

Summary: Tech Check: Where Automation Actually Pays Off in ITAD

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In this edition of Tech Check, we examine the technologies that are expected to reshape ITAD operations, from robotic server disassembly and automated component harvesting to computer vision, AI-assisted sorting, data erasure, and chain-of-custody software. Using Amazon's deployment of Molg robots in AWS reverse logistics as the starting case, we assess where automation is already credible, which competing platforms address the same operational problems, and where manual processing remains the stronger commercial choice. AWS uses Molg systems to inspect and disassemble retired servers and hard drives for reuse, resale, or recycling; Molg and ABB position their robotic microfactories for hyperscale data centers and ITAD companies.

After reviewing the technology, our conclusion is that the investment case here is not "buy robotics." Rather, it is to automate the bottlenecks that are already constraining your operation. For most ITAD companies, that will mean data erasure, intake, testing, grading, asset tracking, and resale preparation before it means a robotic teardown line. Physical automation becomes investable when inbound equipment is sufficiently standardized, but also volumes are high, and recoverable components justify the capital, integration, and maintenance burden. Amazon's use of Molg robots is a signal that repeatable data-center hardware processing is moving in that direction, but it is not proof that every ITAD operator should follow with the same investment.

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Our Offices: Boston, MA | 2361 Walnut Court, Pembroke Pines, FL 33026