

**CONNECT** new mexico

Office of Broadband Access & Expansion

## **A Primer for Corporate IT Leaders**

### **CONSIDERATIONS FOR PREPARING AND DONATING CORPORATE TECHNOLOGY**



**Digitunity**<sup>®</sup>

# A Primer for Corporate IT Leaders: Considerations for Preparing and Donating Corporate Technology

Donating used computers to nonprofits and social service organizations is a great way to support your community while also ensuring that your old IT assets are disposed of in an environmentally responsible way. However, it's important to follow best practices in the IT Asset Disposition (ITAD) return and recovery process to ensure that sensitive information is securely erased, the product is refurbished to a like-new condition, and that the donation is beneficial for both parties.

In this guide, we'll cover the key steps in the collection, donation and recovery process that a corporate information technology executive should consider when preparing to donate their retiring technology assets to nonprofits and social service organizations.

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## WHO TO DONATE TO?

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Before donating your used computers, it's important to find a nonprofit or social service organization that is in need of your equipment and has the capacity to utilize it effectively. Some organizations may not have the resources or warehousing space to handle large quantities of IT equipment, while others may not be able to accept certain types of equipment due to compatibility or recipient use issues.





To find the right nonprofit or social service organization, consider reaching out to Digitunity, which provides a Corporate Donation Concierge service to large corporate donors of technology. This coordination service manages the entire process of donation, matching your donation assets with a directory of over 1,500 vetted nonprofit organizations in need of IT equipment across the U.S.

Additionally, it's important to conduct an inventory of all IT assets in the organization to determine which devices can be donated. This process can also help identify equipment that is no longer usable and should be disposed of through responsible R2 or e-Steward certified e-waste recycling providers.

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## THE IMPORTANCE OF USING A PROFESSIONAL REFURBISHER

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It is recommended that donors use a professional refurbisher and depot repair provider for preparation of the technology identified for donation. These organizations, whether they may be for profit or not-for-profit entities, have the expertise and knowledge to properly diagnose, repair, and refurbish computers and other technology assets.

Typically working to support a wide range of hardware and software, professional refurbishers can quickly identify and address any issues with the donated equipment. They are also well-versed in compliance with applicable laws and regulations related to data protection, environmental sustainability, and responsible disposal of electronic waste. The refurbisher can ensure that all sensitive data is securely erased, that best practices in the asset recovery process are followed, and any hazardous materials that remain from the process are properly disposed of.



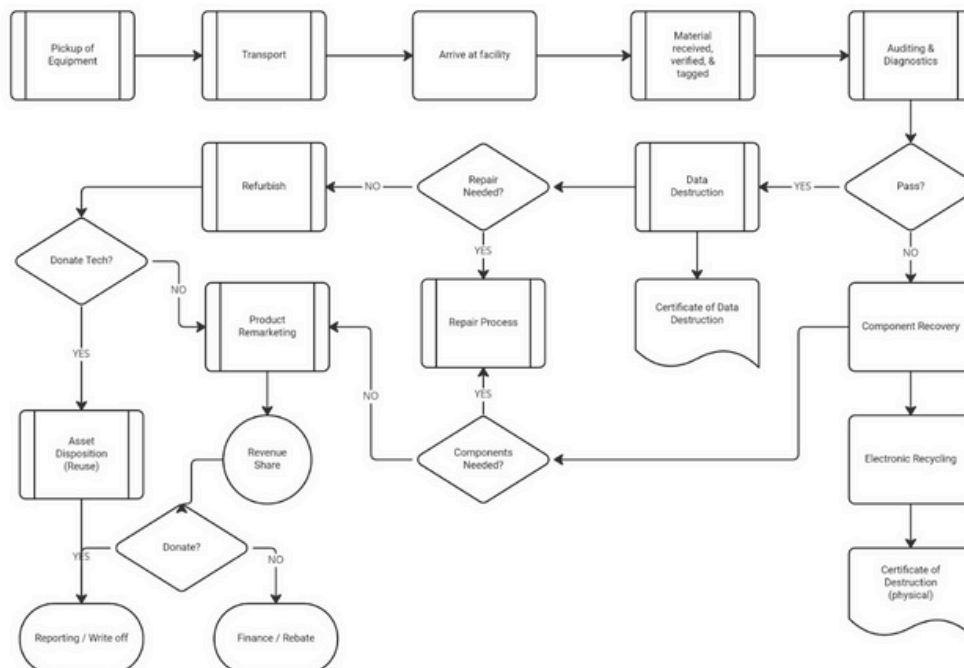
## THE TECHNOLOGY DONATION PROCESS

When you donate your old computer or other technology equipment to a nonprofit organization, you want it to be in good working condition so that it can be used effectively by the people who need it. However, sometimes the equipment may be outdated, damaged, or not functioning properly, which can make it difficult for the nonprofit to use it.

This is where professional refurbishment is best practice for repair and upgrade technology equipment so that it works like new again and will be of long term use for the individual recipient. A professional refurbisher is familiar with the complex process and steps needed to recover and repair a used technology asset, fix any problems with the equipment, and upgrade it with new parts or software to make it work better than before.

Below is an illustration and process flow outline of the repair, refurbishment, reuse and recovery process that is followed to maximize the effective use of donated equipment and provide the greatest value to the communities they support.

### Corporate Donation Recovery & Reuse



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## ARRANGE FOR PICKUP OR DELIVERY

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When donating used computers, it's important to arrange for pickup or delivery to the nonprofit or social service organization. This may involve coordinating with a logistics provider or arranging for your own transportation. In some cases, if the nonprofit or social service organization offers technology repair and refurbishment services as part of its mission, the organization may have the capacity to provide pickup services. It's important to communicate clearly with the nonprofit or social service organization regarding pickup or delivery details, including the date, time, location, condition of the equipment (palletized, gaylords, loose assets, etc.), and whether a shipping dock is available or a lift gate truck is required.

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## AUDITING AND DIAGNOSTICS

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The first step is to sort the donated equipment and take an inventory of all the assets and capture identifying information and validate the actual receipt of the product against the client provided inventory donation list. This helps identify equipment that is in good working condition, as well as equipment that may require refurbishment or repair. It also provides chain of custody tracking when required by the donor organization.



Next, the donated assets are thoroughly tested and inspected before they are sent to the recipient organization. This helps ensure that the equipment is in good working condition and meets all necessary standards. This may involve running diagnostic software to check for any hardware or software issues, as well as checking the condition of all components, including the processor, memory, hard drive, and other peripherals. At this stage of the process, unrepairable and beyond economic repair status is determined, which means that the costs expended in the repair process to bring the unit back to working status outweigh the end value of the end unit. At this point, a decision is made to move the asset to component recovery, which breaks the whole unit down into usable service parts, thereby reducing the parts costs for future repairs.



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## DATA SANITIZATION/DESTRUCTION

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Any data storage devices that are included in the donated equipment are securely erased using a variety of certified data destruction software tools whenever possible, or as last resort physical destruction methods, to ensure that all sensitive information is removed.



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## REFURBISHMENT AND REPAIR

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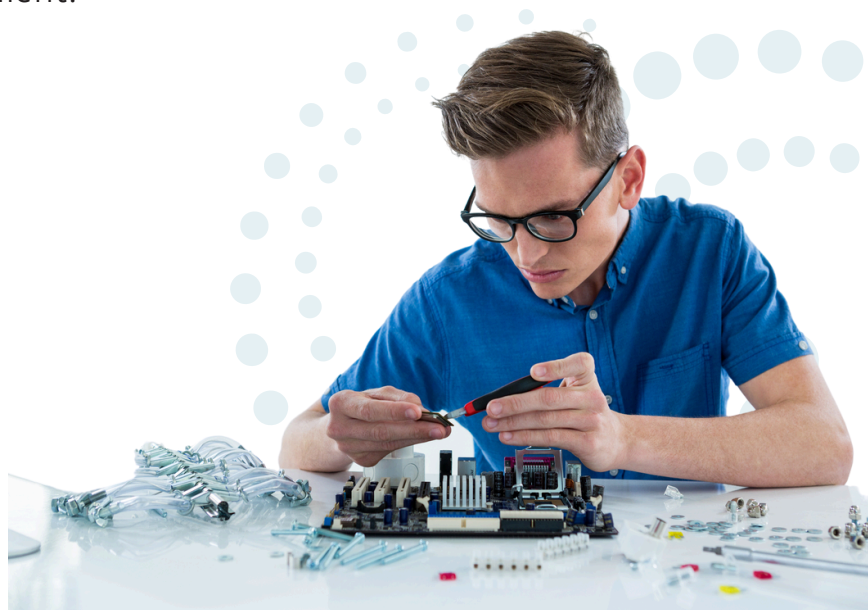
Equipment that requires refurbishment or repair is then sent to technicians who can clean, repair, and replace any faulty or damaged components. This may involve replacing broken screens, keyboards, or other parts, or upgrading memory or storage to improve performance. Whenever possible, recovered service parts are used in this process, reducing the overall costs to bring the assets back to a like-new, working status.

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## SOFTWARE INSTALLATION

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Once the equipment has been refurbished or repaired, an operating system must be installed and configured to ensure that it is ready for use. This may involve installing the latest version of the operating system, as well as any necessary drivers or software. Technology refurbishers have access to low cost licensed software options as part of the donation refurbishment process. This includes qualified refurbishers that qualify for programs like the Microsoft Citizenship program, where Microsoft sells Windows licenses at a significantly reduced price to organizations that provide a public benefit.



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## REFURBISHMENT AND REPAIR

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Before the equipment is donated to the recipient organization, it must undergo a final quality assurance check to ensure that it is in good working condition and meets all necessary standards. Additionally, best practices for the donation of technology equipment also includes a warranty to be provided on the refurbished equipment. Service warranties typically include one of three options: a 90-day early life failure warranty, a 1-year parts and labor depot warranty, and less often, a 2-3 year extended warranty for parts and labor. Best practices recommend a minimum warranty of 1-year in length for donated technology.

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## REMARKETING AND RESALE

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Once the donated technology has been refurbished and is in good working condition, products that are not suitable for deployment to individuals (e.g. servers and network equipment, large network printers, etc.) these technology assets can be valued and sold through remarketing services, with the financial proceeds donated to to nonprofits and social service organizations who benefit from this financial donation as well. This also provides an additional value to the donor organization in the form of tax advantages for both an in-kind (computer) and a financial contribution.





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## PACKAGING AND COMMUNITY DEPLOYMENT

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The equipment is then packaged securely and delivered or shipped to the recipient organization, along with any necessary accessories, such as power cords or adapters. Recommendations on what type of packaging (individual brown box vs. bulk pack) is determined by the use case of the receiving organization and the final recipient. For example, community deployment to K-12 students through a school might also include school supplies and backpack and a bulk pack shipment would be suitable, while a community wide deployment event would usually require each computer to be packed in its own box for ease of carrying the donation home by the recipient.

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## REPORTING AND ANALYTICS

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To ensure that both tax advantages can be met and social impact and ESG goals are measured, donor companies should consider implementing a reporting framework that tracks the impact of their donations. Some key reporting areas include tracking the fair market value of the donated equipment, as well as any expenses related to refurbishment, storage, and transportation they incur. This information can be used to calculate tax deductions and ensure compliance with relevant tax regulations.



Another metric to report is the environmental impact of their technology donations, including the estimated amount of electronic waste diverted from landfills through the reuse of technology. Donor organizations may also request impact reporting from the receiving nonprofits and social service organizations in order to project the social impact of their donations. These can include the number of individuals and organizations that benefit from the donated equipment, the types of organizations that receive the donations, and the specific benefits that the technology provides.

This information can also be used to communicate the company's values and commitment to sustainability to stakeholders such as shareholders, customers, and employees.

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## IN CONCLUSION

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The benefits of working with a qualified organization like Digitunity to help you identify a professional refurbisher and depot repair provider that is focused on sustainability and digital equity can help ensure that donated computers and technology assets are properly prepared for reuse and donation, maximizing their impact and promoting sustainable IT practices.



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