

SNOW SOFTWARE HELPS SAVE MILLIONS

One large company achieved a multimillion-dollar return on investment with the software license optimization tool from Snow Software.

A client came to CDW Account Executive Glenn Kijewski in 2014, looking to reduce the company's annual \$170 million software budget by 10 percent. It was an ambitious goal, to be certain, but the organization's managers knew there was waste to cut.

They just didn't know where.

Through mergers and acquisitions, the company — a large organization in the Northeast with more than 22,000 users — had deployed hundreds of software applications, many with different versions.

"The managers knew they would eventually need to eliminate unwanted applications and standardize," says Kijewski, "and that if they did this, they would save money, not only on software, but also for support and staff."

Along with redundant programs, the organization's IT executives worried that some users ran applications without the appropriate licensing, which left the company vulnerable to financial penalties.

"The client got an indication that some major vendors would conduct audits in the near future," Kijewski says.

"Rather than wait for the publishers to come and find them, the client decided it was time to get their environment under control."

"A No-Brainer"

Kijewski recommended Snow Software's software license optimization tool, which helps track and manage software licenses from major vendors such as Microsoft, SAP, VMware and Oracle. Along with the major vendors, Snow monitors applications from a wide range of providers, including small and medium-sized software publishers. Snow updates its list of applications daily and adds on average more than 7,000 new applications per month.

An agent installed on user devices tracks the use of software applications that are both web-based and installed locally, including the amount of time each gets used. With this information, IT shops can monitor overlicensing or underlicensing of software.

At the same time the company came to CDW, Kijewski's client also considered a Snow competitor, but that vendor's product required high levels of customization.

Ultimately, the organization took Kijewski's advice and deployed Snow's tool in 2015.

Company executives initially wanted to get a handle on their Microsoft environment before a June 2015 contract renewal. An assessment indicated that the enterprise was underlicensed. Among several areas of concern, the

Microsoft Office suite had users running versions of the software without the appropriate licenses.

Kijewski said the company knew an audit was imminent. IT leaders contacted Microsoft to say the company was out of compliance, but could fix the issue in time.

>6,000

Organizations worldwide that currently use software asset management solutions from Snow Software.

SOURCE: Snow Software

Microsoft did an initial audit that revealed a \$10 million compliance gap. After implementing the Snow tool and optimizing the company's software license environment, Microsoft ran a second audit and found the gap dropped to just \$3 million.

"If the client did not implement Snow, they would have paid \$10 million, and would still run applications they paid for but didn't need," Kijewski says.

Although the company spent \$3 million to reach compliance, the \$7 million cost avoidance easily eclipsed the \$1 million the organization paid to implement Snow.

"It's a no-brainer," Kijewski says. "The company spent \$1 million to save \$7 million, and there's still more to save."

For the client, those savings came solely from Microsoft. Future savings will come with the adoption of Software License Optimization & Entitlement tool (SLOE) solutions. SLOE, which minimizes compliance risk, is a useful tool as licensing models become more complicated and software vendors become more aggressive in their auditing programs.

"You will be audited," says Gartner Research Director Hank Marquis. "Vendors know they're losing a lot of money from piracy and noncompliance. Without SLOE in place, even if you're in compliance, you won't have the reports that help an audit go smoothly. You set yourself up for unplanned expenses and a time sink while you're trying to maintain regular services for your users."

An End to Wishing and Hoping

Many organizations miss out on such savings, Kijewski says, because they use ineffective forms of software asset management (SAM). Many stakeholders still manually input the status of software license agreements in spreadsheets, failing to take advantage of the recent advancements in SLOE.

"The difference is that Snow constantly monitors and tracks the use of all software licenses throughout the enterprise," Kijewski says.

Snow provides snapshots of an organization's license environment. At any given time, IT managers know whether the organization is overutilizing or underutilizing its software."

Since software environments continually change, manually inputted software databases lack the accuracy needed to manage them effectively.

"A lot of companies believe their software license

CDW and SAM

Software Asset Management can bring efficiency to any organization's software environment. Starting with license analysis and reconciliation, SAM can help IT leaders turn best practices — including license configuration optimization, license recycling and the ability to leverage asset management — into routine systems management tasks.

CDW's team of Software Asset Management specialists, including software, business development and technical experts, can analyze an organization's licenses in depth and provide reconciliation services that help IT staff understand gaps between registered and deployed licenses. With proper asset management, organizations can more efficiently deploy and administer software assets, while avoiding costly audits.

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environment is under control, but until their next physical inventory, they're wishing and hoping everything remains correct," he says. Still, Kijewski estimates that four out of five organizations continue to manage software assets via spreadsheets and outdated SAM methods.

Ironically, now that Kijewski's client finds itself better prepared for audits, it will likely face far fewer of them. As software vendors realize that an enterprise can instantly run a report that shows full compliance, Kijewski says, they generally "stop knocking on the door."

Snow's solution also helps improve security, ensuring that users do not run unpatched or unwanted software programs.

Furthermore, the details of the report provide more insightful information for organizations to plan future purchases and upgrades. These reports can be distributed to executives, business units, purchasing and operational support in a format they can use to support decision-making.

Moving forward, the client will search for software redundancies from other vendors. The company will also better prevent individual divisions and departments from installing new programs without approval.

As for the goal of reducing the organization's software budget by 10 percent? Kijewski can't say for sure whether the company will hit that number.

"But if they didn't have Snow," he says, "they wouldn't have a chance."