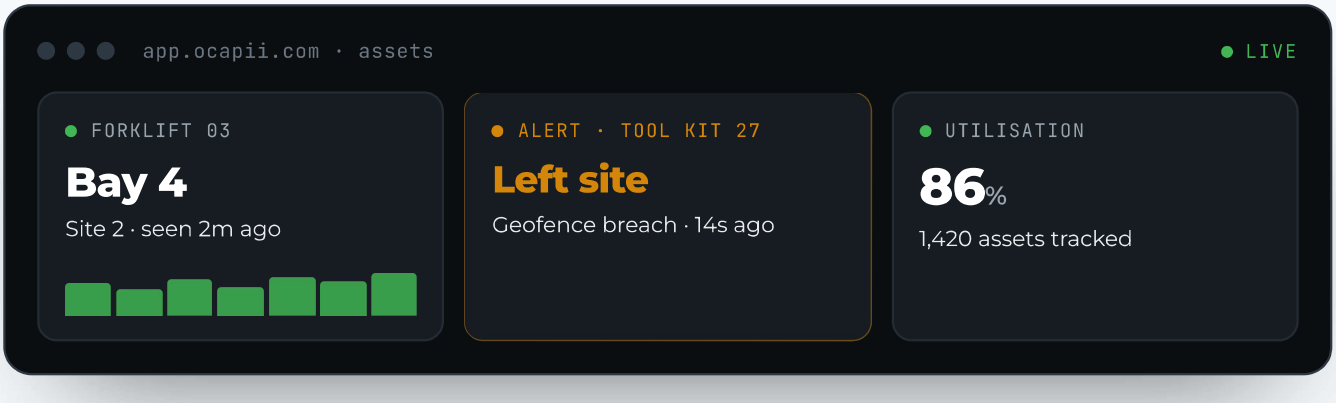
ASSET TRACKING · OPERATIONAL GUIDE

The moment a missing asset becomes a problem is never the moment it went missing. It is always later. That gap is where the cost lives.

For the people responsible for assets across one site or many. Where manual approaches fall short, what connected tracking enables, and how to build an approach that delivers operational action, not just a map of where things are.

- Live visibility
- Movement history
- Utilisation across sites



IN THIS GUIDE

Built for the people accountable for every asset on the move.

This guide is for people responsible for managing assets across one site or many. It covers the gaps that manual approaches leave behind, what connected asset tracking enables, and how to build an approach that delivers operational action, not just a map of where things are.

01

WHAT MANUAL CONTROL MISSES

The asset visibility gap

Most organisations know roughly where their critical assets are. The question is whether that knowledge is fast enough, accurate enough, and connected enough to be operationally useful.

When an asset is listed in a spreadsheet, signed out on a paper log, or tracked through a series of radio calls and emails, the information exists. It just arrives too late, sits in the wrong place, and disconnects from the decisions that depend on it.

The gap is not always about losing assets. It is about what happens between the moment something changes and the moment the right person knows about it and acts.

The difference that matters

A map that shows where an asset is today is useful. A connected system that shows where it was, flags when it moves unexpectedly, assigns a recovery action, and creates an evidence trail is operationally valuable. Those are different things.

Manual asset management tends to work well when assets are static, teams are small, and the cost of not knowing is low. It breaks down when equipment moves across teams, sites, and shifts, when the consequence of a missing tool, a delayed device, or an idle asset compounds across an operation.

This guide examines where those breakdowns typically occur, what a more connected approach makes possible, and the questions worth asking before changing how your organisation manages its assets.

02

BEFORE YOU CHANGE YOUR APPROACH

Five questions to ask before you change your approach

Moving to connected asset tracking is not primarily a technology decision. It is an operational one. The value comes from what the tracking connects to, not the tracking itself.

1 **Do you know where your highest-value assets are right now?**

Not approximately. Not based on the last log entry. Right now. If the honest answer is no, that is the starting point. Identifying which assets carry the highest operational consequence when they are unavailable, delayed, or lost is the basis for any tracking investment.

2 **How do you find out when an asset has moved unexpectedly?**

In most manual environments, the answer is: someone notices, or it comes up in a shift handover, or it surfaces when the asset is needed and is not there. Each represents a delay between the event and the response. The question is how long that delay is, and what it costs.

3 **What evidence can you produce when an asset is missing or disputed?**

When equipment goes missing, a device is damaged, or an asset fails mid-task, the ability to reconstruct what happened matters. Location history, movement records, last known user, condition data: if that information does not exist, the investigation starts from scratch every time.

4 **How much time do teams spend looking for assets rather than using them?**

This is rarely measured, which is why it is often underestimated. Time spent searching for equipment, making calls to find who has something, or waiting for an asset to return from another site is productive time lost. Aggregated across a team or a quarter, the numbers become significant.

5 THE ONE LEADERS MISS

Do your leaders have visibility of asset utilisation across sites?

In multi-site operations, assets are frequently over-purchased in one location while sitting idle in another. Without a view across the estate, procurement decisions are made on local perception rather than actual availability. The result is duplication, waste, and an operation that is harder to manage than it needs to be.

03

A STANDARD WORTH BUILDING TO

What 'good' looks like

Across operationally complex organisations, there is a set of outcomes that a well-built asset tracking approach should consistently deliver. Most organisations are already achieving some of these. **The gap tends to be in alert-to-action connectivity and cross-site evidence.**

✓ **Live asset visibility**
Every critical asset has a current or last known location, accessible without a phone call or spreadsheet lookup.

✓ **Movement history on demand**
A clear record of where an asset has been, when it moved, and when it was last seen, available without manual reconstruction.

✓ **Alert when something changes**
Unexpected movement, geofence breach, inactivity, or condition event triggers a notification to the right person within minutes.

✓ **Action connected to the alert**
Every exception has an assigned response: a recovery task, an inspection, an escalation, not an email thread.

✓ **Evidence that is ready to use**
Location history, movement records, assigned actions, and timestamps form a complete record without retrospective assembly.

✓ **Utilisation data across sites**
Leaders can see which assets are active, idle, mislocated, or unavailable, and use that to make better procurement decisions.

✓ **Consistent standards across locations**
The same visibility and response standards applied across every site, not dependent on which local team manages the asset.

The organisations that move furthest are not the ones with the most tracking devices. They are the ones that connect asset data to the workflows that act on it.

04

WHAT IS AT STAKE

The numbers behind the decision

The operational case for connected asset management is well established. These figures help quantify what is at stake across different dimensions of the problem.

1.5bn

Hours wasted

Frontline workers spend this on low-value tasks annually, including asset searching.

Source · ILO

5-40%

Cost of poor quality

Of revenue, including operational downtime and asset mismanagement.

Source · ASQ

£22.9bn

Annual workplace harm

Cost in the UK, much of it linked to poor asset condition visibility.

Source · HSE 2023/24

The hidden cost of idle assets

Assets that are hard to find get replaced before they need to be. Assets in the wrong location do not get used. Assets out of service without anyone knowing create delays that ripple across a shift. The cost rarely appears on a single line in a P&L, which is why it tends to persist.

Utilisation: the metric most operations miss

Most organisations track whether they have enough assets. Fewer track whether those assets are being used effectively. Connected tracking gives leaders the data to see utilisation patterns across sites, and make procurement decisions based on evidence rather than local estimates.

05

WHERE BREAKDOWNS CLUSTER

Six common failure points in asset management

Asset management problems tend to cluster around a predictable set of causes. Understanding where breakdowns typically occur helps identify where connected tracking has the greatest return.

FAILURE POINT	WHY IT PERSISTS
Shift handovers	Asset responsibility transfers without any formal record. The next team does not know the last known location, condition, or user.
Multi-site movement	Assets move between locations without a trail. The receiving site may not know an asset is coming; the sending site assumes it will return.
Idle asset accumulation	Assets out of service, awaiting repair, or simply unused accumulate invisibly. Leaders see a procurement need; the reality is a utilisation problem.
Late damage discovery	Condition issues are found at the point of use, not when they occur. The gap between damage and discovery creates disputes about cause, liability, and cost.
Recovery without evidence	When an asset goes missing, the response is informal: calls, messages, spreadsheet checks. There is no audit trail of what was done, when, or by whom.
Compliance-critical assets	Medical devices, safety equipment, and inspection-dependent assets need condition records as well as location records. Manual systems rarely connect both.

The common thread is **timing**. In each case the information that would prevent or resolve the problem exists; it just arrives too late, or not at all. Connected tracking closes the gap between event and awareness.

06

FROM REACTIVE TO RESPONSIVE

What connected tracking actually changes

Connected asset tracking is not a faster version of manual asset management. It changes the relationship between your operation and its assets: from reactive to responsive, from assumption to evidence.

BEFORE	AFTER
Assets listed in spreadsheets	**Assets visible in one connected platform**
Teams rely on memory or local knowledge	**Location and status data supports daily decisions**
Missing assets discovered late	**Unexpected movement triggers an alert**
Asset checks handled separately	**Checks, inspections and tasks connect to the asset record**
Recovery actions sit in email threads	**Actions are assigned, tracked and evidenced**
Leaders see limited utilisation data	**Dashboards show trends, exceptions and improvement areas**

◆

Asset tracking as part of operational mastery

A dot on a map tells you where an asset is. A connected platform tells you where it was, flags when it moves unexpectedly, assigns the right person to act, records what they did, and surfaces the pattern when the same issue repeats. That is the difference OCAPII was built to deliver.

07

PRIORITIES DIFFER BY SECTOR

Industry-specific considerations

The types of assets involved, the regulatory context, and the operational consequence of loss or unavailability differ across environments.

Manufacturing & Industrial

A misplaced asset can stop a production line, not just a task.

- High-value tooling and plant benefits from location and maintenance-status visibility.
- Container and pallet tracking across dispatch and return improves logistics visibility.
- ISO and sector certification often extends to asset condition and maintenance records.

Hotels & Accommodation

Shared resources moving across departments and floors.

- Housekeeping and maintenance teams find shared equipment before starting work.
- Event and banqueting assets need location records across setup, service and breakdown.
- Brand standards increasingly require digital evidence of condition and maintenance.

Facilities & Estates

Responsible for assets you do not directly control.

- Contractor equipment tracking supports accountability and reduces disputes over loss or damage.
- Safety-critical assets (first aid, fire equipment, PPE) need condition and location records as a minimum.
- Central visibility across managed sites maintains oversight without physical inspection.

Leisure & Entertainment

High-frequency movement across venues and events.

- Event asset tracking cuts the time spent locating equipment between setups.
- Safety asset condition records are essential where inspection obligations apply.
- High-value AV and technical kit benefits from location history for insurance and loss prevention.

08

PRACTICAL STARTING POINTS

Making the transition

Moving from manual asset management to connected tracking does not require replacing every process at once. The most effective approach starts with the assets and environments where the gap between event and awareness creates the greatest operational cost.

A typical starting point

1. **Identify your highest-consequence assets**, the ones where unavailability, unexpected movement, or poor condition has the most immediate operational impact.
2. **Map the current information flow**: how does your team find out when an asset has moved, is missing, or needs attention?
3. **Define the alert and action logic**: what should happen when an asset leaves an area, goes inactive, or is flagged for inspection?
4. **Decide what evidence you need**: location history, condition data, user records, action trails, and design the record around what matters.
5. **Connect tracking to existing workflows**: maintenance schedules, shift handovers, inspection cycles, and reporting structures.
6. **Review utilisation data after the first month**: idle assets, high-frequency movement patterns, and recurring exceptions are often visible within weeks.

The goal is not to track everything. It is to build a connected view of the assets that matter most, and use that view to make decisions faster, resolve issues earlier, and build a record that holds up when it needs to.

SEE HOW OCAPII CONNECTS ASSETS TO ACTION

The data is already there.

Most operations teams do not have an asset problem. They have a visibility problem. OCAPII connects asset location, condition, alerts, corrective actions and evidence into one operational platform, so your teams can act sooner and prove what happened.

Request a conversation at ocapii.com →