



# Spotlight on India

Ingram Micro ITAD, EPR, and PRO

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“The formal e-waste recycling sector in India is currently being developed in major cities. However, informal recycling operations have been in place for a long time, with over 1 million poor people in India involved in manual recycling operations.

Global E-waste Monitor 2017  
International Telecommunication Union (ITU)<sup>1</sup>



India's electronics industry – and the market for technology products – is one of the fastest growing in the world. Deloitte's Rajiv Sundar, in a 2017 interview with India's Economic Times, noted that with “rapid advances in smartphones, mobile internet penetration, and commoditization of consumer technology, we have a generation of tech savvy ‘digital first’ consumers who are using mobile and digital as primary media for information and transactions.”

He added that with government “initiatives such as Digital India, Smart Cities etc., which are streamlining the program management and roll out of large scale digital transformation initiatives, technology adoption in India is at a break-out stage.”<sup>2</sup>

India's digital transformation is well underway, however as technology spreads there's a dark side to progress: India has become the fifth largest e-waste producer in the world.



The downside of this explosion in electronic devices comes when they fail, reach end-of-life, or are replaced as newer models reach the market. With rapid digital modernization the need to manage old technology keeps pace. As a result, India has become a major e-waste producer.

"India is one of the biggest producers of e-waste in the world," writes Banjot Kaur for DowntoEarth.org. "The Global E-waste Monitor 2017, published by the United Nations University, states that India generates about 2 million tonnes of e-waste annually and ranks fifth among e-waste producing countries."<sup>3</sup>

And according to Sandip Chatterjee, the director in charge of developing e-waste recycling technologies for the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, "E-waste [in India] is growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of about 30%."<sup>4</sup>

To address the growing challenge of e-waste management, India has enhanced regulations aimed at how end-of-life electronics are processed, with the goal of directing electronic devices to responsible, government sanctioned recyclers to ensure the materials are handled in a manner consistent with best practices.

A challenge, however, comes in the form of the very large number of existing small-time recyclers – or to put in more plainly, businesses operating as recyclers who offer illegal, unregulated services – already in place. These unauthorized recyclers operate without permits and don't have a safe way of handling the waste stream from their operations. Workers in the informal sector are exposed to toxic chemicals and the communities in which they work suffer from degraded air quality and contaminated ground water.

As Jaideep Chenoy writes in the Times of India, "The sad part is that a mere 5% of India's total e-waste gets recycled due to poor infrastructure, legislation and framework which lead to a waste of diminishing natural resources, irreparable damage of environment and health of the people working in the industry. Over 95% of e-waste generated is managed by the unorganised sector, and scrap dealers in this market dismantle the disposed products instead of recycling it."<sup>5</sup>

For environmentally-responsible recycling to work in India, it's essential for electronics sellers and importers to provide e-waste management in compliance with the Extended Producer Responsibility regulations...and that means using licensed recyclers.

Currently, only 5% of India's total e-waste is recycled, which causes irreparable damage to the environment and endangers the health of India's citizens.

### **What is Extended Producer Responsibility?**

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is a set of stringent environmental policies designed to ensure responsible management for products from design through end-of-life.

The EPR seeks to create a framework for markets to emerge that truly reflect the full environmental impact of a product. This is expected to encourage both producers and consumers to make more

environmentally-responsible decisions once the full cost of compliance are factored into product cost.

While responsibility is shared by all entities in the product chain from manufacturer to end user, EPR places primary responsibility on producers/brand owners since they're the ones who make design and marketing decisions. EPR encourages product design changes that minimize negative impacts on human health and the environment at every stage of the product lifecycle.

Any company that produces products is responsible for ensuring their products are collected once they reach end-of-life and all materials are responsibly recycled or disposed. Because treatment and disposal costs are incorporated into the total cost of a product, manufacturers can lower overall cost by using materials that can more readily be recycled.

And because EPR also ensures the cost of collection and recycling is borne by the manufacturer, cities and regional governments aren't saddled with environmental remediation costs.

### **What is a PRO and why do you need one?**

Naturally most manufacturing and distribution companies aren't optimized to provide collection and recycling services, which requires reverse logistics – the ability to collect end-of-life devices from wherever they're deployed and transport them to a centralized processing location – and recycling expertise. Thus, the need for specialized organizations to which a producer can transfer responsibility for the return and disposition phase of the lifecycle.

A Producer Responsibility Organization – referred to as a PRO – provides just that service. A PRO may work with a manufacturer to provide services to collect consumer products or, to meet the more advanced needs of corporations with large fleets of data-bearing information technology assets like laptops, PCs, and servers, a PRO may be a highly specialized organization that focuses on not only recycling and proper disposal but also on secure data sanitization, investment recovery, and providing a verifiable audit trail and compliance documentation.

A PRO focused on IT Asset Disposition (ITAD) brings, at a minimum, specific expertise in chain-of-custody management with validated data destruction capabilities, certified and licensed processing centers to demanufacture electronics, and a network of licensed and audited downstream recycling partners to ensure all materials are processed in compliance with environmental best practices and the law.

A Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO) in the IT space provides documented collection, data sanitization, investment recovery, and recycling services.

## Ingram Micro's Role as a PRO

Ingram Micro ITAD, part of the Ingram Micro Commerce & Lifecycle Services group, is an experienced, global IT asset disposition and e-waste recycling company. In keeping with our global mission of risk mitigation for both data destruction and recycling, we have initiated a range of activities to promote and support compliant e-waste recycling in India.

Ingram Micro's mission is to make a substantive difference in environmental safety and human health through our zero-landfill policy for e-waste. Our processes have been explicitly designed to maximize resource value while eliminating environmental impact of waste through technological solutions and consistent, thorough processing measures so that both the economy and the environment can thrive.

Ingram Micro has designed a solution for all organizations who need to meet strict EPR targets. We:

- Operate 38 authorized collection centers in India including two dismantling centers
- Aggregate all collected e-waste for processing in our secure, state-of-the-art facilities in Gurgaon and Bangalore
- Follow strict ISO 9001, ISO 14001, OHSAS 18001, and R2 procedures in India, just as we do at our facilities worldwide
- Maintain a trained, skilled, and certified workforce
- Ensure all data on devices is thoroughly destroyed, by shredding and recycling the drives or by using internationally-recognized Blancco erasure software for assets that can be reused
- Track and manage detailed processing instructions with our purpose-build, global blueIQ asset intelligence system
- Remain accountable for all materials through to final disposition, with detailed record-keeping.

We also:

- Promote awareness of EPR through social media, corporate events, print and digital marketing, collection drives, and additional initiatives
- Reach 1000+ endpoints through informal scrap traders (Kabadees) who run e-waste collection and recycling operations
- Create awareness of the impact of toxic waste on people, animals, food production, and our natural surroundings through workshops and educational events
- Prepare videos, slideshows, documents, and other forms of educational content to assist producers in ensuring that e-waste processing complies with the EPR guidelines
- Provide a dedicated toll-free number to make it easier for consumers to find out how to safely dispose their e-waste.

## Do Your Part to Protect the Environment

Companies who manage large fleets of IT equipment have a particularly important role to play in ensuring the success of the EPR. They should:

- Collect retired or end-of-life IT assets then stage them for pickup in a secure area to prevent non-compliant disposal
- Route all IT assets and electronic products to authorized e-waste management companies like Ingram Micro ITAD for refurbishing or recycling and disposal.

### Source

- 1 <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Climate-Change/Documents/GEM%202017/Global-E-waste%20Monitor%202017%20-%20Chapter%2010.pdf>
- 2 <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/small-biz/startups/newsbuzz/indias-tech-ecosystem-has-the-right-ingredients-to-support-rapid-economic-growth-deloitte-rajiv-sundar/articleshow/61930329.cms>
- 3 <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/can-india-manage-its-toxic-e-waste--60891>
- 4 <https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-features/tp-metroplus/what-about-e-waste/article24237195.ece>
- 5 <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/india-among-the-top-five-countries-in-e-waste-generation-asso-cham-nec-study/articleshow/64448208.cms>

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