IT Asset Management (ITAM)
Questions Board Members Should Ask

Below are some questions you may ask management to ensure that IT asset management (ITAM) practices are sufficient to support the institution's risk management, patch management, and end-of-life management programs.

1. **Does the institution have an effective process to manage the full IT asset life cycle (from planning and procurement to disposal)?**

   WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: All IT assets – software, hardware, mobile devices, cloud assets, etc.- have a life cycle, and management of each stage in the lifecycle is critical to maximize the value of the asset to the business and manage associated risk exposures for the life of the asset. The life cycle begins with strategies and planning for acquiring or developing the asset and continues logically through the ongoing operation and maintenance of the asset, as well as any potential modifications that may be necessary over the course of its lifespan. The final stage of the life cycle addresses the proper disposal of the asset at the end of its useful life.

2. **Does the institution maintain an accurate, comprehensive, and dynamic inventory of all IT assets? Is it updated in real time and does it include hardware, software, cloud assets, and mobile devices?**

   *WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: Effective ITAM is a critical contributor to effective risk management practices throughout the institution. ITAM programs play a critical role in identifying **unauthorized IT devices, software, or other services** in the institution's environment and are instrumental to the comprehensiveness and success of **patch management** and **end-of-life management programs**.*

3. **How does ITAM align with the institution's overall business and IT strategy? Are asset decisions supporting digital transformation, sustainability, and cost optimization goals?**

   WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: ITAM is a supporting mechanism for business strategies in that it helps to maximize the value of technology investments by ensuring that technology resources are aligned with the institution's organizational mission and goals, are efficiently used, and are properly governed. Strategically, ITAM gives the institution visibility into the entire asset management life cycle to better inform decisions about investment, cost optimization, and general risk management- both short-term and long-term. Effective ITAM also frees up resources to allow for growth and innovation within the institution.

4. **What tools or products does the institution use to manage its IT asset inventory?**

   WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: Depending on the size and complexity of the institution, the methods and tools used to manage the hardware and software inventories will vary. According to the FFIEC, "There are tools that may help management identify and manage hardware (including telecommunications) and software in the entity's IT environment. For example, automated asset management tools can scan an entity's IT environment for unauthorized hardware, software,

and devices. Smaller or less complex entities may use manual asset inventory processes; these processes, however, should allow management to effectively document, track, and oversee the entity's technology assets." [1]

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[1] Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council. FFIEC Information Technology Examination Handbook: Architecture, Infrastructure, and Operations - III.B.1 - Technology Asset Inventory. June 2021.