



Land. Invest. Protect. Surrender - LIPS™

Revolutionizing Channel Sales

Commoditization and over-competition is rife across almost every technology segment today. This has been chiefly driven by a shift in:

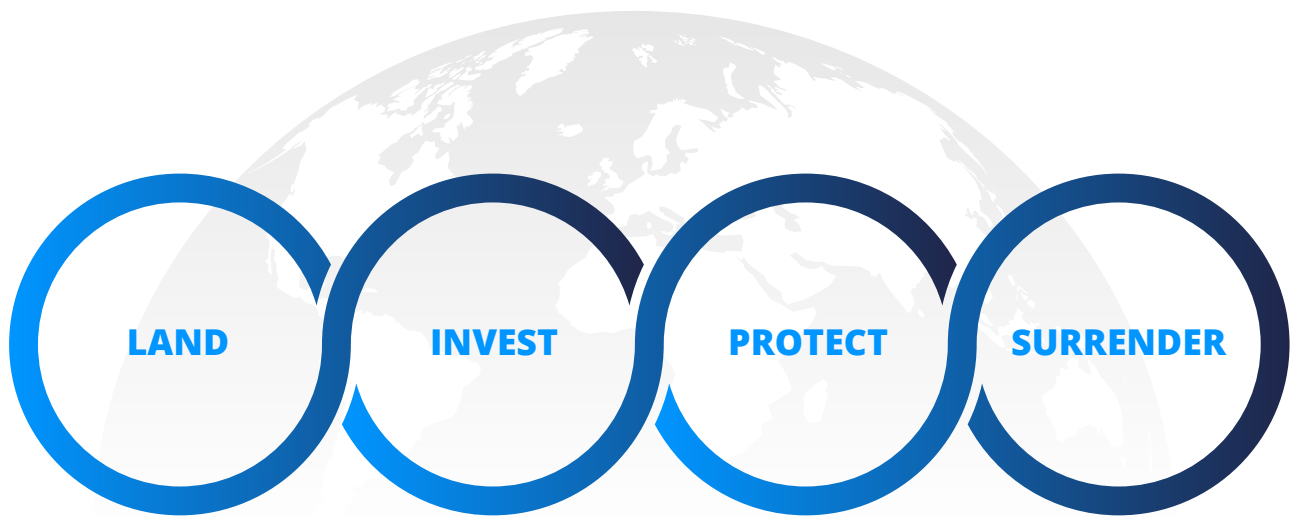
1. Customer expectations (everything as a service/XaaS, consumption, subscription models)
2. Rapid development of new innovations (IoT, cloud, AI, etc)
3. Lower barriers to entry for new providers wanting to enter the market.

As a result, old and current revenue streams are becoming dangerously under threat for a large portion of technology providers – particularly the larger firms who have been around for a very long time, providing their now “legacy offerings”. And, whilst emerging technologies such as IoT/OT and AI present an incredible opportunity for growth, it’s clear that the market is demanding greater sophistication from technology providers - and not just at the product level.

The market is evolving – and you can too.

If you are technology provider, it’s imperative that you demonstrate and deliver more value and in turn, become more relevant to your customer. You need to commit to the entire customer and product lifecycle journey and ensure that not a single stone is left unturned – or in this case, no opportunity is left unexplored. This applies to any tech firm, no matter where you are in your journey: whether you’re transitioning from transactional to solution-based selling, or shifting from legacy to more advanced technologies, or you’re an established organization simply seeking greater return from your existing customer base.

Proactive management of your customers’ IT investment strategy is key. That’s why we have created “L.I.P.S.” which stands for the four categories in product lifecycles being - **Land, Invest, Protect, Surrender**.



Land

When you **Land** a deal, the customer journey is only just beginning. You may have closed the initial sale, but there's so much more you can do throughout the entire product lifecycle, so you must prepare for the future immediately. In the LIPS™ strategy, **Land** is all about collecting data at the time of an initial sale – but with a customer success strategy already in mind.

Your customer success strategy should anticipate and manage a series of outcomes. To start with, the customer should be 100% satisfied with their investment and has adopted your solution, because those who do not see true value will happily switch providers (churn). Next, you must prepare to extend that investment, to help amplify the return based on current and future technology roadmaps. The ultimate goal is to address your customers' business needs and contribute to their success, whilst optimizing for your own profitability.

In order to achieve this, you need to ensure that the data which your CPQ (Configure, Price, Quote) system collects is not limited to a simple invoice. An important point on [data mining](#), is that most of the data that can be ultra-valuable today, was actually collected for other reasons.

So, the spreadsheets and systems used to collect and store this information tend to be disengaged from the true value which that data should hold. For example, sales data would have been collected to confirm a sale for invoice purposes, not to help create recurring revenue campaigns. Same data, different strategic direction.

Which is why you may feel overwhelmed when it comes to optimizing your data. You might have a tonne of it. You might be unsure as to where it all sits. You might be doubtful of its accuracy and value. And finally, you might baulk at the time and resources need to clean it all up.

But with the right platforms working together in unison - such as your CPQ, ERP and an Installed Asset Lifecycle Management Platform (IALMP), you will be able to cleanse, capture and monetize that data very easily - to help inform a long-term Customer Experience (CX) strategy beyond just Land. So, don't allow your data to delay or hinder your progress. The sooner you start, the sooner you will have useful data that can help you achieve your desired outcomes.

Invest

Invest is the most important aspect of the LIPS™ strategy, because it represents growth. With digital transformation (DX) a top priority for end customers, it provides an opportunity for you to become a critical advisor to your customers' digital transformation initiatives, whilst growing your own business at the same time.

Invest requires a consultative approach, that enables you to proactively manage your customers' IT investment strategy. By analyzing your customer data using targeted artificial intelligence, you can proactively create unsolicited proposals that help put your customer in a better economic position. In other words, you are adding value to the initial sale you made. At iasset.com, we define value as offering customers something that they just can't do without. And without you - it would not have happened, because you helped identify that need/solution. This is where you transform from being just another provider, to a true partner with a vested interest in your customers' success. As a result, you become part of their IT strategy, rather than just another IT supplier.

This step requires investment in your installed base data, to uncover potential growth opportunities. By proactively pursuing these opportunities, you will increase customer lifetime value and enable incremental revenue growth. This can be achieved in a number of ways, including upgrades to the initial investment to cover feature enhancements (up-sell). You can also maximize value through an ecosystem programme, that includes reference architectures which give the customer greater revenue-generating opportunities and cost-reduction strategies - far beyond their stand-alone investment (cross-sell).



But in order to do this effectively, you need a comprehensive LIPS™ strategy that leverages automation to help execute all of the above – at scale. We'll discuss more about how you can achieve this later in this white paper.

Protect

As mentioned in many of our past papers, we cannot stress the importance of **Protect**-ing and staying on top of your recurring revenue enough. You need to ensure that you action all license, maintenance and tech renewals to (at the very least), keep the original investment sold to your customer alive, current and useful over its workable life. It simply isn't an option – it is mandatory.

A large number of tech firms still really only focus on processing renewals. Yes, this is definitely important. However, if all you are doing is “managing” a renewal transaction, then it is contested. Because you have not added any value apart from collecting a renewal fee and have not considered the greater picture. A true CX strategy is not about ERP extensions, calendar reminders and renewals notifications – because these are very much reactive. And if you are reactive, you are simply involved in a transaction with your customer – not a strategy.

“At TSIA we see an emergence of technology being deployed to enable renewal specialist or CSMs to more effectively support their customers, rather than spending time managing their technology. In high volume / high velocity renewals spaces it is important to reduce as much redundant human processes as possible and intelligently direct those resources to impact customers experiences with the use of great data”.

Jack Johnson

VP - Research Service Revenue Generation

Technology Services Industry Association (TSIA)

When it comes to renewals, it should already be automated and built into the consultation workflow, as mentioned above. And by automated, we are not referring to automatic reminders/notifications to then take manual action. Rather, the entire renewal process should be fully automated – except for your larger accounts that require a little bit more engagement and TLC. Automation is particularly mandatory for subscription or consumption-based models, where churn can be monthly, weekly or even hourly, which presents additional risk for lapsed renewals, unsupported/redundant assets still in use, all of which lead to lost business.

Another important aspect of **Protect** is adoption of your products/services, particularly at the vendor or reseller level. Your offering might be fantastic, but if your end users are not actively adopting or using it, then you are at risk. Which is why you must have an adoption strategy in place, that will not only protect your existing revenue, but help provide opportunities to add more licenses or users in future as well.

We are already seeing this with several key vendors (such as [Cisco](#)), who are actively engaged with their channel partners to sell across the entire lifecycle of their products. They expect partners to drive software activation/adoption, as well as expand existing deals into new opportunities. Those who fail to do so, face the real (and harsh) possibility of losing their partner status, and even their customers. This highlights the urgency in which distributors and resellers must implement an Installed Asset Lifecycle Management Platform within their business, to start executing these **Protect** strategies - now.



Surrender

Keep in mind that it does not end at **Protect**. All assets will (at some point), reach the end of their useful life. And this is not just limited to hardware asset intensive environments – it includes software-based assets and environments as well. Which is why we have added **Surrender** as the final stage to LIPS™, to ensure a forward-thinking obsolescence strategy. Without this, the entire product lifecycle has not been considered - from “cradle to grave”.

Asset retirement can happen due to a number of reasons, such as the customer no longer finding the asset useful, or choosing to replace it with something better. It could be due to the vendor deeming it “end of life” from a support perspective. Today though, much of this is driven by an increase in the recovery or migration from an asset/on-premise environment to a cloud/ service-based model.

Either way, it's a compelling event. It makes the asset redundant, which is why a risk mitigation strategy is essential at multiple execution levels. It could include financial instruments such as buy-back or leasing. Or it could include services to clear all data from the device, recover parts for recycling and/or dispose of it in a responsible and ethical manner.

All of these require precision management and tracking of the asset through its useful lifecycle. And by planning for **Surrender** upfront, you are managing the consultative nature of the transaction and adding value to your customer. Rather than responding at the time of asset retirement, or the surrendering of the asset back to out of cycle, you have the opportunity to introduce new technology at the appropriate change over time. By doing so, you will help ensure your customers' digital strategy is enhanced and amplified, not hindered and brought to a halt due to risk.

The need to include asset retirement (both physical and virtual) is fundamental in a technology investment strategy. Not only because the economics are better, but the **Surrender** strategy also informs the decision criteria for further innovation and return on working capital associated with technology investments.



Why Vendors need LIPS™

As a vendor, empowering your partners to sell more of your products is critical. [Forrester](#) is predicting that the partner experience (PX) will soon become just as important as the CX for the channel. By executing LIPS™, you can bring PX and CX together and grow your revenue at the same time.

Lifecycle selling is fast becoming a top priority for vendors. And whilst many large vendors such as [Cisco](#) are incentivising their partners to sell across the lifecycle of their products, they are failing to recognize the additional administrative burden they are placing on their partners by making this the partners' responsibility.

Rather than incentivizing your partners, you should be identifying and enabling them to execute on potential opportunities, just like we have covered within Invest. Because, let's face it, the less complex you make life for your partner, the [more likely](#) that partner is to focus on you. However, with such a vast network of channel partners within your ecosystem, we understand that this isn't always that easy. Which is why you need to automate your LIPS™ strategy.

If you are vendor of IoT enabled devices, then the Land stage within LIPS™ will also help you set the right foundation to achieving [IoT security compliance](#). Before you enforce any type of security controls on any device, you need an accurate, real-time understanding of all of your installed assets across your channel. Land will ensure that you have the right mechanisms in place to track and manage every single device.

Why Distributors need LIPS™

As a distributor, you sit at the pivotal juncture between the vendor and the VAR/SP. As a result, you have access to extremely valuable data which could give you a competitive advantage (when used effectively).

With so many partners to manage globally, vendors often struggle to manage every aspect of the product lifecycle across their channel. When appointing distributors, vendors are looking for those that can add value to the channel process. By executing LIPS™, you will help reduce your vendor's workload, while providing a stable source of income for everyone involved.

On the flipside, because you are optimizing product lifecycles, your VARs/SPs will come to rely on you for automatically generated opportunities, so they don't miss out on any customer revenue. This is one of the most addictive parts of the process and will make you [irresistible](#) to VARs and SPs alike.

Why VARs/SPs need LIPS™

As the critical interface into the end customer, Value Added Resellers (VARs) and Service Providers (SPs) play a major role in shaping which technologies are deployed within the end customers' business. It's your responsibility to determine the best solution for your customer, which is why it's not necessarily wise to wait for each vendor to identify growth opportunities on your behalf.

By having complete control over your installed base and LIPS™ strategy, you will be able to demonstrate further value - not only to your end customers, but also to your vendors/distributors.

[Broadcom's sale](#) of Symantec's Cybersecurity Services Unit is a perfect example. Ex-Symantec channel partners who are already tracking their installed base could easily cross-grade customers to a competitive product. However, those without this information at hand will have to walk away from that revenue, because by the time they can gather the information and take action, it's simply too late.

"It is critical that channel pros have a 360-degree view of partner data to make better decisions and streamline programs. Without this single source of truth, brands are missing cross-sell and upsell opportunities, spraying their marketing tactics, depleting resources on manual tasks, setting too wide of a berth on recruitment and overpaying on partner programs".

Jay McBain

Principal Analyst: Channels, Partnerships Alliances
Forrester Research

Why the Channel need a LIPS™ ecosystem

Organizations are redefining and redeploying their DX strategies to ensure they can stay relevant and not become a victim to the next Uber, Airbnb or Netflix. They are exploring how to apply more innovation within their business to help remain competitive. This includes moving to more contemporary forms of digital strategy execution, including shifting to consumption based "as a service" delivery models. A significant number of vendors are involved in the execution of these DX strategies, however with the channel ecosystem so incredibly vast, all of this needs to be orchestrated and managed more effectively, to ensure that every piece of the migration puzzle is considered.

What the channel needs is a single source of truth. A standardized platform where your partners and even your partners' partners can interact and exchange data in a secure, automated manner.

An Installed Asset Lifecycle Management platform such as [iasset.com](#) - which has been built specifically to benefit technology providers, can offer that single source of truth and 360-degree view of partner data. If one of your channel partner already has their own [iasset.com](#) instance, once permission is granted, the two instances can exchange data, facilitating a fully automated process immediately and in real-time. The more integrations you can achieve within your partner ecosystem, as well as with your existing applications (such as your ERP/ITSM/CRM) - will enable a complete, accurate view to help identify and action opportunities, with minimal effort.

Put your LIPS™ into action with iasset.com

According to a recent [report by Deloitte](#), redesigning the legacy operating model to one that is services based, will help organizations support flexible consumption more effectively. In their illustrative breakdown of a services based operating model, Deloitte identifies key areas of consideration throughout the lifecycle, including - lead to opportunity, configure to quote, order to fulfill, monitor to usage, all the way through to adoption to retention. iasset.com is one of the only platforms that can help you execute each of these in an operationally efficient and agile manner.

You can't have a strategy without a platform, and you can't have a platform without a strategy. One will not work without the other. To help turn your LIPS™ strategy into a reality, you need to marry your LIPS™ with an Installed Asset Lifecycle Management Platform (IALMP) to execute it all for you. iasset.com is the only platform that can bring your installed base data to life by collecting, organizing, analyzing and monetizing it, to ensure proactive management of your customers' IT investments.

Transforming operations to support flexible consumption models (FCM) requires a systematic operational recalibration. Force-fitting legacy processes and practices to support FCM will only yield suboptimal outcomes.

Deloitte report: Shift to flexible consumption

Land with iasset.com

To get started, you will need an accurate, consolidated and real-time view of all of your data. This includes a complete history of all products and services sold, from point of sale (POS) information, price books, part numbers, part descriptions, weights, cubic measurements, options, service and maintenance contract dates, right through to consumption data.

ERP, CRM, CPQ, MA, spreadsheets are great applications in their own right, but are not built to handle the complexities that are inherent for a large-scale LIPS™ strategy within the channel. They don't understand channel quoting, price books, forecasting, usage trends, upskilling and partner tiers. So, in order to identify and execute **Invest** initiatives using these applications, you'll need to do a great deal of manual data analysis and quoting which will mean a considerable amount of labor overhead.

So, it's important to get it right from the start. As an IALM platform built for the channel, iasset.com ensures that you capture and use every piece of your installed base data, to better understand your customers and identify opportunities for growth. And, it doesn't necessarily have to replace any of your existing business applications like your CRM, ERP, Marketing Automation or Customer Success tools. In fact, we offer API integrations, so they can be leveraged in unison for the ultimate objective of profitable customer success and growth. For example, we have proven customer success integrating into applications such as Oracle, Salesforce.com, SAP, Netsuite, ServiceNow, Microsoft Dynamics, Xero and [many more](#).

And finally, we understand that for many organizations, some extra upfront work may be required to help get all of their data into order. iasset.com can help consolidate and cleanse your data to make it more useful for growth strategies. We have helped countless tech firms discover new revenue from old data. Most importantly, you do not need to cleanse all data before you can get an effective LIPS™ strategy working. Simply load what you have and clean as you go.

Features & Benefits:

- Gain full visibility and control over your installed base
- Manage installed assets/contracts/licenses/SKUs/pricing in one place
- Complete audit trail of every product sold – from order to delivery
- Integrate into any ERP/ITSM/CRM system to ensure data integrity
- Automatically cleanse, validate and consolidate all POS data (vendors)
- Track asset location with advanced geo-mapping functionality
- Enable infinite scalability that will grow with your business

Invest with iasset.com

Invest is all about mining your installed base for customer expansion and extension opportunities - and iasset.com can do all of this for you. If you're a vendor, you can have a complete and accurate view into your installed base/channel data and act on this data to initiate growth campaigns for your partners – before your competitors. If you're a distributor or reseller, you also have the added functionality of including products from multiple vendors into the same quote within your iasset.com instance.

With iasset.com, you can easily segment your data based on any number of parameters and proactively generate automated quotes and unsolicited proposals. Automating the quoting element, as well as having real-time visibility into the latest products, price lists and margins in one place is fundamental to accelerating the process and getting more quotes out the door - at a lower cost of sale.

In addition to automated workflows, campaigns and quotes, iasset.com offers a powerful suite of descriptive and predictive analytics, that will help provide deep insights into your data, enabling you to make proactive, informed decisions. InGRID is the first channel focused Artificial Intelligence (AI) by iasset.com. With purpose-built machine learning algorithms, InGRID can dissect your data sets and forecast outcomes, such as closure rates, YoY trends, cross-filtering and more. And, as InGRID continues to learn over time via all of iasset.com's platforms globally, 'she' will reveal more insights and value about your business.

Features & Benefits:

- Proactively drive growth opportunities within each stage of the product lifecycle
- Automatically program upgrade, refresh and cross-sell campaigns to your installed base
- Create automatic, pre-validated quotes using pricing tiers/certifications
- Streamline processes
- Lower operational costs
- Leverage analytics to grow your business and better serve your customers
- Extend customer lifetime value (CLV)

Protect with iasset.com

iasset.com will help you **Protect** existing revenue streams and ensure nothing is missed – even your low value contracts. As a platform that automatically tracks and manages the entire product lifecycle, iasset.com makes it easy to identify and process renewals for all of your hardware/software/cloud contracts, without the need for additional headcount or complex systems.

With its automated quote creation, price management and notifications, our scalable platform ensures on-time renewal of contracts and faster quote to cash periods. It can send automatic communications with pre-prepared/pre-populated quotes from 120, 60, 30, 14, 7 days from expiry.

By proactively managing your contracts with iasset.com, you will not only protect your current recurring revenue business, but also have the opportunity for further upsell into these existing accounts, such as adding more licenses or users.

Features & Benefits:

- Boost on-time renewal rates
- Reduce customer churn
- Accelerate quote to cash periods
- Achieve greater efficiencies and reduce total cost of sale
- Trigger alerts before contract expiry
- Eliminate manual interactions so staff can focus on larger accounts

Surrender with iasset.com

To help plan for **Surrender** upfront, you will need advanced and proactive tracking of each and every asset, throughout their entire lifecycle. And the iasset.com platform does exactly that.

Determine how far in advance you wish to prompt action with automated workflows and reminders. By doing so, you will help reduce/eliminate the number of unsupported or redundant assets with your customers, and manage the risk associated with this, on their behalf.

Features & Benefits:

- Track all assets with confidence throughout their entire product lifecycle
- Trigger alerts when products reach end of life or service
- Proactively work on campaigns to transition customer from on-premise to cloud-based consumption models during their digital transformation
- Demonstrate value to your customers by minimizing their business risk
- Anticipate future events far in advance

iasset.com's installed asset lifecycle management platform helps you manage:

RENEWALS

Boost on-time renewals with automated, pre-validated quotes.

POS DATA

Automatically cleanse, consolidate POS data for an accurate view of sales.

PRODUCT LIFECYCLES

Execute refresh, upgrade and migration campaigns, extend CLV.

CLOUD REVENUE

Stay on top of cloud usage and billing, stop contracts from lapsing.

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iasset.com
The Global Channel Ecosystem

iasset.com® is the leader in revolutionizing global IT channel efficiency. Our cloud-based platform helps reduce complexity and increase revenue for our customers each day. iasset.com® empowers the entire IT channel ecosystem – from vendors, distributors/ aggregators, to service providers and value added resellers. We accomplish this by automating the product lifecycle for any type of product or service – including cloud consumption and subscription contracts, and hardware or software maintenance renewal contracts. As a result, our customers achieve superior business outcomes including faster and more streamlined processes, compliance, added intelligence, cost savings and the ability to service their own channel and customers more effectively.

Today, iasset.com® manages over \$20B worth of assets in more than 150 countries, and continues to be the solution of choice for leading technology organizations.