



THE LOOKING GLASS

A newsletter for IT professionals

Review of Gartner IT Asset Management Summit

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Gartner's annual IT Asset Management Summit took place on September 12-14, 2005 at the Westin Century Plaza Hotel in Los Angeles, CA. This article will review the participation, benefits, themes, sponsors, fees and feedback on the conference and can help companies determine if they should attend in the future.

Who Attended

This year 900 end-users, mostly from large corporations, attended the Gartner IT Asset Management Summit. Attendance had risen from 2004. The end-users were primarily IT Asset Managers of companies, stakeholders or managers who had been tasked with IT Asset Management in addition to their other responsibilities for their organizations. The content of the conference seemed geared towards end-users in the beginning to intermediate stages of developing IT Asset Management programs for their companies. Advanced users who are very confident with their processes, organizational structure, tools and accuracy of their asset data would not benefit as much from this conference.

Benefits

There were several benefits to attending this conference. The first was **education** on industry trends and tools. There was plenty of content from Gartner analyst speakers, customer case studies as well as sponsor/vendor presentations. Most of the presentations were provided by Gartner VPs and senior analysts.

Another benefit was **networking** with peers who were facing similar challenges in IT Asset Management. There were plenty of opportunities to network – at breakfast, lunch or during the evening Solution Provider Showcase and Hospitality Suite events. Most lunches were 2 hours in length which gave attendees the opportunity to converse with each other and attend the Solution Showcase to learn more about the leading tools available in the industry.

A third benefit was the ability for an end-user to validate where they were in the process of establishing a reliable IT Asset Management function and give them a **benchmark**. Through the presentations as well as discussions with peers, end-users were able to gauge where they stood...if they were behind, with or ahead of the curve, and if they were heading in the right direction. Most end-users seemed relieved to learn that other companies were facing the same struggles.

Themes

The following were some of the major themes that were presented by Gartner analysts and outside speakers during the conference.

- IT Asset Management is built on processes. Tools need to fit into the processes that are established.
- IT Asset Management processes must support business realities.
- IT Asset Management needs to be tied to the value of the business; synergy with major business initiatives is a necessity for IT Asset Management success.
- It takes time, 18 months – 3 years, to put a reliable IT Asset Management program in place. Don't try to boil the ocean.
- Go after quick wins to demonstrate the need for IT Asset Management to the executive team. Choose highly-visible, high-impact projects first to demonstrate the value. Internal marketing and selling of the value is an essential critical success factor.
- Just about all the tools you need are available. Choose the tools that fit your processes.
- IT Asset Management adoption is still low - only 30% of organizations of 2,500+ employees are doing it.
- Compliance with financial reporting, such as Sarbanes-Oxley, and compliance with license agreements are the drivers for companies to establish effective IT Asset Management. If they aren't doing it, they need to.
- IT Asset Management is moving away from a technical discipline to a business benefit.
- IT Asset Management still lacks business discipline in many organizations.
- In order to establish a multi-functional IT Asset Management team, include business units, finance, legal, contract management, procurement, the IS organization and Asset Management team.
- Gartner predicts that IT Asset Management will eventually have a framework like ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library) and this will demonstrate maturity in the discipline.

Sponsors

There were 32 sponsors/vendors that exhibited in the Solution Provider Showcase and several that sponsored Hospitality Suites. Many of the sponsors were leaders in providing IT Asset Management solutions while others were up and coming companies in the industry. The vendor products covered all aspects of IT Asset Management from asset discovery, software license metering, inventory, asset repository to disposal and destruction of assets. This is the list of sponsors.

ABC Enterprise Systems, ASAP Software, AssetMetrix, BDNA, Belarc, Birlasoft, Blazent, BMC, Cascade Asset Management, Chasm, Computer Associates, Eracent, Evergreen Systems, Express Metrix, HP, IBM Global Financing, Infra Corporation, Isogon (an IBM Company), Macrovision, Microsoft, MRO Software,

Newmarket IT, Novell, Open iT, Peregrine, Protiviti, Provance, Quickcomm Software Solutions, Redemtech, RetroBox, Scalable Software, Software Spectrum

Fees

The conference registration fee was \$1,695 per person for early bird registration (up to 2 months before the start of the conference) and \$1,895 for late registration.

Feedback

Both the end-users and sponsors/vendors seemed very pleased with the content of the conference. End-users were appreciative of the education they received, the networking opportunities and the ability to speak with multiple vendors in the same venue. The vendors were enthusiastic about the high level of interest in their products and services and the qualified leads that were generated.

Some of the attendees were repeat customers and participate in the Gartner conference every year.

Conclusion

The Gartner IT Asset Management Summit was well-received by both end-users and sponsors. It was very informative and a productive use of their time. Gartner did a good job in choosing pertinent content for their audience, and participants left with the intention to attend next year's conference, which will be held in Orlando, FL from September 18-20, 2006.