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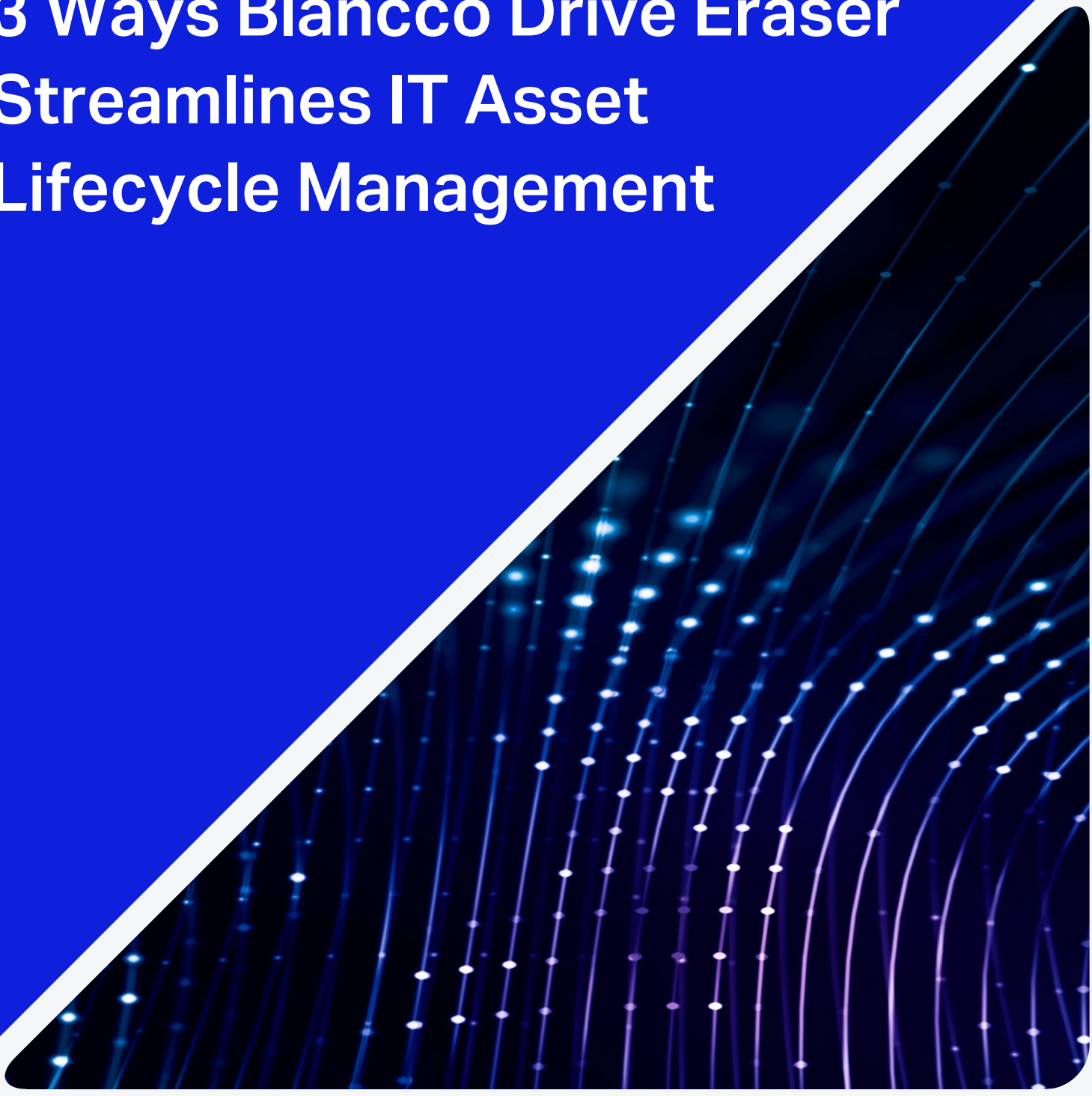
Efficient, Secure, Scalable: 3 Ways Blancco Drive Eraser Streamlines IT Asset Lifecycle Management



Your organization likely has hundreds or thousands of data-bearing assets that will eventually reach the end of their usability. A mature asset lifecycle management (ALM) strategy will ensure that when these drive-based devices are retired, the data on them is completely eradicated, allowing them to be safely redeployed, recycled, destroyed, or resold.

If your organization is currently destroying this data (and possibly the assets too) in house rather than through an ITAD vendor or MSP, you may be choosing between reformatting or factory resetting, cryptographic erasure, degaussing, physical destruction, or perhaps even a software-based data sanitization tool.

But with so many devices to manage, the sanitization step in your asset lifecycle management can become logjammed with inefficiencies. You need scalable solutions that optimize processing rather than introducing friction.

This guide has three tips to help you supercharge your data disposal process with the most tested, approved, and certified erasure solution on the market, Blancco Drive Eraser.

Wondering what "data erasure" is?

It's one of the only methods for achieving **complete** sanitization of used IT assets. Data erasure involves overwriting digitally stored information with random binary data according to a specified standard (such as NIST 800-88 or IEEE 2883), then verifying and certifying that the erasure has been successful.

Data removal methods such as formatting, factory resets, and unverified data wiping don't guarantee total data destruction in line with this definition. It's also worth noting that while some forms of physical destruction are viable sanitization options, degaussing does not work on flash drives and international media sanitization standards such as IEEE 2883 have also rendered shredding and pulverizing obsolete, so not all physical destruction methods are equally reliable.

The end of the IT asset lifecycle doesn't have to be a headache

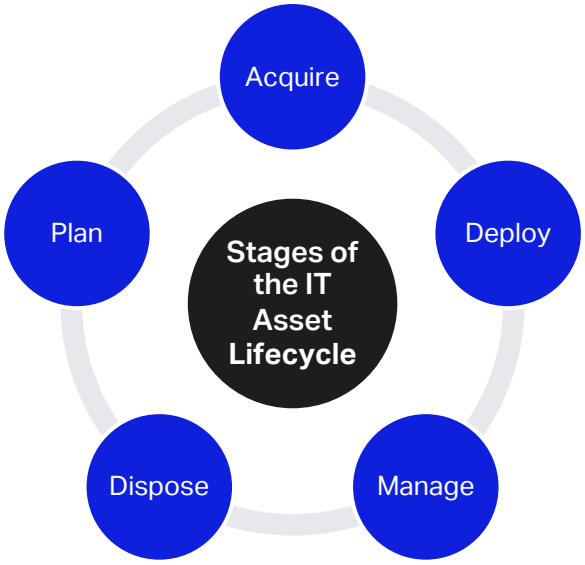
If you're fortunate enough to have (or be) a dedicated IT asset manager in your organization, you know the various pitfalls of the IT asset lifecycle. If you don't have a specialist asset manager, your IT team will be even more stretched trying to control an entire inventory while juggling other responsibilities.

From planning and acquisition to deploying and disposing, there are distinct challenges at each asset lifecycle management stage.

While every stage has different considerations, end-of-use IT asset disposition (ITAD) has a unique set of issues that can cause major problems when inefficiently managed.

First, the impact of getting decommissioning and disposition wrong can be immense. Improper disposition of increasingly complex storage technologies and their data can lead to costly data breaches, compliance penalties, and reputational damage.

What is less acknowledged, however, is how time-sapping and error-prone manual end-of-life (EOL) processing can be.



The IT asset lifecycle generally consists of five primary stages: planning, acquisition, deployment, management, and disposition, after which, the cycle begins again.

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How are you currently processing EOL drive-based assets?

Reformatting or factory resetting inefficiencies

- **Inconsistent processes:** Different assets and operating systems have different reset mechanisms, making standardization difficult.
- **Time-consuming for large-scale operations:** Factory resets may need to be manually triggered per drive, making it an impractical approach for large inventories.
- **Auditing difficulties:** It's hard to generate proof that data was securely erased, which is a compliance risk. Manually logging each event also causes delays.

Degaussing inefficiencies

- **Not applicable to flash storage:** Degaussing is only effective on traditional hard drives (HDDs) and magnetic tapes, making it useless for flash storage devices such as SSDs.
- **Permanent destruction but no verification:** Once degaussed, a drive is inoperable, but there's no way to confirm data removal. Verifying and tracking the success of erasures manually is time-consuming.
- **Physical handling bottleneck:** Manually degaussing drives slows down bulk operations.

Cryptographic erasure inefficiencies

- **Dependent on key management:** If encryption keys are not centrally managed or if there are issues with key storage, erasure could fail or be unreliable.
- **Difficult for mixed environments:** Non-encrypted devices won't benefit from this method, requiring additional steps for secure wiping.
- **Q-Day:** We're not quite there yet, but security authorities such as NIST and BSI are already advising organizations to prepare for quantum computers that will be capable of breaking encryption. Having to re-encrypt or otherwise process drives to new standards in the future will be an added management step that undermines efficiency.

Physical destruction inefficiencies

- **Labor-intensive and costly:** Drive-based assets may need to be collected, transported, and physically destroyed, requiring additional logistics and expenses. This can also delay destruction, increase storage costs, and compromise chain of custody.
- **Environmental concerns:** Unless they are handled correctly, destroyed IT assets can become e-waste. Ensuring they don't will require specialized recycling or disposal, which adds complexity and potential costs.
- **No resale or reuse potential:** Physically destroyed hardware cannot be refurbished or resold, reducing potential financial recovery from retired assets.

In an IT environment where end-of-life asset management must compete for budget with other priorities, an underinvestment in automated, integrated systems results in labor-intensive wiping, shipping, documenting, and tracking of assets across multiple locations.

A scalable data erasure solution, on the other hand, can increase your efficiency.

A more efficient asset lifecycle management solution for end-of-life: Data erasure

Enables bulk erasure of hundreds or thousands of assets simultaneously. This reduces manual effort and time spent on IT asset disposition.

Generates verifiable reports and certificates of erasure, supporting compliance with GDPR, PCI DSS, and other regulations, without additional paperwork.

Allows IT teams to execute and monitor secure data erasure remotely across multiple locations.

Reduces e-waste and disposal costs by enabling secure device reuse, resale, or redeployment.

How should you choose the right solution and deploy it optimally? Here are three tips for success.

1. Streamline bulk asset erasure

For IT managers handling large-scale end-of-life asset processing, efficiency hinges on the ability to erase multiple drives simultaneously while maintaining security and compliance.

Blancco Drive Eraser eliminates bottlenecks in bulk data erasure with a fast, automated approach that scales with enterprise needs and enables the erasure of hundreds of drives at once.

By leveraging network-based deployment options, IT teams can trigger bulk erasures and reduce the need for device-by-device interaction. Additionally, Blancco's automated workflows detect connected drives, apply the correct erasure standard, and generate tamper-proof audit reports without laborious oversight.

This approach not only accelerates the decommissioning process but also minimizes human error and ensures consistent and verifiable sanitization.

CASE STUDY

Top technology company erases over 4,000 servers simultaneously.

A major multinational company was struggling with its decommissioning solution. While it used physical destruction to sanitize some data center hardware, it needed a software-based erasure solution to process servers remaining in its network.

Having worked with Blancco to erase more than 800 servers in a previous test, the company wanted even more efficiency and scalability. Working closely with Blancco, the company managed to erase 4,000 servers overnight.

Learn more

2. Make asset lifecycle management easier with integrations

What could be more efficient than connecting a data erasure solution to the rest of your IT asset management systems?

Blancco Drive Eraser works with Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) applications, Asset Management Systems (AMS) such as ServiceNow, and Unified Endpoint Management (UEM) platforms like Microsoft Intune to simplify a range of erasure and reporting tasks.

Managing your asset lifecycle through a single platform reduces the time you spend on other systems and increases accuracy.

For ServiceNow users, for example, the Blancco Secure Data Erasure app on the ServiceNow store enables you to integrate and control asset erasures directly from ServiceNow—giving you a holistic way to manage data sanitization and speed up asset disposal.

You can use the app to automate data erasure for multiple or single assets, across multiple data center servers, or for a single remote worker. Whether it's for device replacement or redeployment, device break/fix, breached devices, loaner or temporary devices, employee exit, device recycling, or any other situation calling for end-of-life removal of sensitive data, the app can help.

This cost-effective, efficient approach reduces processing and storage costs by streamlining erasures of ServiceNow-managed assets and allows you to collect the results and receive automatic certification in one place.

3. Automate your workflow with Blancco Intelligent Business Routing

The gold standard in asset sanitization is a customizable, automated workflow that can authorize device erasure, select an erasure standard, and minimize disruption by automatically selecting fallbacks in the case of failure—all with minimal or no human interaction.

That's how Blancco Intelligent Business Routing and Blancco Drive Eraser work together.

2x

Bain & Co found that companies investing in automation reduce costs via their automated processes by over twice as much as late adopters.

Blancco Intelligent Business Routing is a business process management tool for enterprise-grade erasures. The system takes automation to the next level by programmatically moving used IT assets through the process of erasing data to adhere to compliance and data security best practices.

Blancco Intelligent Business Routing features workflows built with widgets/actions that perform assigned tasks (e.g., start, erase, report, condition, end, etc.).

1. A series of commands is defined between Blancco Management Portal and Blancco Drive Eraser
2. Blancco Intelligent Business Routing strings the commands together to create highly customizable workflows, from simple to complex processes
3. The system then automatically executes the asset processing, including erasure, without the need for any operator involvement

The result is a robust, yet simple-to-use process that dramatically increases the efficiency of data erasure within your organization.

The benefits don't stop at efficiency

Drive-based IT assets eventually reach the end of their usefulness. When that happens, you must thoroughly scrub all data on them or face the risk of security breaches and compliance penalties.

Working with one of Blancco's ITAD or MSP partners is a secure and effective way to achieve this, but if you prefer to handle data disposal in house, Blancco Drive Eraser offers more benefits than efficiency alone. You'll also achieve greater security, compliance, and sustainability outcomes.

- **A short chain is a strong chain:** Decommissioning servers and laptops onsite means they don't need to leave your organization carrying data. Safeguard data by erasing the device onsite so no matter where the device travels after your secure location, there's nothing to be compromised.
- **Increase compliance:** For highly regulated industries and companies compliant with data protection regulations or security frameworks such as ISO 27001, there is a significant need to control as many variables as possible. Using a certified data erasure solution demonstrates compliance in the event of audits, applications, and customer demands.
- **Enable internal reuse:** Perhaps used devices and drives don't even need to leave your organization. Assets can have a useful second or third life within your organization even if they no longer fit their first-line requirements. Securely erasing the data means they can stay in house and be passed safely between teams or individuals.

Ready to turbocharge asset disposal with an efficient data sanitization process?

Download our guide to Blancco Intelligent Business Routing to see how this powerful solution reduces manual touch time and cuts the chances of human errors.