VIZOR

Enhance Your Microsoft SCCM Investment

A Journey Through The Lifecycle Of Your IT Assets

Introduction

As technology becomes a greater part of business strategy, it is important for organizations to better manage their assets. Specifically, for IT assets, there are a lot of advantages to better management that organizations overlook. Instead they manage IT assets in spreadsheets or only use Microsoft SCCM to collect data about their assets. However, in this document, we are going to discuss the lifecycle of an IT asset and why SCCM should not be used alone to manage your ITAM processes.

In many cases SCCM is used to perform tasks and processes it was not designed to do. For example, the tool alone does not comply with ITIL practices. As a result, users can get frustrated and waste time trying to manipulate the system to do tasks it wasn't intended for. SCCM is a powerful tool for many operational IT tasks but it needs to be complimented by a tool like VIZOR that can better manage other parts of the lifecycle.

Lifecycle Stages of an IT Asset

1. Asset Requests
2. Purchase
3. Allocation & Deployment
4. Discovery & Audit
5. Repair
6. Reassignment / Recycling
7. End-of-life

Stages of an IT asset lifecycle that are typically managed in SCCM

SCCM is commonly used for operational "Discovery & Audit" and "Deployment" stages of an asset's lifecycle.

Why SCCM is NOT Enough

SCCM is evidently part of managing IT assets. However, as its name implies, the System Center *Configuration Manager* excels at configuration management tasks of the lifecycle such as network discovery and application deployment. A tool such as VIZOR encompasses all IT Asset Management (ITAM) processes and workflows. VIZOR transforms raw network discovery data collected by SCCM into actionable information. Thus, enabling organizations to manage every part of the lifecycle.

Why would you want to manage every part of the lifecycle?

ITAM increases the overall productivity of an organization, helps ensure license compliance, defend against vendor audits, and reduces IT costs. Gartner claims that an organization can experience up to a 30% reduction in costs within the first year of use of an ITAM strategy and ongoing savings between 5-15% for the next 5 years.

Other benefits of managing the lifecycle of IT assets:

1. Determines the value attached to IT assets within the organization, as it affects the bottom line
2. Monitors asset circulation and use of IT assets to ensure there are enough to execute the business functions of the organization
3. Creates a reliable source of accurate data to make informed decisions
4. Establishes business processes to improve IT services and overall productivity within the organization

WHY USE VIZOR?

To summarize, VIZOR extends the value of the inventory data you have in SCCM today. It takes raw inventory data and connects it to employees, your processes and workflows and allows you to work from one central tool, without the need to cross reference Excel spreadsheets. *Let's jump into more detail by going through the lifecycle stages.*

1. Asset Requests

SUMMARY: VIZOR streamlines the IT Asset request process with unique features for managing approval.

What processes do you have in place if an employee needs a new computer or wants to use new software? Many organizations use email to manage employee asset requests. Although this may work in smaller organizations, it can get out of hand quickly. Receiving emails from dozens or hundreds of employees is not ideal. Then the execution may take follow up questions and manual labor. This task can take a lot of man hours resulting in frustration for both employees and IT. In VIZOR, not only do you have access to all your IT asset information, but also all relevant employee data. This centralization of information allows IT to streamline the asset request process. When an employee asks for a software application, you can check which computer that person is using, what other software the person may be entitled too and what department he or she is from. This gives you a fuller picture, reducing follow up questions and saving time to get the software to the employee.

To take is a step further, VIZOR also has a request portal. If you're ready to take asset requests to the next step, VIZOR is ready. VIZOR has an area where you can set up a catalog of assets your employees can request. These assets are usually assets already approved by your organization. To ensure all required information is collected at time of request, there are specific forms attached to different requests for each asset type. For example, a form for a new computer may be different from a new software request. They can be attached to each asset type for the employee to fill out. As a result, you get the information you need right away.

Many organizations lend devices to employees. This can include borrowing a laptop, tablet or cellphone. Typically, IT must track who borrows which device and when it is due. This ensures employees are held accountable and helps reduce any security risks. It also helps IT maintain control of the devices belonging to the organization for it is their responsibility for the distribution and keeping them safe. VIZOR can streamline these processes and track the program's success regarding borrowing, maintenance, repairs and solving incidents.

Asset Request *Approvals*

In some instances, employees request assets that are not already owned by the organization. Or organization policies request management approval before the request can be fulfilled by IT. This commences an approval process. Regardless of how your organization goes through this process, VIZOR is set up to make it easier for you.

- **Simple approval:** VIZOR can send approvers emails giving them the details they need to approve a request directly from the email.
- **Many approvers**: if there are many possible approvers for a request, VIZOR can send it to the potential approvals. Once the minimum number of approvers is reached, the request is passed to the next step automatically. For example, after the Line Manager approves of a potential very expensive software, the organization may want the Director's approval. VIZOR would automate this process based your workflow configuration in the tool.
- **Internal IT process:** If the approval has gone through the process and is now up to the IT to take care of fulfillment, VIZOR can delegate the task to the appropriate technician based on technical expertise and available resources.
- **Updated request info:** if something about the request changes, the information is automatically updated and sent to the approvers who already saw the request.
- **Email reminders:** Enough chasing people to get approvals! VIZOR has email reminders already set up. Thus, efficiently moving the process forward.

Overall the process is more efficient when streamlined in a tool. There is less manual work and less reliance on people to remember to follow up.

2. Purchase

SUMMARY: VIZOR provides a centralized view of IT asset purchases, contracts and costs

There are several parts of procurement that we have already discussed. Usually attached to a purchase is the approval process and sometimes a request from an employee. Those have been previously discussed. However, although purchases are normally executed by another department, it's important for IT to have visibility into them.

What do we mean by that?

IT Assets purchases may be requested by employees but are ultimately made by IT. IT departments need visibility into the IT purchases of the entire organization, as it is their responsibility to know how much they are spending, who is spending it, and what the organization owns.

As a result, VIZOR enables IT departments to track their purchases alongside the associated IT assets. VIZOR goes as far as having line items of purchases. For example, when shopping at the grocery store, you may purchase many items and even several of the same item. This can be compared to IT purchasing many software licenses or maintenance services. VIZOR has the flexibility for you to operate at this granular level. It makes it easy to attach contracts and agreements to a purchase. It also makes it easy to connect your purchases to the actual assets which can help with proof of purchase for compliance.

3. Allocation & Deployment

SUMMARY: VIZOR streamlines the employee onboarding process by integrating SCCM, Active Directory and HR systems

IT Assets are most commonly allocated and deployed when an employee starts a new job at the organization or changes position within the organization. VIZOR has some unique features to assist the onboarding process.

- **Automation:** VIZOR reduces IT workload by automating deployment of IT assets by creating tickets for preparing a new work station or triggering a software deployment via SCCM.

- **Role based provisioning**: VIZOR can automatically allocate IT assets to employees based on his or her position/role, location or seniority.

- **Documentation:** By identifying roles and policies in an automated solution provides for reduced manual labor, efficiency and a proper documentation of employee jobs and their requirements to execute.

- **Security measure:** The automation ensures that no one has access to sensitive employee information or assets when they are no longer required.

- **Sequential ability:** VIZOR keeps track of any sequential tasks like setting up an AD account before granting Office 365 access. This keeps things organized and eliminates the chances of a step being forgotten.

- **Taking advantage:** Any automation in IT is ideal. It alleviates technicians from manual work and to focus on tasks that are more profitable to the organization

4. Discovery and Audit

SUMMARY: SCCM is known for discovering devices on your network

VIZOR is known for managing the processes around those devices. It can also manage your physical assets

SCCM is commonly used by IT to discover devices connected to their network. However, pulling out actionable information from raw inventory data can be difficult. VIZOR transforms the data into valuable information. Then you can use VIZOR's out of the box reports, and queries to sort through the data. In addition, VIZOR consolidates information from multiple discovery tools. Therefore, if you have SCCM but also need to information from Lansweeper and/or spreadsheets, you can place it all in VIZOR. It provides a single view for discovery data.

Once network discovery and audit data is centralized, processes associated with auditing and maintaining assets are simplified. Knowing who has what and where it is, enable IT to satisfy compliance and governance requirements which occur during an assets operational use, for example reporting software compliance for vendor audits.

Know who has what

IT needs to know which assets- hardware and software- are allocated to which employees. For accountability reasons and tracking purposes, this allows IT to closely monitor the assets for when they need repairs, upgrades or replacement. This proactive approach extends their lifetime value and helps monitor their depreciation. This is also a great security measure for when employees leave the organization. IT knows exactly what that employee had access to and will be able to salvage the software on the computer and reuse the hardware.

Know where it is

A great part of VIZOR is locating your assets, geographically. Although hard to do manually, VIZOR can easily track where your assets are located across the organization's locations. It is especially beneficial when an organization operates in multiple cities. By tracking asset location, you will be able to better maintain inventory, know which assets are always available and where they can be distributed. For example, you might count 100 available laptops but realize they are stored in the Ohio campus as opposed to the Washington campus where you need them.

Audit and Inventory beyond network discovery

Often, organizations have several types of assets, some of which may not be discoverable by SCCM such as chairs and desks. In VIZOR, you can track your assets of all kinds. Although VIZOR is tailored for IT assets many customers manage their fixed assets in VIZOR as well. They prefer having all the assets in one location. However, some organizations have multiple assets management systems and spreadsheets. You can leverage them and bring the assets into a single centralized view in VIZOR.

VIZOR also allows you to track assets before they exist in SCCM, for example recently purchased laptops which aren't on the network yet, perhaps not even arrived from the supplier. As detailed within, VIZOR supports many lifecycle processes, such as request purchase and allocation, which may proceed a devices deployment. VIZOR ensures these assets aren't exclude from compliance and governance auditing requirements if they don't yet exist in SCCM.

5. Repair

> SUMMARY: It's not easy to manage repairs in SCCM.
>
> VIZOR identifies lemon assets and keeps track of their repairs, helping you stay on top of maintenance contracts and warrantees.

Can you manage repairs in SCCM? Not Easily.

In VIZOR, you can easily check in devices that need repair and then check them back out (giving them back to the employee) once the repair is complete, or check-out a replacement device. You can simplify this process further by using barcodes to ensure the correct asset is checked in and out. VIZOR will even automate the creation of a repair ticket, so the status and any costs incurred by repair can be tracked.

Once an asset is sent out to repair three times, VIZOR automatically identifies the asset as a lemon. This alerts IT to investigate the asset as they may be an underlying defect. Since the repairs links to purchasing information, IT can easily identify assets under warrantee, or extended maintenance that may be eligible for a refund or an exchange.

A great area in VIZOR is the repair area. It keeps track of everything associated with each repair. Inspired by the Education Industry needing to track every repair, the information that can be stored in VIZOR is impressive. It includes the number of repairs, the types of repairs, who's repairing it, the cost associated to the repair, if there are any chargebacks to department. It is also part of the asset profile, giving you insight on who has used it, who borrowed it, its warrantee, the vendor, and its cost.

6. Reassignment / Recycling

> SUMMARY: VIZOR can recycle software assets, saving you on costs.

Consider a laptop. When its not needed by the employee it goes in to storage, so its available for another employee to use. If the employee leaves the laptop could be reassigned to the new employee. Now this can be done with software licenses in VIZOR.

Software license recycling is simply recovering unused licenses and keeping them in a central location until another employee needs it. It is the internal reuse of licenses. Once an employee leaves the company or changes department, the individual may stop using a certain laptop and all the software licenses he or she had access to. In several cases, installed software can be forgotten on the computer, especially if the computer restores to a base without verification. In addition, computers are often not reused right away so the installed software remains on the device. Often when a computer's ownership switches, the new user may not need the same software and then the installed software becomes a waste.

Whether it is a SaaS or an installed software, you can retrieve the license and put in storage with just a few clicks. You can then re-purpose it with another few simple clicks. If the integration with HR is set up, the system automatically detects a change in the employment status.

7. Disposal

SUMMARY: Notification of maintenance contract renewal, expected end-of-life and warrantee expiration dates in VIZOR.

Auto end-of-life tasks across the organization including finance.

What do we mean by disposal or retire an asset? In short, it is when as asset will no longer be used. It happens when an asset is lost, too old, beyond repair or at the end of its lifecycle. There are hardware refreshes that can happen every three to five years. How do you deprovision an asset once it's completed its life? What are the processes associated to disposal? For a physical asset, you may have to hire a specialize company to pick it up and properly dispose of it. As an organization, there are environmental responsibilities when disposing devices. For the security of your organization's data, you date clearing processes to ensure no sensitive data is leaked. In VIZOR, it is possible to manage the processes and vendors responsible for the disposal of your physical assets. VIZOR will also help ensure financial information relating to your IT assets is accurate. VIZOR has inbuilt support for calculating for asset depreciation and can notify the finance department when an asset is "retired" so they can accurately track the value of assets in the organization.

As for software assets, you wouldn't "dispose" of the software license. Rather, you would delete or cease to use. This happens when you change vendor, when employees no longer requires the software or when a software is no longer supported by a vendor (end-of-life), like Windows 7. How do you know if you can still use a software application? In VIZOR, you can set expiration dates, renewal dates to help manage the life of your software assets. Similar to your assets, email notifications can be sent to the finance department so they can stay up to date with the assets and expenses of the organization.

VIZOR allows organizations to report on legacy assets which no longer exist in SCCM. After many years of using VIZOR, your organization may go through many vendors. Thus, wanting to clean out "retired" assets and delete them. A feature in VIZOR allows you to permanently delete very old asset records that reside in the solution.

VIZOR
YOUR IT ASSISTANT

VIZOR has helped many organizations enhance their SCCM investment. Get in touch with one of our representatives to see how we can help you!

Contact 1-770-622-2850

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Visit website here www.vizor.cloud

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Email ask@vizor.cloud for with any questions