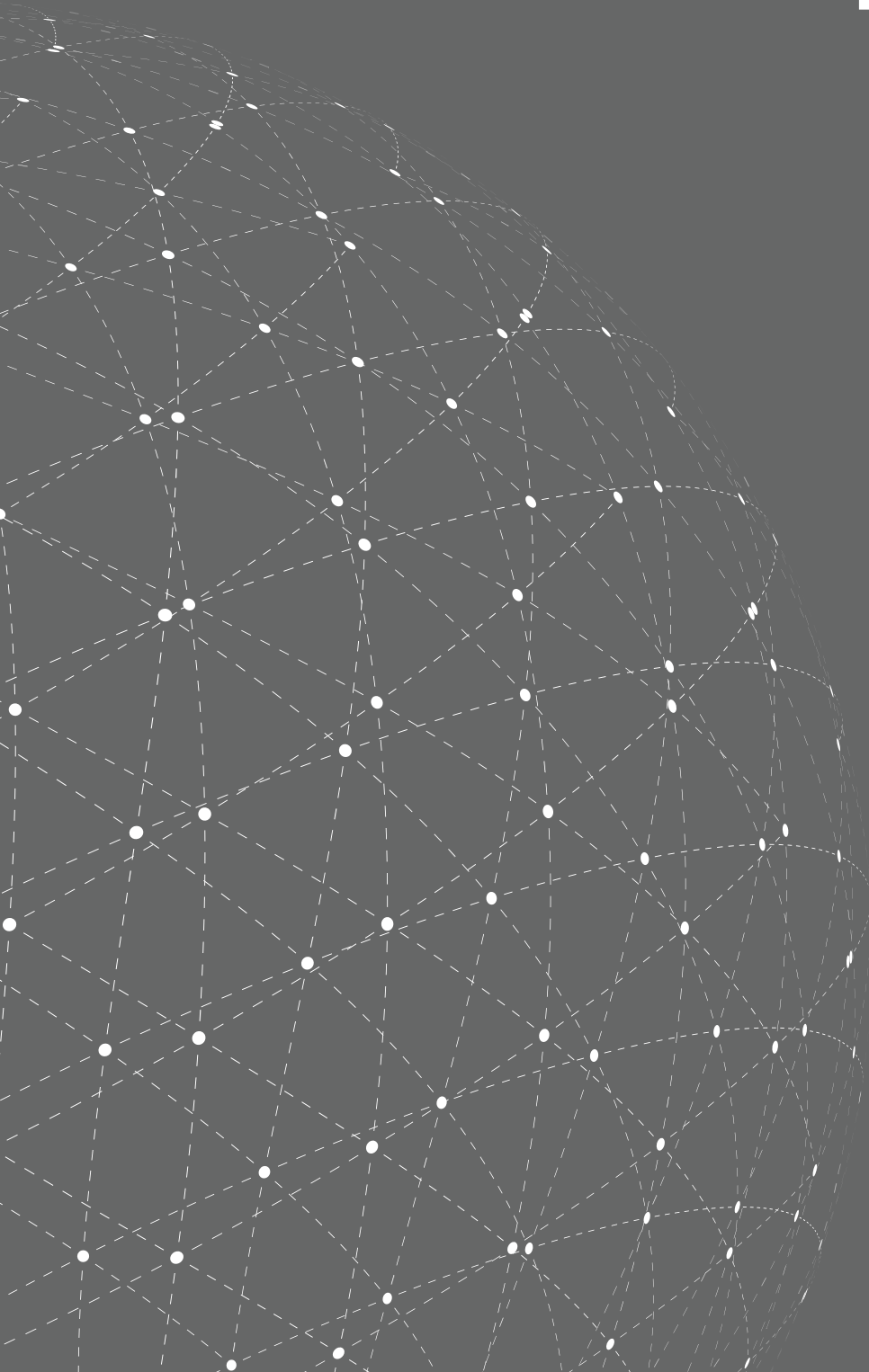
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Centralized IT asset management gives you easy-to-access, comprehensive, automated insights that simplify internal, external and software audits. Gain time, avoid risks and swiftly mitigate issues.

Harness your technology to empower your people.

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When software malfunctions, data is lost, drivers fail or malware strikes, your company's talent suffers. Productivity lost to blue screens of death (BSODs) adds up. The amount of time and energy spent writing and responding to IT tickets concerning errors, version problems, misbehaving (or missing) devices and other intra-company computing troubles is a figure that you're probably aware of – and concerned about.

A smoothly-functioning, well-inventoried, digitalized IT landscape isn't just necessary to guarantee security, drive efficiency and ensure that IT assets are being used in an optimal way. Centralized IT asset management also empowers every single employee that accesses your company's network.

Maximize the use of your resources

IT assets don't come cheap, and they are absolutely **critical to your company's continued business activities** and competitive edge. Do you know how much disk space is available across your entire IT estate? Are there 'dinosaurs' – outdated, license-wasting, tax-inflating technologies – lurking on your network? Is every single IT investment accounted for and generating value? The answers to these questions affect the overall health of the company.

Knowing the status of your IT assets at all times means that you can proactively manage them to avoid risks – and **save up to 30% of your IT budget** (Gartner).

Allocate resources where they are needed most. Perform maintenance and updates and purchase hardware before anything ever goes wrong. Plan and execute new IT projects that take every affected user and device into account. The result? Employees that can collaborate, create, communicate, develop, etc., smoothly and effectively with minimal interruptions or interventions.

30%

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Boost productivity across the entire company

When employees have well-functioning technologies they need to do their jobs, it doesn't just save time for your IT team. Regardless of their departments or their roles, **all employees benefit from a centralized IT Asset Management system**, as the tools they rely on to tackle their responsibilities – from operations and finance to sales and procurement – are in prime condition.

Automate repetitive manual tasks

IT management is growing more complex by the minute. Automated reporting, notification and scanning capabilities **can free up your IT teams to focus on innovation** and value-adding activities. Many IT asset management processes are still performed manually, increasing the risk of human error and bringing efficiency down.

Respond rapidly to issues and tickets

If you already know where the software errors are occurring, you can keep problems from snowballing, proactively repair failing systems and identify bottlenecks before the tickets start monopolizing IT resources.

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An IT landscape that functions smoothly and maximizes the use of resources makes it easier for your IT team and personnel in all departments to do their jobs.

IT Asset Management as a business growth driver.

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IT leaders are no longer 'nerds in chief', nor are IT teams relegated to the corner of a basement surrounded by cables and humming machinery. Countless analyses and thought leaders agree that the more closely IT strategy and overall business strategy are intertwined, the more successful the company is.

Make it easier for your business to scale

A comprehensive overview of your IT resources helps ensure that as you grow and globalize, your systems stay **balanced, safe and ready to tackle the next challenge** – no matter the distance between locations or departments.

Become more agile

An IT asset management system **brings greater agility to your IT talent** (and your company as a whole), enabling the IT department not just to ensure that assets are used optimally, but to explore new applications that will be more and more essential to the greater customer-centric strategy of the business.

Embrace new technologies

Moving forward, companies will be increasingly reliant on cloud platforms and the economies of scale that drive machine-learning and other emerging innovations. To reap the full benefits of these innovations, it's important to e**nsure that your IT estate is as orderly, well-managed and secure as possible**.

IT asset management is an essential enabler of your digital transformation journey. Before you can move to the cloud, implement AI-driven solutions or effectively digitalize, it's absolutely necessary to be familiar with the resources available, the data you gather and keep, and the topology of your unique IT landscape.

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Centralized IT asset management is an important enabler of the crucial collaboration between IT and business strategy, as it provides important insights useful in mitigating risk, managing growth and making strategic decisions.

Laying the groundwork for global success

IT alignment is critical for business success. Markets are more volatile than ever, margins are shrinking, and the fast movers are the ones going home with the market share. This is exactly why a comprehensive, centralized, bottom-up IT asset management approach is worth so much more than just the sum of its parts.

Lansweeper offers firms of all sizes complete visibility into its IT asset landscape. As a d**igital 'clearing house' that connects every single tool, device and asset on your network**, our software solution overcomes data siloes and compartmentalization challenges on a global scale. Make informed IT decisions using easy-to-generate, comprehensive reports that take every insight into account.

Lansweeper Deepscan Technology
Proprietary scanning algorithm ensures the discovery of all assets.

Agentless Network Discovery
Get up and running with minimal hassle.

Aggregated Data
Information from multiple systems is assembled into one unique object.

Lansweeper

IT Asset Management Software That Finds & Manages All Assets Across Your Enterprise.

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