

IT Procurement

Should I purchase brand new?

To answer this question the starting point should be the IT policy. Unless the company has a well thought out policy it will be difficult to assess whether it really is in the interests of the company to purchase new equipment or to ensure that consideration of environmental issues are an integral part of the decision making process.

Best Practice: A company should have a clear policy on purchasing IT equipment that is communicated throughout the organisation and takes into account:

- Alternative options to purchasing brand new equipment
- Impact on productivity and improvements in efficiency
- Environmental implications

In the development of the purchasing policy the company should seek to address the following questions:

Alternative Options

1. What options should the company consider if it decides to upgrade/replace its IT systems e.g. purchasing brand new, purchasing second hand, leasing etc?
2. Can the existing machines be upgraded and if so, what will be the initial cost? If this option is selected will there be a need to upgrade again in the short term?
3. How will the company determine “value for money” before the proposed purchase/upgrade and who will make the assessment?
4. Are the options of acquiring new software or training staff to use existing machines more effectively viable alternatives to purchasing new hardware?

Improved Efficiency

5. Will the efficiency and productivity of the organisation be enhanced by the purchase of new IT equipment? If so, how?
6. What tools does the company have in place to measure any increases in efficiency and productivity?
7. What functions will the new machines undertake that the existing machines cannot?

Environmental Implications

8. How will the computers being replaced be recycled/disposed of? e.g. donation to charitable organisation, sent to refurbisher etc.
9. How does the company select a manufacturer or seller? Does the company take into account the environmental, recycling and take-back policies of manufacturers and sellers and how do these influence the purchasing decision?
10. How easily can the computer components be upgraded or recycled e.g. can the toner cartridge be re-used?