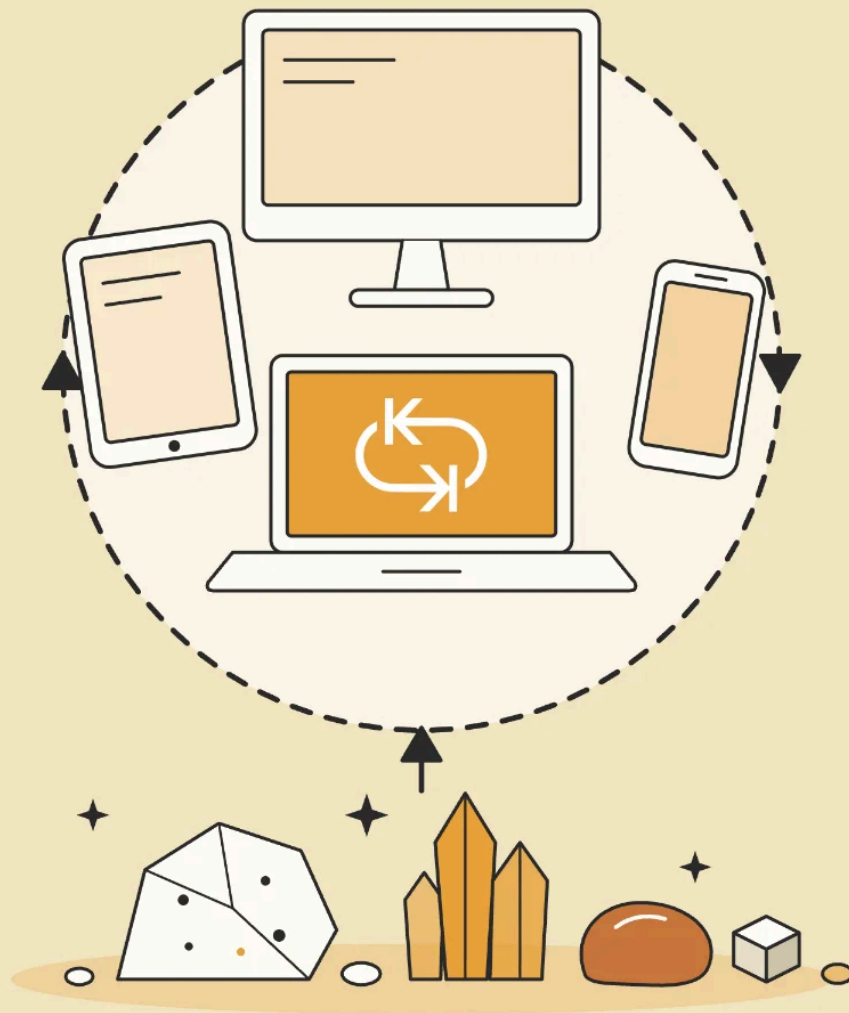




A GUIDE FROM KLYK

The circular IT guide

Four steps to greener, smarter business tech



A certified B Corp, helping
businesses keep tech in use for
longer

HELLOKLYK.COM

Every business runs on technology

Every business runs on technology. Laptops, phones, screens and networks are what keep teams working, wherever they are. But that technology has a cost that rarely shows up on an invoice: the energy, materials and carbon it takes to make, and the waste it leaves behind.

The good news is that the biggest improvements don't come from complicated programmes. They come from a handful of everyday decisions about how you buy, look after and retire your tech. This guide sets out four practical steps any business can take, whatever its size, and how to measure the difference they make.

Circular IT isn't only about buying second-hand. It's about putting every device across your whole IT estate (laptops, phones, screens, meeting room kit and network equipment) onto a circular pathway, whether you buy it new or reused. And it makes business sense: done well, it can save up to 60% on hardware spend.



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Read it end to end, or jump to the step that matters most to you right now. Each step ends with a short checklist, and there's a one-page summary at the end to share with your team.

CONTENTS



1. Keep devices longer
p. 07



2. Plan how you buy
p. 08



3. Repair before you replace
p. 10



4. Retire responsibly
p. 11



Measure your progress
p. 13

Five facts that make the case

Circular IT means keeping technology in use for as long as possible, through reuse, repair and refurbishment, and only recycling it once every bit of use has gone. It replaces the traditional "buy, use, throw away" approach.

4%

Tech now rivals aviation for emissions.

Information and communication technology accounts for up to 4% of global greenhouse gas emissions, and data centre electricity use is expected to more than double by 2030 as AI grows.

79%

Most of a device's footprint comes from making it.

Around 79% of a laptop's lifetime carbon footprint is created during manufacturing, before it's ever switched on.

91%

The materials are finite and concentrated.

China refines around 91% of the world's rare earths and produces 99% of its gallium. Supply can be disrupted, and prices are rising: copper and tin have more than tripled in ten years.

22%

Most e-waste isn't recycled.

The world produced 62 million tonnes of e-waste in 2022, and only around 22% was formally recycled. The UK produces the second-highest amount per person.

460m

Huge amounts of tech sit unused.

There are an estimated 460 million unused devices in UK homes and businesses, and 267 million of them could be repaired or reused.

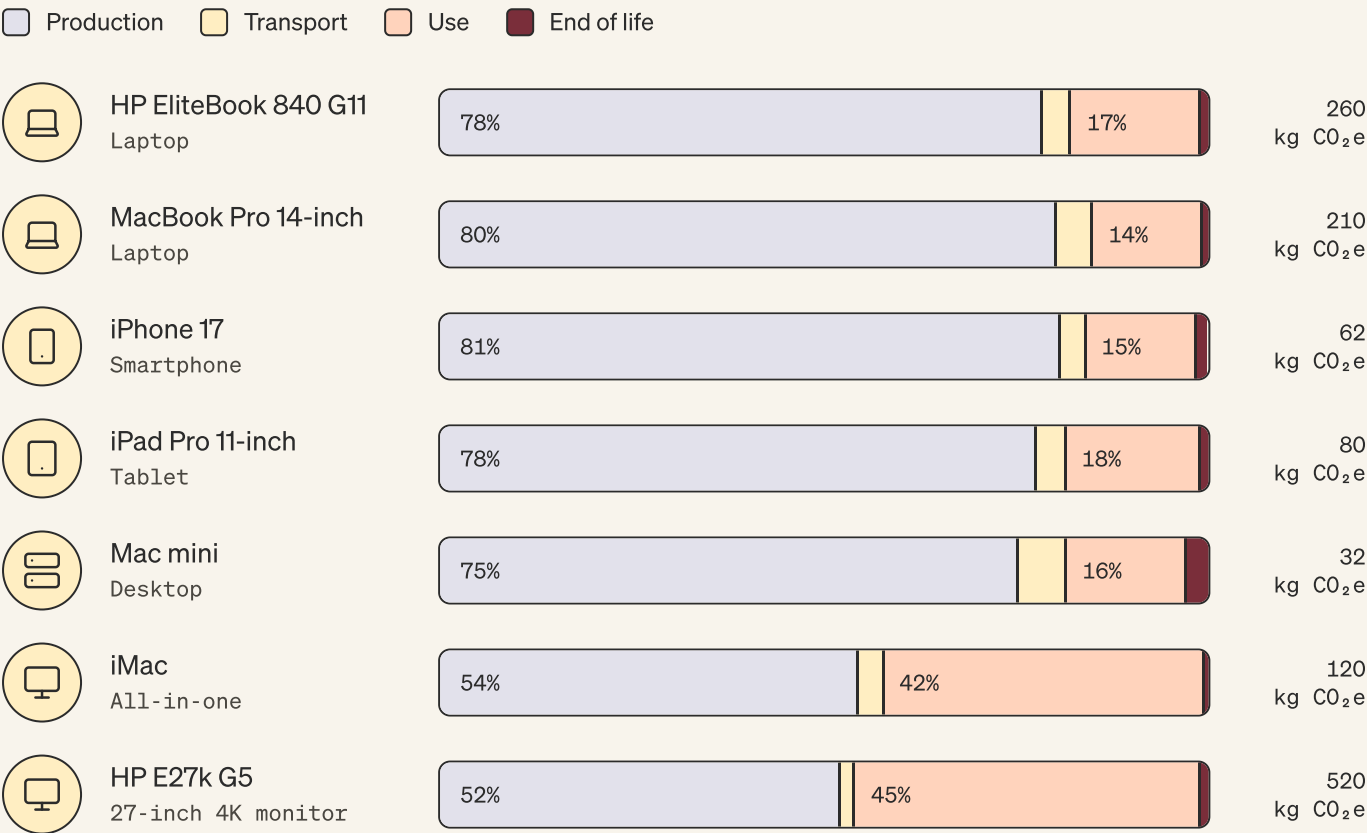


THE OPPORTUNITY

Because most of a device's carbon comes from making it, the single biggest lever is simple. Make fewer new devices, and keep the ones you have in use for longer. That saves carbon and money at the same time.

Where a device's carbon comes from

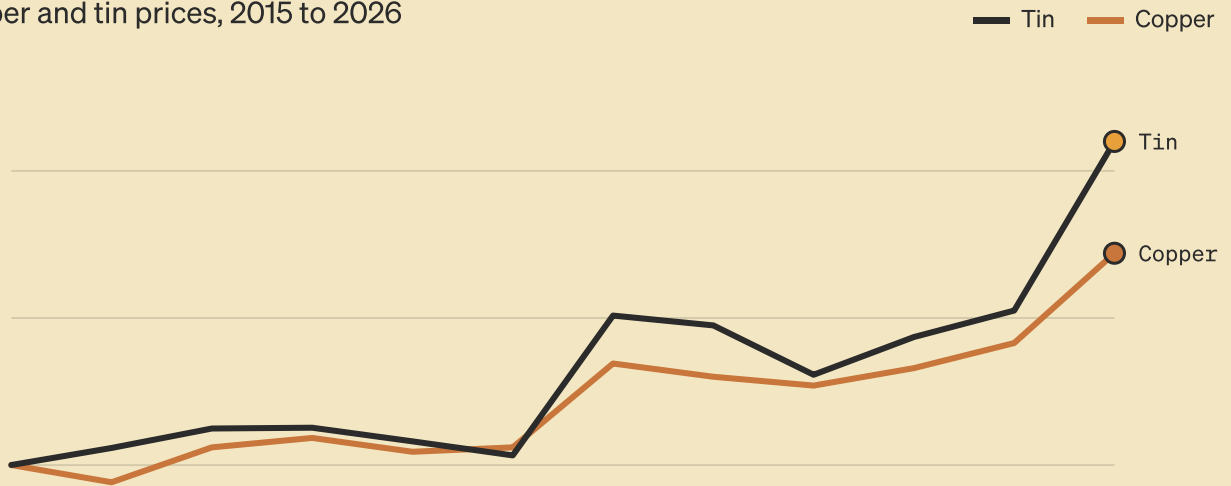
For laptops, tablets and phones, around three-quarters or more of the footprint is created before the device is switched on. Screens that are on all day use more power, so use makes up almost half of theirs, but making them is still the biggest share. Transport and end-of-life processing barely register: the carbon saving from circular IT comes from not making new devices, not from recycling old ones.



Lifetime footprint by stage, in kg CO₂e. Sources: Apple Product Environmental Reports (2024–2025); HP product carbon footprint data.

The materials in every device are getting more expensive

Copper and tin prices, 2015 to 2026



Annual average price, indexed (2015 = 100). 2026 is the year to date. Source: IMF Primary Commodity Prices, via FRED.

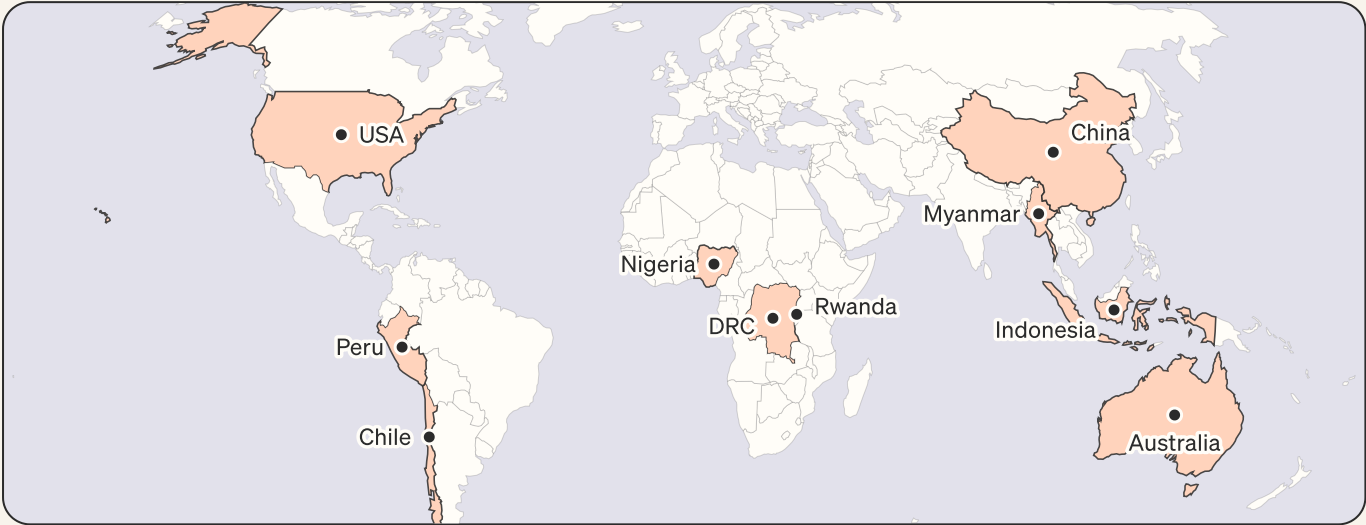
It isn't only copper and tin. Silver, used in circuit boards and contacts, is up around 368% on 2015, and gold, used in connectors and inside chips, around 292%, though both are also driven by investors.

MEMORY PRICES

+400%

Memory (DRAM) prices are forecast to rise more than 400% between the start of 2024 and the end of 2026, as chipmakers prioritise AI data centres.

What's inside your devices, and where it comes from



MATERIAL	USED IN	WHERE IT COMES FROM
Rare earth elements	Magnets in speakers, haptics and drives	China mines 69% (then the US 13%, Australia 7% and Myanmar 6%), refines around 91% (2024) and makes 94% of rare earth magnets
Gallium	High-performance chips and power electronics	China produces around 99%
Germanium	Chips and fibre optics	China produces around 77%
Tantalum	Capacitors in laptops, phones and servers	The DRC, Rwanda and Nigeria produce 84% between them
Cobalt	Batteries	The DRC mines around three-quarters, and China refines most of it
Lithium	Batteries	Mined mainly in Australia (32%), China (21%) and Chile (19%), but China refines around 70%
Graphite	Battery anodes	China produces around 82%
Indium	Touchscreens and displays	China produces around 68% of refined indium
Tin	Solder on every circuit board	China, Indonesia, Myanmar and Peru are the largest producers

The pattern is clear: even when materials are mined elsewhere, most are refined in a handful of countries, and supply can be switched off. In 2025, China introduced export controls on several rare earths, and the IEA estimates that USD 6.5 trillion a year of production outside China would be at risk if they were applied in full.

Much of the world's tantalum and cobalt comes from the DRC, where mining has been linked to conflict and child labour, and rare earth processing can leave toxic and radioactive waste behind.



Keep devices longer

WHY IT MATTERS

Since most of a laptop's footprint comes from making it, every extra year in use spreads that footprint further. Research suggests keeping corporate laptops just one year longer can cut related emissions by up to 25%. It also delays the cost of replacing them, which matters more as device prices rise.

WHAT GETS IN THE WAY

Devices are usually replaced because they feel slow, not because they're broken. Often the real cause is apps and background processes hogging memory and processing power, which can be fixed.



HOW RESOLVER AI HELPS

Resolver, Klyk's AI, can spot the apps and processes hogging memory and processing power, help free them up, and flag the devices that genuinely need a repair or upgrade. Slow devices get fixed instead of replaced, and your team keeps working smoothly.

HOW TO DO IT

- 01 Review your refresh cycle.**
If you replace devices on a fixed timetable, ask whether every device really needs replacing at that point, or only the ones that are struggling.
- 02 Monitor device health.**
Track memory use, processor load, storage, battery health and how often devices are restarted. It shows which devices genuinely need attention.
- 03 Fix slowdowns at the source.**
Clear the apps and processes hogging resources before deciding a device is too old.
- 04 Protect devices from damage.**
Cases and screen protectors for phones and tablets prevent the most common repairs.
- 05 Reallocate before you replace.**
A device that's too slow for a power user may be ideal for someone with lighter needs.

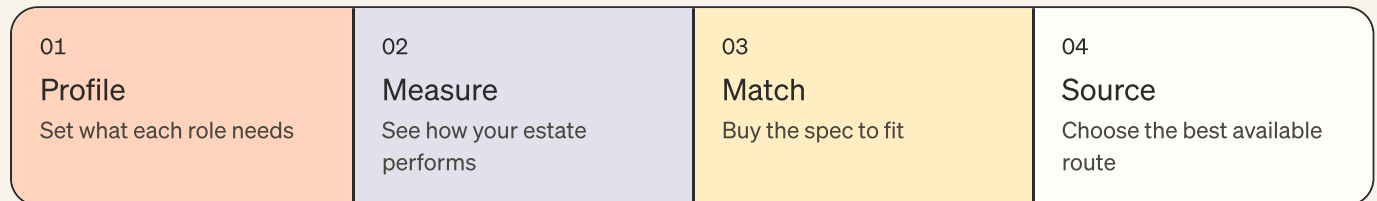
CHECKLIST · STEP 1

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ We replace devices based on condition and performance, not just age | ☐ We monitor the health of every device |
| ☐ Phones and tablets are issued with cases and screen protectors | ☐ We check whether a device can be reallocated before replacing it |



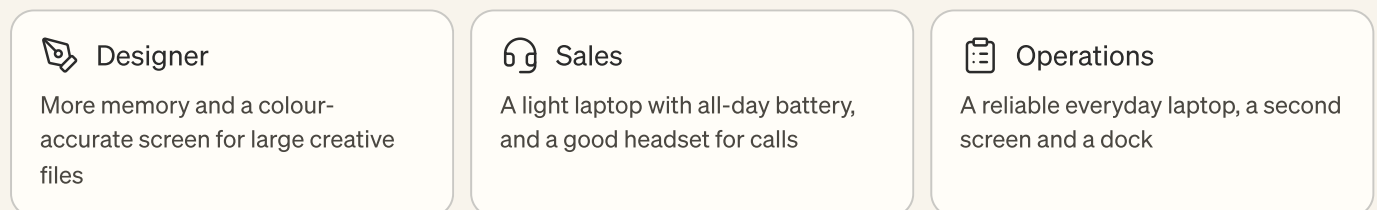
WHY IT MATTERS

The most wasteful device is the wrong one. An underpowered laptop slows someone down and gets replaced early; an overpowered one costs more, and more carbon, than the job needs. Buying well starts with knowing what each role needs and how your current devices perform, then sourcing that spec from the best route available.



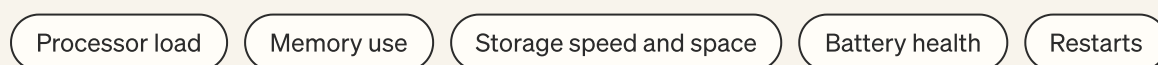
01 Build tech profiles by role

Decide what each role really needs, and buy to that profile. A designer, a salesperson and an operations lead need very different kit.



02 Understand how your estate performs

Use real data, not guesswork. How your current devices perform shows where people are held back, and where they have more than they use.



03 Match the spec to the need

Choose Windows devices with RAM slots.

As teams use more AI and more demanding software, memory needs will rise. Windows laptops and desktops with memory (RAM) slots can be upgraded later; those with memory soldered to the board can't, so they're replaced when they run short.

Buy the right memory up front where you can't upgrade.

Some devices, including Apple silicon Macs, have memory that can't be added later. For these, use your performance data to choose the right amount from the start.

WHY IT MATTERS MORE NOW With memory prices rising sharply, a device you can add memory to protects you from paying for a whole new laptop when all you need is more memory.

04 Source it from the best available route

With the spec set, check availability across every route and choose the best option for each device.



Certified refurbished

Returned devices restored and certified, often through manufacturer returns programmes

As new



Excess stock

Brand-new devices that never sold, usually last season's model, with warranty remaining

New



Trade-in and buy-back

Devices from trade-in schemes and businesses that are downsizing, tested and graded

Graded, priced to match



New

For specialist roles where only the latest model will do. Still circular if it's tracked, kept running for longer, then reused, refurbished or donated

New

WHAT TO ASK A SUPPLIER

Is every device tested before it's supplied, and by whom?

Where has it come from, and can you show the chain of custody?

What warranty comes with it, whichever route it comes from?

Has it been securely wiped to a recognised standard, such as NIST 800-88?

CHECKLIST · STEP 2

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ We have a tech profile for each role | ☐ Our buying decisions are based on how our devices actually perform |
| ☐ The Windows devices we buy have upgradeable memory (RAM) slots | ☐ For devices that can't be upgraded, we choose the right memory at purchase |
| ☐ We consider every route, not just new, when we buy | ☐ Every reused device comes with a warranty |
| ☐ Our supplier can show where each device came from | ☐ Every device has been securely wiped before it reaches us |

3

Repair before you replace



WHY IT MATTERS

Repair is the inner loop of a circular economy. It keeps all the energy and materials that went into making a device in use, and it's usually far cheaper than buying new. With memory prices rising sharply, upgrading and repairing has never made more sense.

Make repair the default.

When a device breaks, ask "can this be fixed?" before "what should we buy?"



Use genuine parts

Repairs with genuine parts help devices perform and last as they should.



Upgrade where it pays

More memory or storage can give an older device years more life.



Don't forget cosmetic repairs

A scuffed or dented device that works perfectly can be restored, rather than retired.



Keep people working

Have loan or spare devices ready, so a repair never costs someone a day's work.

CHECKLIST · STEP 3

- ☐ Our first question when a device breaks is "can it be repaired?"
- ☐ Repairs use genuine parts
- ☐ We upgrade memory or storage before replacing a device that's slowing down
- ☐ We have loan or spare devices for people whose device is being repaired



Retire responsibly

WHY IT MATTERS

Recycling is better than landfill, but it's not the answer. When a working device is shredded, the energy and materials that went into making it are lost, and many materials can't be recovered at all. An estimated 57% of material in collected e-waste is lost during recycling, and no smartphone has ever been made from 100% recycled materials.

FOLLOW THE ORDER THAT MATTERS

Most value kept → least

1



Reuse

Reallocate within your business to someone with lighter needs

2



Repair or upgrade

Give it more life with a fix, a new battery or more memory

3



Refurbish

Pass it to a new user through resale or trade-in

4



Donate

Give it to schools and charities that need it

5



Recycle

Only once every bit of use is gone

Know your legal duties (UK)

- ✓ IT equipment is classed as waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) and can't go in general waste.
- ✓ You must follow the waste hierarchy, putting reuse ahead of recycling and disposal.
- ✓ Waste must go to a licensed carrier, with a waste transfer note for every collection, kept for at least two years (or a hazardous waste consignment note, kept for at least three years, for items such as batteries).
- ✓ Under UK GDPR, personal data must be securely destroyed before a device leaves your control.
- ✓ Your business stays responsible even when someone else takes the kit away, so choose your partner carefully.

WHAT'S CHANGING

The government's digital waste tracking service started for waste sites in October 2026. Businesses still need their usual paperwork for now, but records are moving online, so work with a partner that's ready.

THE PAPERWORK TO ASK FOR, EVERY TIME



A waste transfer note for each collection



A certificate of data erasure for each device



A certificate of recycling for anything recycled



A report showing where every device went

CHECKLIST · STEP 4

- ☐ We never put IT equipment in general waste
- ☐ We reuse, repair, refurbish or donate before recycling
- ☐ Every device is securely wiped to a recognised standard, such as NIST 800-88
- ☐ We keep waste transfer notes and data erasure certificates for every collection
- ☐ We know where every retired device ended up

This is a general summary, not legal advice.

What gets measured gets done

Tracking the carbon impact of your IT shows where you're making progress, and gives you real figures for your sustainability reporting, customer questionnaires and tenders.

ORGANISATION TOTAL · EXAMPLE			
38.4 t CO₂e		Carbon saved 11.2 t CO₂e	Devices tracked 142
Device	Route	Footprint	Saved
MacBook Pro 14-inch	Certified refurbished	210 kg	168 kg
HP EliteBook 840 G11	Memory upgraded	260 kg	51 kg
iPhone 17	Kept a year longer	62 kg	12 kg
HP E27k G5 monitor	Bought new	520 kg	0 kg

WHAT TO MEASURE

- The footprint of every device, and the total for your organisation, so you know your starting point
- Carbon saved by buying reused, compared with buying new
- Carbon saved by keeping devices longer, through repairs, upgrades and better maintenance
- Devices recovered, and where they went: reused, donated or recycled
- E-waste kept out of landfill, in kg

WHERE THE DATA COMES FROM

Most major manufacturers publish a carbon footprint for each model. Combine it with what you know about each device's age and use, and you have a much more accurate picture than spend-based estimates.

WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE

Carbon figures device by device, rolled up into one total for your organisation, so you can see which devices and decisions make the biggest difference, and report a single, credible number.

CHECKLIST · MEASURE

- ☐ We know the carbon footprint of every device we own
- ☐ We track the carbon saved by reuse and longer device life
- ☐ We include IT in our sustainability reporting

Circular IT makes business sense

Circular IT isn't a cost. It's a saving, and it protects you from the rising prices and supply shocks covered earlier in this guide.

60% UP TO
saved on hardware spend



Better for the planet

- ✓ Less carbon, because fewer new devices are made
- ✓ Less e-waste sent to landfill or shredded
- ✓ Fewer newly mined materials
- ✓ Devices donated to schools that need them



Better for business

- ✓ Up to 60% saved on hardware spend
- ✓ Cash back from retired devices with resale value
- ✓ Less exposure to rising metal and memory prices
- ✓ Real figures for sustainability reports, questionnaires and tenders

THE SIMPLE MATHS

A device kept in use for an extra year, upgraded instead of replaced, or bought reused instead of new, saves both carbon and cash at the same time. Very few business decisions do both.

Your circular IT checklist

Share this page with your team, and tick off each step as you go.

STEP	THE QUESTION TO ASK	DONE?
1 Keep devices longer	Are we replacing devices because they need it, or because of their age?	☐
2 Plan how you buy	Does each role get the spec it needs, based on real performance data, from the best available route?	☐
3 Repair before you replace	Have we tried repairing or upgrading before replacing?	☐
4 Retire responsibly	Is every device wiped, reused or donated where possible, and recycled only as a last resort?	☐
 Measure your progress	Do we know the footprint and savings for every device, and our total?	☐



Klyk is a B Corp-certified IT partner for ambitious teams, based in London. We help businesses get the right tech, keep it running for longer, and give it a second life.

HOW WE HELP WITH EVERY STEP

Keep devices longer

Resolver AI frees up memory and processing power when devices slow down, and monitors the health of your fleet.

Repair before you replace

Our own repair engineers, genuine parts, and loan devices while yours is fixed.

Measure your progress

Carbon tracking for every device and for your organisation as a whole.

Plan how you buy

A data-led device audit, tech profiles for every role, and certified refurbished, excess stock and trade-in devices, all tested in our London facility and backed by a 1-year Klyk warranty.

Retire responsibly

Collection, NIST 800-88 data wiping, reuse, donation to schools, and every piece of paperwork.

Get your IT to Klyk.

Talk to our team, or call 0203 307 2500.

Visit helloklyk.com →



SOURCES

ICT share of global emissions: World Bank and ITU, 2024

Laptop manufacturing footprint and life extension: Atos workplace sustainability research

Copper and tin prices: IMF Primary Commodity Prices, via FRED

Unused devices in the UK: Virgin Media O2, September 2026

UK legal duties: WEEE Regulations 2013; Environmental Protection Act 1990, section 34

Memory prices: J.P. Morgan Global Research

Lithium and graphite: USGS Mineral Commodity Summaries 2026

Digital waste tracking: Defra and Environment Agency guidance

Data centre electricity: International Energy Agency, Energy and AI

Rare earths and gallium: IEA, Rare Earth Elements report; World Bank, World Development Report 2026, using USGS data

E-waste volumes and recycling rates: Global E-waste Monitor 2024 (ITU and UNITAR)

Recycling losses and recycled smartphones: iFixit, citing third-party studies

Device carbon footprints: Apple Product Environmental Reports (2024–2025); HP product carbon footprint data

Silver and gold prices: World Bank Commodity Price Data (the Pink Sheet)

Germanium, indium and gallium: USGS, production of mineral commodities in China, 2026