



## Selecting a Tool to Support Your IT Asset Management Processes



Successful IT asset management programs are supported by effective tools. An effective tool is characterized by its ability to manage financial, contractual and physical data, integrate with adjacent IT management tools and business systems, provide out of the box best practice functionality, and support implementation and automation of IT asset management processes.

There are four core capabilities tools must provide to support an effective IT asset management program:

- **An IT asset management repository;**
- **Hardware and software inventory and usage information;**
- **Integration with adjacent IT and business systems; and,**
- **Data import.**

The IT asset management repository is the principal component of an IT asset management system. It serves as the central store for the required financial, contractual and physical data. However, what determines the quality and effectiveness of the tool is the repository's functional ability to perform IT asset management tasks and activities that support processes across the life cycle and that are based on best practice.

The ability to discover hardware and software inventory and determine asset use is similarly essential to effective IT asset management. Both automated discovery and physical inventory tools like bar code scanning are required to ensure continuous management of assets through both operational and non-operational portions of the life cycle. Without physical inventory capabilities, it is impossible to support certain IT asset management processes and best practices, such as receiving and rolling (physical)

IT asset management is reliant upon data from both IT and business systems. For this reason, Gartner states in the 2013 Marketscope for the IT Asset Management Repository:

*“When choosing an ITAM repository, most Gartner clients say one of the top priorities is to look for how tightly integrated the repository is with adjacent toolsets. The primary toolsets with which ITAM repositories will integrate, besides inventory and software usage, are IT service support management, change management, and purchasing and configuration management.”*

Where no direct technical integration is provided, effective data import capability is required, e.g., from finance or ERP systems. At a minimum, an import tool should be able to access information stored in either databases or files, and provide capabilities to filter and transform source data to either create or update asset records in the repository.

Given the increased benefit that is realized as an IT asset management program evolves, it is essential to select a tool whose feature set will not just meet current needs, but will also support anticipated future requirements as maturity improves. A larger initial investment in a more highly functional tool at the outset can prevent significantly higher downstream costs to “rip and replace” a tool whose functionality fails to keep pace with organizational improvement.