



# Electronics



DIGITAL MEETS CIRCULAR

# Challenges and Opportunities

By drastically reducing the demand for printed media like newspapers, magazines and books - the digital revolution has proven to be a valuable tool for the circular economy. But our soaring demand for electronic devices doesn't come without challenges.

- ➔ *Worldwide creation of e-waste reached nearly 50 million tons in 2017*
- ➔ *In line with growth of the global middle class, this number is expected to top 100 million by 2040*
- ➔ *Only a fraction is recycled. Most is burned, buried or sent to undeveloped countries with little if any regulation*



**A New Circular Vision for  
Electronics**  
Time for a Global Reboot

Adding a circular element to the digital revolution will drastically reduce the amount of e-waste created and improve environmental conditions where it's currently processed.

Strategies to make the electronics industry circular need to incorporate all levels of the supply and distribution chain.

➤ *2nd and even 3rd lives for electronic devices should be encouraged through building refurbishment programs and resale platforms.*

➤ *A circular economy requires electronics to function within a system. That means they must be designed and built for reuse, restoration & recycling.*

➤ *Advance recycling techniques that can cost effectively recapture materials from electronic devices need to be improved and implemented*

➤ *Improved product return and collection incentives need to be established to increase the likelihood of recovering a product at the end of its life cycle.*

**Food for Thought:**

*there is 100 times more gold in a ton of old cell phones than there is in a ton of gold ore. The world's richest deposits of valuable material could be sitting in our landfills.*