

Tips for selecting a professional partner

Most companies will need to work with an external supplier to help them manage some or all of their WEEE compliance strategy. Below are some essential guidelines to help you select the right partner for your organisation:

► **Check data security standards** - find out whether your supplier can offer specialist data overwriting software with a guarantee that data is unrecoverable. Computer Aid International offers a free, professional data wiping service for donated PCs, using industry leading Blancco software which is deployed by military, defence, police, government and banking organisations across the world.

► **Do you need an audit trail?** - can your supplier help you with your reporting obligations under the new legislation? Computer Aid International can help in documenting your WEEE compliance and will provide a letter of disposal to confirm this. The letter, which acts as a certificate, states that the data has been destroyed to Ministry of Defence standards and that where equipment can not be reused, it is sent for recycling by a licenced waste management company.

This letter can be used for auditing purposes and shows that you have satisfied the requirements of the legislation by treating your old IT equipment in a socially responsible and environmentally friendly way.

► **Can you reduce overheads and maximise positive social impact by working with a charity?** - Computer Aid International provides a free, professional PC decommissioning service with stringent quality control and rigorous data security standards.

► **Companies who have used this service include:** Tokyo Mitsubishi Bank, British Airways, Barnardos, Ford (Credit Europe) and Warner Bros. PCs passed to Computer Aid International are given a second lease of life in schools and community organisations throughout the developing world.

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The WEEE Directive & IT Equipment

Complying with the New UK Law: A Guide for Businesses

For further information about Computer Aid International's portfolio of decommissioning services call Vaneeta Pinheiro on 0207 281 0091 or visit our website: www.computeraid.org



Refurbished PCs put to good use in developing countries



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Computer Aid International is a UK registered charity (no. 1069256) and a non-profit company (no. 3442679)

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Computer Aid
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What is the WEEE Directive?

The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive is an EU initiative to protect the environment by reducing the amount of electrical equipment - including PCs, servers, printers and laptops - dumped in skips and going into landfill. The WEEE Directive requires each EU country to introduce new laws to meet targets for the collection, recycling and recovery of electrical equipment.

Who will be affected by the new law?

The law will affect practically everyone who uses electronic equipment in the home or at work. It also places legal requirements upon manufacturers and retailers of electrical goods. This guide concentrates on how the new law will affect business users of PCs.

When will the law be introduced in the UK?

The new law should have been introduced in August 2004, allowing a 12 month period of grace before it becomes enforceable in August 2005. The Government has failed to meet this deadline. However, the introduction of the new law remains imminent. There is widespread concern in the IT industry that there will not be enough time to prepare for the new legislation. Industry surveys suggest that compliance could cost up to 5% of the IT budget for businesses and that there could be heavy costs for companies that fail to plan ahead.

What does the new law mean to me?

In August 2004, the Government published draft guidance to the new legislation, giving a reliable indication of the direction the law is likely to take.

The summary overleaf is the result of a long consultation process between Government, manufacturers, retailers and charities such as Computer Aid International:

▶ As a business user of IT equipment you will be legally responsible for the collection, treatment and recovery of all PCs purchased before 13th August 2005, unless you are buying new PCs to replace old ones on a like-for-like basis;

▶ If you are replacing old PCs with new equipment, manufacturers and resellers are required by the new law to take responsibility for the costs of collection, treatment and recovery of any equipment being replaced on a like-for-like basis;

▶ Where you are responsible for the collection, treatment and recovery of redundant PCs and other IT equipment, you will also be responsible for reporting evidence to show that they have been disposed of in accordance with the new law;

▶ From August 2005, the law requires manufacturers to bear the main burden of legal responsibility for the collection, treatment and recovery of any new PCs or IT equipment that you purchase;

▶ However, a loophole in the proposed new law also allows manufacturers to enter into a commercial agreement with business users to share the legal responsibility and costs for compliance with the new legislation, so it is very important to read the small print carefully when making new PC purchases.

Tips for legal, safe and cost-effective disposal of PCs and IT equipment

▶ **Plan ahead** - If you have any redundant PCs and IT equipment cluttering your offices, now is the time to start thinking about your legal responsibilities under the new law. It's never too early to start and it may benefit your business to begin examining the options open to you for disposing of old equipment and the development of Corporate Social Responsibility policies as soon as possible, in advance of the new legislation.

▶ **Carry out an audit of unwanted equipment** - find out how many end-of-life PCs are stored by your business as well as the age and specification of the machines to determine whether they are most suitable for recycling, remarketing or reuse.

▶ **Include PC disposal costs in your IT budget** - remember to allow for collection, data wiping and the cost of recycling obsolete equipment.

▶ **Don't forget about data security** - under the Data Protection Act 1998 it is your responsibility to destroy any personal data that may be stored on the machines. Just hitting the delete button is not enough to wipe the data. To ensure full data security you will need to use a professional data wiping solution that makes recovery of the data impossible.

▶ **Be realistic about the value of used IT assets** - it is possible to remarket redundant PCs, but many businesses over-estimate the value of old PCs. Often, the costs of remarketing for sale, collection and data-wiping can exceed their market worth. In this case, it is worth considering donating PCs to a charity such as Computer Aid International, who will ensure data is wiped professionally, to the highest government standards, before giving PCs a second lease of life in schools and community groups in the developing world.

▶ **Think about your Corporate Social Responsibility policy** - by donating end-of-life PCs to a charity you can demonstrate to company stakeholders that your organisation is making a positive social and environmental impact.

▶ **Avoid recycling if you can** - recycling should be your final option, reserved for PCs that can no longer perform a useful function or are damaged beyond repair. United Nations research has proven that reuse offers a more cost-effective option than recycling, with far greater environmental and social benefit.