



# **THE LOOKING GLASS**

A newsletter for IT professionals

## **The IAITAM Conference**

### **A Good Find for ITAM Practitioners.**

*By Steffani Lomax*

IAITAM, the International Association of Information Technology Asset Managers, is a professional association for individuals involved in any aspect of the lifecycle processes for IT assets, in organizations of any size or industry. Serving IT Asset Management professionals in more than eighteen countries around the world, IAITAM's mission is to provide centralized real world-based skills development for the IT professional and to provide an understanding of IT asset management best practices and their value to the organization.

IAITAM held their annual IT Asset Management conference on November 9-11, 2005 at the Rosen Centre Hotel in Orlando, Florida. This article will review the participation, benefits, topics, sponsors, fees and feedback on the conference, will compare and contrast it with the Gartner IT Asset Management Summit, and will help companies determine if they should attend in the future.

### **Who Attended**

This year 250 end-users, many from large corporations, attended the IAITAM conference. The end-users were primarily IT Asset Managers and practitioners who have been tasked with IT Asset Management responsibilities within their organizations. The content of the conference focused on process and how to address specific IT Asset Management challenges.

### **Benefits**

There were several great benefits to attending this conference. The first was **education** on process and tools. There were a variety of speakers representing the IAITAM organization, sponsors and vendors, as well as end-users. It was invaluable to hear the perspectives of these different groups. Prior to the start and the week following the conference, IAITAM provided IT Asset Manager, hardware and software certification courses as well as IT negotiation training.

Another excellent 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 Exhibitor Reception. Because the conference was relatively small in comparison with other industry events, it was extremely easy to network as attendees saw each other

repeatedly at the sessions. The small size of the conference also lended itself to networking with vendors to learn more about tools and services available.

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, and as a result of the small size of the sessions, they could easily exchange information and provide suggestions to each other on how to solve their IT Asset Management problems.

### Topics

During the conference, there were three tracks to choose from – General ITAM, Experienced ITAM and Executive Management. The content of the sessions provided real-world, practical information for the audience. The following were some of the topics of interest that were presented by IAITAM representatives, vendors and end-users.

- The Art of Managing Assets
- Usage Tracking
- Software Licenses and Support Cost Containment
- Critical Enterprise Data for a Successful ITAM Program
- IAITAM Best Practices Model
- Multiple Location Asset Recovery Challenges
- Using ITAM to Respond to Continuous External Risks
- Common ITAM Implementation Mistakes
- Defining the Roles of ITAMs
- Asset Management Staffing
- Collaboration in a Decentralized ITAM Environment
- The Legal Aspects of Compliance
- Software Audits
- Avoiding Legal Liability Arising from Mergers and Acquisitions
- How to Protect Your Intellectual Property Assets
- Data Destruction
- How Managed IT Asset Disposition Protects Your Organization
- IT Vendor Performance Management
- Tips on Reducing Asset Management Costs for Your Company
- Messaging the Value of ITAM to Executive Management

### Sponsors

There were 30 sponsors/vendors that participated in the Exhibit Hall. 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, inventory, software license metering, asset repository, disposal and destruction of assets as well as professional services. Here is the list of sponsors.

Altiris, ASAP eSmart, AssetMetrix, Asset Recovery Corporation, Attest Systems, BDNA, Boss Solutions, CG4 Solutions, CompuCom Systems, Computer Associates, Eracent, Express Metrix, IBM Software Group, Image Microsystems, Intechra, Iron Mountain, Liquis, Miro Consulting, NPMA, Peregrine Systems, PlanITROI, RetroBox, Sassafras Software, Software Spectrum, Sunflower Systems, TekMethods, United Recycling Industries, Verifichi

### **Fees**

The conference registration fee ranged from \$995 - \$1,995 per person, depending on whether the attendee was an IAITAM member, non-member or an exhibitor.

### **Feedback**

The end-users were very pleased with the content of the conference. They were appreciative of the education they received, the networking opportunities and the ability to speak with multiple vendors in the same venue. Some of the attendees were repeat customers and participate in the IAITAM conference every year.

Due to the small size of this conference, it was less palatable for sponsors as there was not a large volume of traffic in the Exhibit Hall. The Exhibit Hall was open for 2 full days during the conference and had there been limited hours, this would have been more time productive for the sponsors.

### **IAITAM Conference vs. Gartner IT Asset Management Summit**

The annual IAITAM and Gartner conferences are very different from each other and should not be viewed as competing events. As described, the IAITAM conference is geared towards IT Asset Managers and staff and is focused on process and "how to." The Gartner conference deals with more strategic issues such as the direction of the industry, trends and is designed more for managers than staff. The Gartner conference was very "Hollywood" and glitzy (in fact, it took place in Los Angeles). It provided dynamic and inspiring keynote speakers, entertaining sponsor events and pertinent content.

For a full review of the Gartner IT Asset Management Summit, please view our website at [www.swspartners.com](http://www.swspartners.com) and download *The Looking Glass Issue 3*.

### **Conclusion**

The IAITAM Annual Conference is a great venue to search for answers on how to solve specific IT Asset Management challenges. The intimate size of the conference enables attendees to receive as much individual attention as they require from the IAITAM representatives, sponsors and their peers...and, at a reasonable cost.

Next year the IAITAM 2006 Annual Conference and Exhibition will be held on October 18-20th, 2006 at the Renaissance Hotel in Cleveland, Ohio. Visit their website at [www.iaitam.org](http://www.iaitam.org) for additional information.