IRON MOUNTAIN®

RETHINK SUSTAINABILITY

Environmental sustainability has become an increasingly important topic around the world. There is a collective effort between governments, organisations and individual citizens to change how we live and work to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

In recent years, there has been a greater emphasis on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) programmes. Every day, organisations with ESG programmes seek to incorporate these principles into the core of their culture and the way they operate. They are driven by data to truly understand the environmental and societal impacts of their businesses and to provide a governance structure around them to ensure they are transparent and accountable.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY ALONG THE INFORMATION LIFECYCLE

A CAREFUL LOOK AT THE INFORMATION LIFECYCLE REVEALS MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPLEMENT MORE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES AS WE CREATE, USE, STORE, AND DESTROY INFORMATION.

DISPOSE

- Ensure retention schedules are available and abided by so information can be disposed of at the end of its retention period.
- Consider refurbishing or recycling electronics instead of defaulting to destruction.
- Assess your suppliers to ensure they have obtained proper certifications and are employing sustainable methods.

STORE

- Assess the current environment to store physical or digital records.
- Promote the use of collocated data centres for more efficient energy consumption.
- Seek data centre facilities that are powered by renewable energy.
- Back up inactive data to tape to eliminate ongoing energy usage.

POLICY & GOVERNANCE
DIGITAL & PHYSICAL

DISPOSE · CREATE · USE · STORE

CREATE

- Encourage movement away from paper to digitally born records and data.
- Reduce use of toner and discourage printing.
- Carefully vet suppliers and seek those that leverage recycled materials and sustainable processes.

USE

- Monitor energy consumption of computing devices.
- Analyse the current use of materials such as paper, packaging, file folders, and printer toner.
- Digitise work processes for greater efficiency and increased data access.
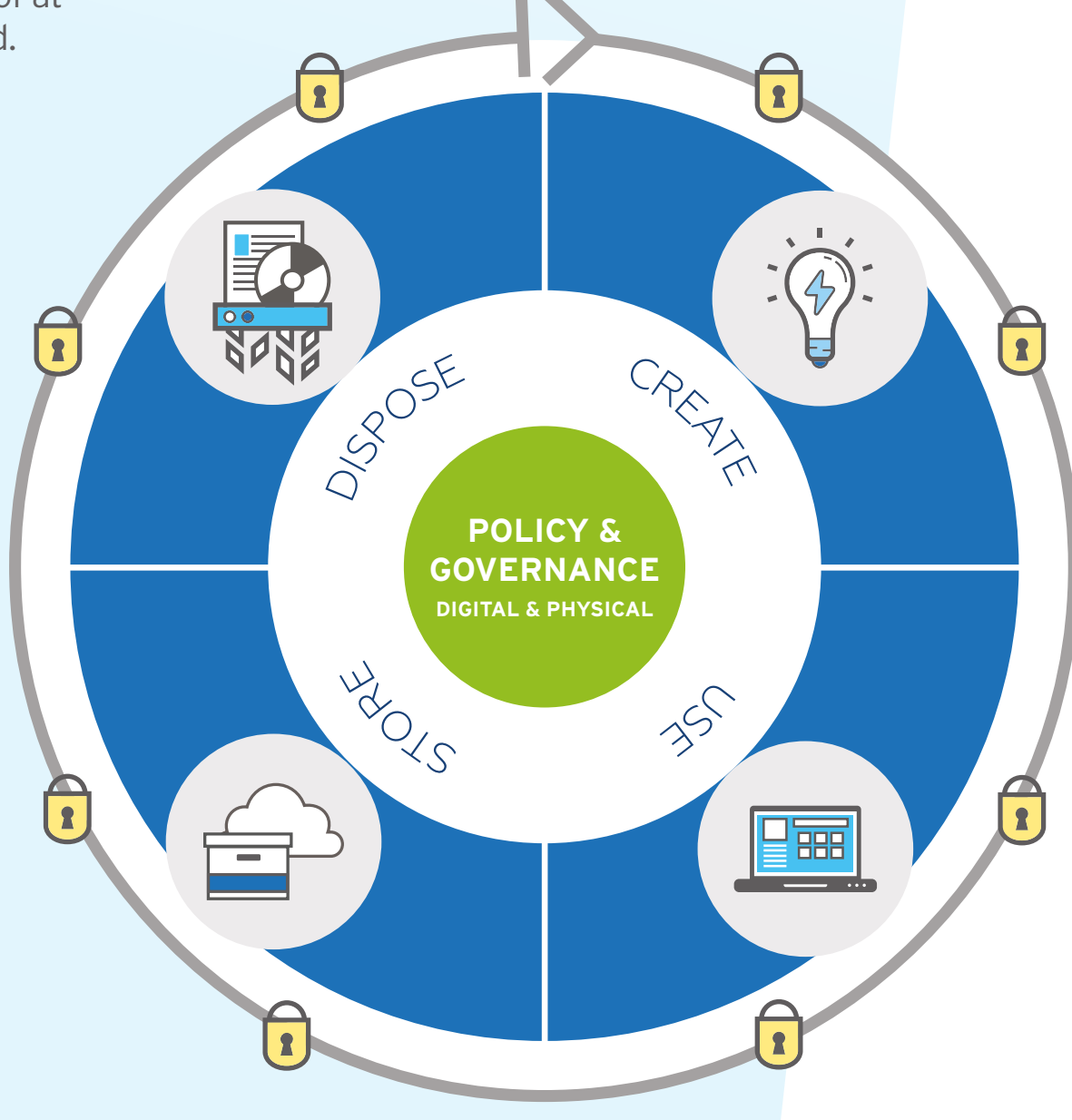
THE IMPACT OF YOUR VALUE CHAIN

MOST COMPANIES HAVE FOCUSED ON REDUCING THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT DIRECTLY UNDER THEIR OWNERSHIP OR OPERATIONAL CONTROL. HOWEVER, UPSTREAM AND DOWNSTREAM EMISSIONS FROM THE SUPPLY CHAIN CAN MAKE UP AS MUCH AS **90%** OF THEIR TOTAL IMPACT. [1]

EMISSIONS SOURCES
- Business Operations
- Purchased Electricity and Steam
- Supply Chain Upstream or Downstream Activities

BENEFITS TO ENGAGING WITH YOUR SUPPLY CHAIN

- **Reduce environmental impact**
- **Improve reporting accuracy**
- **Mitigate business risk**
- **Identify unethical practices**
- **Reduce expenses**
- **Improve brand reputation**
- **Comply with emerging regulations**
- **Increase stakeholder trust**

[1] Carbon Trust

ENGAGE WITH YOUR SUPPLIERS ON ESG

HERE ARE A FEW QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR VENDORS AS YOU BUILD OUT YOUR SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PRACTICES:

- Does your organisation have a Human Rights policy?
- Do you release a Corporate Social Responsibility report?
- Have you set any environmental goals?
- Do any third parties verify your data?
- What visibility do I have into my environmental impact from your services?
- Can you help me reach my environmental goals?

[2] SUPERMICRO, Data Centres & The Environment: The State of Global Environmental Sustainability in Data Centre Design, December 2018
[3] The Global E-waste Monitor 2020 (ewastemonitor.info)
[4] www.theworldcounts.com

Reduce Your Impact

HERE ARE THREE AREAS TO START TRACKING TO ENSURE YOU ARE REDUCING YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT FROM YOUR INFORMATION MANAGEMENT ALONG THE SUPPLY CHAIN:
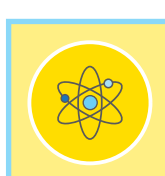
ENERGY

As our world becomes increasingly more digital, it may seem like we are being more environmentally friendly. The truth is that we require a growing amount of energy to power this digital landscape. One area to be cognizant of is your data centre. Storing data, hosting servers, retaining network connectivity and cooling the data centre to keep equipment running efficiently is incredibly energy intensive, **with data centres amounting to an estimated 3% of the global electricity demand[2].** Many are seeking innovative ways to operate more efficiently, from relying on renewable energy as their main power source to reducing the total amount of power needed. This can be done by optimising the data centre layout, leveraging advanced cooling techniques, and reducing idle computing uptime.
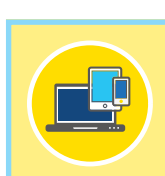
ELECTRONICS

Our growing demand and use of electronic devices have caused detrimental impacts on our environment in the forms of massive e-waste generation, a significant carbon footprint, and an increasing demand on the natural world for resource extraction. **E-waste is now the fastest-growing waste stream in the world, generating 53 million tons of waste in 2019[3].** Many IT items can be securely erased and then refurbished and resold to other organisations, allowing you to retain their value and divert waste from landfills. Equipment that is truly at the end of its life can be recycled, allowing materials such as iron, copper, and aluminum to be extracted and reused. And a responsible partner will ensure that all human rights and worker safety measures are in place, in addition to providing secure data erasure methods to protect data privacy.
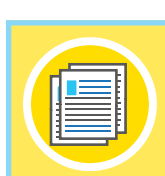
PAPER

Even as the world becomes more digital, there is still important information that exists in paper form, from printed day-to-day documents to confidential legacy records. When these records are eligible to be destroyed, it is paramount that organisations ensure it is done securely and responsibly. **Paper is the 3rd largest polluter of air, water and soil and makes up 26% of waste at landfills[4].** In addition to harming the environment, it can also be extremely damaging to an organisation's brand if not disposed of properly. To take it a step further: are you gathering data around how much paper you are recycling? This is valuable information that can be leveraged as you seek to increase recycling rates and landfill diversion rates.

CLIMATE RESILIENCE

As we've learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, **disruption can come at any time**. Your sustainability programme isn't just about reducing waste and emissions; it must also be about planning for continuity in the face of change. For information management leaders, this means assessing your climate risk, reporting on it, and building a resilience plan to ensure **business continuity** in the event of a disruption.

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