DEAKIN UNIVERSITY

Usage insight and automation are forging a strategic bond between IT and end-users

COMPANY BACKGROUND

Deakin is an Australian regional public university with its main campuses in Burwood, Geelong and Warrnambool. It has 56,000 students, enjoys an excellent reputation, and is classed in the top 2% of universities, according to major international rankings. In 2016, the university decided to centralize all aspects of Software Asset Management (SAM) across its four faculties and administrative areas. Snow's SAM Platform was crucial to the success of this project.

CHALLENGES

- IT needed to centralize license procurement, deployment and management
- Limited insight into the number of applications installed
- Haphazard software purchasing process
- IT was ill-prepared to renegotiate with the big vendors

SNOW'S CONTRIBUTION

Deakin had limited insight into how much software was installed across its 11,000 devices. Reports from Snow showed this to be as many as 8,000 applications – some of which were never used. License request processes needed to be brought under control, and Deakin used Snow Automation Platform to do just that. Insight into usage is saving money, and for the first time, thanks to data out of Snow, the university can engage in contract renewal negotiations with major vendor from a position of strength.

ANTICIPATED BUSINESS BENEFITS AND ROI

- IT now has visibility into software usage across Deakin's faculties and campuses
- Request process is automated
- Data from Snow is making it possible to negotiate with the big vendors
- Faculties and staff now accept that centralized SAM can work for them.

SAM HERO

Natalie Cooper, Finance Manager at eSolutions [Deakins's IT department], says: "I love Snow for its ease of use. 'How many do you have installed, how's it being used?' – Snow gives me the answer straight away. From a macro perspective, Snow is helping to bring the faculties and IT closer together. With data from Snow, we can work together to optimize the software estate."

SNOWSOFTWARE.COM

❄ snow

AUTOMATION STREAMLINES SOFTWARE REQUESTS

In 2016, the university decided to centralize all aspects of Software Asset Management across its four faculties and administrative areas. Snow's Software Asset Management (SAM) Platform was crucial to the success of this project.

In 2015, Deakin implemented Snow License Manager, Snow Inventory, Software Recognition Service and Snow for ServiceNow for 11,000 seats (a number that was later increased to 13,000).

The adoption of the Snow Platform was timely, because in 2016, Deakin decided to centralize license procurement, deployment and management across its four faculties and administrative areas. This was badly needed, as the university's ad hoc software request practices had contributed to license bloat.

Early data out of Snow showed the university had 8,000 installed applications – much more than Natalie Cooper, Finance Manager at eSolutions would have guessed. "And then quite a high percentage of them weren't even being used," she adds.

To streamline and centralize requests for software, eSolutions – the IT department at Deakin –implemented Snow Automation Platform. Deakin now operates a system whereby "free" licenses (Chrome, Spotify, print drivers and so on, in as far as they are not part of the standard image) are automatically available for download in its Software Center.

For anything "that might need a bit of managing", users go to the Software Store. "A colleague came up with this analogy. Our Software Center is your pantry, and if you can't find what you're looking for in your pantry, you can go to the Store."

Snow Automation Platform integrates with SCCM which alerts the user by email that his or her software is available for download in the Software Center.

BETTER RENEWAL NEGOTIATIONS

Thanks to Snow, contract renewal no longer means merely extending the same Enterprise Agreement for another x years. With Snow, renewal has become re-negotiation. "We're about to come up to our renewal with Adobe," says Cooper. "I'm using Snow to get our usage of Adobe products, so obviously I can have a much more meaningful and knowledgeable conversation. I can say to Adobe: 'Do I really need your entire suite when 80% of it I haven't touched?' Snow definitely provides value in that sense."

A re-negotiation with the vendor of Stata, a statistics package, already saved Deakin roughly AUD40,000 (US$31,000). "It's a concurrent license," Cooper explains, "but our faculties didn't exploit that. When someone needed Stata, we would just get another license." Snow revealed that the concurrent use of Stata was just 17 licenses, which left Cooper a lot of room for maneuver in her conversation with the vendor. In the end, she left a generous buffer by reducing the license count to 100, a cut of more than 50%.

THE FUTURE IS SNOW

The savings, though very welcome, were perhaps not the most valuable outcome of this re-negotiation. The Snow data made the process very transparent, which led to buy-in from the faculties. "We are no longer operating in silos across the organization when it comes to software. Faculty users can select and install Stata from the Software Store. If concurrent usage goes over 100 then I'll look to buy more."

This is laying the ground for much more significant savings later. Adobe, in the next few months. And Microsoft Visio and Project a bit further down the line. Deakin has a site license with Microsoft for a count of roughly 4,700. "We don't need nearly that much," Cooper says. "Last time I looked in Snow we only used 800 Visio licenses, and no more than 600 for Project." Here, Snow will begin to make some big inroads into Cooper's budget.

One of Cooper's priorities is to drive automation to the next level, in particular, the integration with ServiceNow. "We want to take all the information out of Snow and be able to populate a CMDB in our ServiceNow tool," she says. This means that Deakin's service desk will be able to know immediately what machine a caller is on, and exactly what software is installed on that machine.

> "With data from Snow, I am able to have a much more meaningful and knowledgeable conversation with software vendors"
>
> **Natalie Cooper**
> **Finance Manager at eSolutions**

Cooper's team is in the process of implementing Snow's connector with IBM, and she is hoping to do the same with Oracle. Deakin is site-licensed with Oracle. "It's basically a matter of making sure we haven't turned on some kind of module that we're not entitled to."

Another goal is to roll the Snow Platform out to Mac users. "We'll be working with Snow to integrate into Casper," Cooper says.

NEVER THE NAYSAYER

In any organization, centralization meets resistance. Cooper's success – and that of Snow – has won over the faculties, who tend to guard their independence fiercely. "Once you get through one or two issues, and they can see those Snow usage data and how our centralized approach benefits them … when they see we're not there to say 'no' and that we're not there to cut them to the bone in terms of how many licenses they have, then we get much more cooperation."

❄ snow