

Pre-Planning to be Done by Data Center:

- Do you have a detailed inventory of equipment to be decommissioned? (rack location, make, model, serial number)?
- Is there additional equipment that should be removed during the decommissioning project (cabling, e-waste, misc. IT assets)?
- Who will be the on-site decision maker during the decommissioning project?
- Have hardware maintenance contracts been cancelled or adjusted?
- Is there a software license migration/cancellation plan in place?
- Are there important timelines or deadlines that need to be strictly managed?

Initial Information to Provide to Vendor

- Building security requirements
- Address and operating hours of data center
- List and location of hardware to be decommissioned
- Preferred start/end date
- Space and access constraints that may complicate project
- Will there be other contractors on-site during the decommissioning project? How will conflicts be managed?

A Site Visit and Project Plan Helps Ensure On-Time Performance

After vendor selection, a preliminary site survey, done in advance of the project can be very helpful. It ensures that vendor logistics and operations teams can mitigate any risks or challenges that might exist at the site. At a minimum, completion of a site survey should be done if a site visit cannot be scheduled. The survey should evaluate scope, surrounding, access and parking assessment, situation of material, equipment required and a complete risk assessment. Photographs of on-site conditions reviewed in advance can minimize project conflicts and complications during decommissioning.

Confirm Scope of Decommissioning Activity (In-Scope and Out-of-Scope Activities)

- Hardware refresh, cage cleanout, data center shutdown
- Power cable removal and disposal?
- Network cable removal and disposal?
- Rack removal or racks left in place?
- How will equipment to be decommissioned be tagged?
- Disposition of rail kits, rack PDUs, cords?

- Installation of blanking plates
- Ship populated racks or decommission equipment on-site?
- Detail of electronic inventory data capture
- How will inventory counts and items be confirmed and double checked?
- How will discrepancies be managed?
- On-site data destruction
- Any lease returns to manage?
- Critical parts recovery?
- Tracking requirements
- Requirements for how data bearing equipment is handled
- Packing services and packing materials required

Determine Your Reporting Requirements

- What is your company's policy for managing digital data?
- Are requirements in place for how data bearing devices should be handled?
- Will storage media be reused?
- Data destruction standard – (NIST 800-88r1 provides specifications for different destruction methods)
- What information is required for Certificates of Data Destruction?
- What shipment documentation do you require?
- Audit trail for decommissioned data center equipment?
- Is there reporting needed by your accounting department? Your risk management department?
By data privacy officers?
- What reporting is needed by the ITAM team for equipment decommissioned?
 - Items processed per shipment? per month? by location?
 - Make, model, serial number tracking?
 - Inventory count matching to your internal records? (quality control)
 - Disposition of equipment – redeployed – sold – recycled
 - Sales price of units sold
 - Net revenue by item
 - Parent/child tracking (rack, server, hard drive)

Data Center Walk-Through Outcomes:

- Review building security protocols
- Security pre-screen clearances for field technicians
- Pinpoint access points, including loading dock and freight elevator
- Introductions to key on-site personnel – confirm arrival date and time
- Confirmation of floor protection requirements
- Mapping of equipment to be decommissioned
- Assurance that equipment will be powered down on date scheduled
- Identification of any space constraints or shipping constraints (for instance, lack of dock high loading or limitations on size of truck that can access the shipping area)
- Requirements for same day shipping (if space is constrained)
- Map power requirements for powering equipment
- Confirmation of requirements for packing materials – boxes, pallets, straps, shrink wrap, padding
- Size of trucks required – based on volumes, on-site storage availability
- Compile list of equipment and tools needed to perform work
- How shipping needs to be scheduled (based on cadence of decommissioning)
- Determine potential conflicts with other work being done in the data center
- Confirm internet access, through hotspot or access to on-site internet
- Agree on tagging system to designate systematic decommissioning
- Fit-to-purpose toolkit
- Ensure work can be performed safely
- Clearly define data center personnel tasks and vendor tasks
- Agreement on quality control checks and sign-off requirements
- How will exceptions be managed and resolved? (project holds)