

## **IAITAM: EMPLOYEE SOFTWARE PURCHASE HEADACHES, CLOUD SECURITY WORRIES, ITAM SURGES TO NEW HEIGHTS – 3 TRENDS TO WATCH IN 2020**

**CANTON, OH – January 6, 2020** – After predicting correctly that 2019 would be the year that Information Technology Asset Management (ITAM) would break out as a solution for issues faced by small- and medium-sized businesses, the International Association of IT Asset Managers (IAITAM) is back with a new set of predictions for 2020.

Anticipating an even more challenging new year for business managers, Dr. Barbara Rembiesa, president and CEO of IAITAM, [forecast the following three major trends for 2020](#):

### **TREND NUMBER ONE: SOFTWARE LICENSE/"GHOST CONTRACT" HEADACHES**

There was a time when almost all corporate hardware and software (and related licensing issues) took place in a highly controlled and centralized fashion. But that started to change in 2019, with an industry shift towards app sales and licensing agreements being handled by individual employees, rather than by organizations. In a mature ITAM program, IT Asset Managers serve as the gatekeepers for all IT assets entering the environment, so unsecured licenses present a complication.

To highlight a recent example—[Microsoft announced a few months ago that it would allow end-users to buy specific add-ons for its software programs](#). In doing so, the Redmond-based software giant took the power out of the hands of IT Asset Managers to effectively govern their IT environment. After public criticism from IAITAM, [Microsoft doubled back on their decision](#). In response, the corporation gave IT administrators the ability to turn off the feature within their own environments as necessary—at least for now. However, there is a very real concern that what Microsoft started (and backed away from) in 2019 will take hold in other places in 2020.

Dr. Rembiesa said: **“Decentralization of the acquisition process is a real threat to internal risk-management and shows the need for tighter IT asset management. However, it foreshadows what is to come. If vendors start offering end-users a way to acquire auditable software into the environment and circumvent the IT Standardization and Acquisition processes, it could become a serious problem for businesses and ITAM professionals. Handing the power of buying these licenses over to anyone in the organization is a recipe for disaster.”**

As a result of these changes, in the upcoming year ITAM practitioners will have no choice but to become fluent in reading [“ghost contracts”](#). As [predicted by IAITAM last year](#), the rise of “contractual URLs” (which can change at the whim of the vendor) are now an increasingly important aspect of IT Asset Management procedures. Having robust ITAM practices in place, can help businesses anticipate unexpected changes to contracts. For professionals seeking educational opportunities related to contract management, IAITAM offers several [certification courses](#).

Rembiesa said: **“The next year will be a true test for IT Asset Managers to master contract management. The reality is that the clicking off of all those ‘I Agree’ boxes happens most frequently without reading the contract. Often, there is little choice in doing so. You either surrender to the terms or don’t use the product. To make thing worse, the vendor can change what’s embedded in the contract simply by updating the language on the URL, and often without the knowledge of the person who accepted the original agreement ... Without fluency in contract law and risk-management, many organizations will be left in the dark and at the mercy of the companies who write them.”**

**TREND NUMBER TWO: ANYTHING AS A SERVICE (XaaS)/CLOUD SECURITY CONCERNS.** The cloud made huge advances in 2019 and will achieve even more in 2020 ... and with that will come more and more problems. Outsourced vendor relationships that are cloud-based have birthed a concept called “anything as a service” (XaaS), which applies to outsourcing vital IT services, including Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS), Software as a Service (SaaS) and Platform as a Service (PaaS). In 2020, most organizations will likely be using at least one of these tools. Outsourcing XaaS can help make operations more efficient, but there are real risks, including the assumption that third parties will provide security (which they, in fact, may not).

Rembiesa said: **“There is a downside to outsourcing everything. XaaS relies on a cloud-based environment. Organizations concerned about securing data in the cloud might shy away from XaaS. That is true especially with organizations that offer medical services in the United States (required by law as HIPAA compliant), any organization that does business in the European Union where GDPR has strict privacy requirements and levies heavy fines for violating them, or financial institutions. Service providers are aware of these concerns and have been implementing more security and protection into their cloud accounts. Yet still, there is risk involved. In 2020, it will be the IT Asset Manager’s job to determine whether XaaS (or other types of cloud-based vendor relationships) is appropriate for an organization.”**

#### **TREND NUMBER THREE: ITAM INDUSTRY SKYROCKETS**

The IT Asset Management industry has grown exponentially over the past several decades and [shows no signs of stopping](#). In 2017 the ITAM software market was at over \$750 million and it could reach \$2.19 billion by the year 2026. These numbers point to [steady growth](#) for the ITAM profession, for many years to come. The upcoming year 2020 will see IT Asset Managers surge ahead as vital business instruments—with a seat at the executive table and inclusion on important IT business negotiations. ITAM programs produce savings by finding ways to more effectively manage the information or technology assets a company already owns. This direct correlation has not gone unnoticed by top-level executives, solidifying the place for ITAM professionals within corporate culture. Furthermore, compliance is now a hot-button issue for businesses, as the threat of compliance fines became more tangible.

Dr. Rembiesa said: **“The year 2019 was the year of data protection and enforcement. The function of IT asset management is not frivolous. In our current decade, you cannot do business without technology. Simply put, if you aren’t managing your IT inventory then you aren’t managing your business. Each organization has a responsibility to protect data, which is a primary part of mature ITAM programs. Proactive measures can ensure that businesses remain compliant and are well-versed in legislative trends, producing added value for the ITAM profession.”**

The IAITAM head added: **“As the year unfolds, IT Asset Managers likely will face more changes as the industry continues to evolve ... The business industry is becoming more aware of ITAM best practices and we are seeing an increase in adoption. IT Asset Management is now part of the conversation more frequently, even in the highest levels of an organization. By cementing our foothold within the business world and providing actionable data showing the return on investment (ROI) of ITAM programs, there will be an increase in both work and influence for IT Asset Managers.”**

#### **ABOUT IAITAM**

The International Association of Information Technology Asset Managers, Inc., is the professional association for individuals and organizations involved in any aspect of IT Asset Management, Software Asset Management (SAM), Hardware Asset Management, Mobile Asset Management, IT Asset Disposition and the lifecycle processes supporting IT Asset Management in organizations and industry across the globe. IAITAM certifications are the only IT Asset Management certifications that are recognized worldwide. For more information, visit [www.iaitam.org](http://www.iaitam.org).

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