# IAITAM 2021 FORECAST:  REMOTE WORK IS HERE TO STAY, TIME TO CONSIDER DITCHING "DISPOSAL BOXES" & SNITCH SOFTWARE TO SURGE

*Organization That Warned Throughout 2020 That Companies Were Ill Prepared for Work-From-Home Device Management, Security Issues Looks Ahead to New Year.*

**CANTON, OHIO – December 21, 2020 –** After jumping out early in 2020 as a major voice of caution on corporations unprepared for the shift to work from home (WFH) under COVID-19, the International Association of IT Asset Managers (IAITAM), the leading authority on IT Asset Management (ITAM), is now looking ahead to what it expects in the new year of 2021.

IAITAM's predictions focus on three issues:  the reality that work from home is not going away … even if COVID-19 is beaten back with vaccines; an emerging awareness that "disposal box" handling of retired assets is not good enough; and the rise of so-called "snitch" software.

IAITAM President and CEO Dr. Barbara Rembiesa said: **"At times we may almost have seemed like prophets of doom this year when warning organizations that they were not ready for a radical shift into the work-from-home environment.  But we believe that our multiple efforts in 2020 to raise the alarm had a salutary effect.  Many changes to the IT Asset Management industry are taking place right now and some are due to the coronavirus pandemic. Through all of this, the unsung heroes of ITAM have shined, allowing companies to maintain business continuity, which saved countless jobs and entire organizations. The ITAM profession will continue to grow and show its value in 2021."**

Here are IAITAM's predictions for 2021:

1. **Remote Work is Never Going Away and Its Time to Get Back to Tighter Controls**.  Some organizations have discovered that they are able to maintain business continuity in a work-from-home environment while saving money on overhead costs. When the coronavirus epidemic first began and the shift to remote work started, organizations used ad hoc ITAM processes to maintain business continuity and survive the government-imposed shutdowns. This worked in 2020 but is not be good enough for 2021. Organizations need to return to performing mature ITAM processes. Otherwise, they will be at risk of data leaks.  For example, the healthcare industry was in a real bind in 2020 and created ad hoc databases about coronavirus treatment and patients. These databases were made so rapidly that some security processes were ignored, which made them vulnerable. This has led to the databases getting hacked, organizations being threatened, and sensitive vaccine information getting leaked. Regaining mature ITAM programs with strong tracking and security policies and procedures is going to be a major necessity in 2021.

2. **Disposal Box Programs are Good, But Not Good Enough.** Another impact of the coronavirus pandemic was that organizations no longer operated from a central location. When it comes to IT Asset Disposition (ITAD), that is problematic because a vendor cannot easily pick up assets and dispose them in a secured fashion. This issue has led to the innovative fix known as Disposal Box Programs. These programs begin when a consumer requests a packaging box from the vendor, who ships the box to wherever the consumer is at. The consumer then packs the assets that need to be

pushed through the disposition process into the box and mails it back to the vendor.  This process was a great short-term solution to the problem, but it must not remain a permanent solution. This is because there is a lack of a clear chain of custody, i.e., if the package is lost by the mailing service, the vendor can state that no package was sent back, and the organization can say they mailed it and the vendor lost it. A worse scenario is if the package is lost or stolen and the data on the device is hacked. Now that organizations have had time to adapt to the WFH regimen, they should move away from Disposal Box Programs and return to ITAM best disposal practices with a secure end-to-end chain-of-custody to ensure data is wiped properly and with full transparency and security.

3. **"Snitch Software" Will Go Wider.**  "Snitch software" is a newer trend that has just started sneaking into auditing practices. A recent example is the court case between a vendor and a consumer. The vendor placed a Piracy Detection and Reporting Security Software (PDRSS) into their product that tracks and informs them whenever an unlicensed software is used and gives them the IP address. Eventually, the vendor audited the consumer and explained that their software was being used incorrectly, but the consumer argued that had not been proven. This essentially led to the vendor explaining their implemented PDRSS, which led to a privacy and permissions dispute. This is just one incident of snitch software, but there will likely be more cases and implementations since audit rates are going to increase as organizations seek to financially recover from the pandemic. Knowing this, organizations should be prepared for snitch software to gain momentum and software makers are going to put them into more products.  For companies to avoid fines and embarrassment, IT Asset Managers will need to focus in 2021 even more than usual on ensuring that licenses are current and properly accounted for.

To see how IAITAM played a major leadership role in 2020 in alerting organizations for COVID-19 ITAM issues, see here, here, here, here, here, and here.

## 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, 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.

**MEDIA CONTACT:**  Whitney Dunlap, (703) 229-1489 or wdunlap@hastingsgroup.com.