SNOW CASE STUDY

# SNOW SELECTED BY ENDSLEIGH AS 'BEST FIT' FROM SIX OTHER SAM VENDORS

## COMPANY PROFILE

Endsleigh Insurance Services Ltd is one of the UK's largest Insurance providers for graduates and students. The company originally founded in 1965 by the National Union of Students, now employs 850 staff.

## ISSUE

Endsleigh had been using a home-grown asset register and third party inventory tool, but could not reconcile inventory against licensing agreements, monitor software utilisation levels or easily produce management reports.

## SNOW'S CONTRIBUTION

Snow License Manager beat six other SAM solutions to be selected by Endsleigh. Integration, automation and flexible reporting provide the functionality to continually ensure compliance and facilitate re-harvesting of under-used licenses.

## BENEFITS AND ROI

Snow helped Endsleigh prove compliance during a software audit and improved its negotiating power when renewing vendor licensing agreements – saving the company thousands of Pounds in resource time.

As a financial services provider, Endsleigh has strict policies concerning corporate governance. Ensuring compliance with vendor licensing rules is a strategic priority and the company is currently pursuing FAST Gold Stage 2. A small team at Endsleigh is responsible for every aspect of IT asset management, from sourcing and purchasing through to disposal once an asset has reached the end of its lifecycle. This involves managing 1,400 devices, comprising virtualised servers, PCs and laptops running Windows-based applications and suites including Microsoft, Adobe, IBM and VMware.

Endsleigh Insurance began its asset management activities fifteen years ago, using an internally-developed asset register. Subsequently, an early license and inventory solution used in conjunction with its own contracts database was adopted. As user numbers grew and the hardware and software requiring monitoring became more complex, Endsleigh needed more than inventory functionality. The ability to combine software licensing information with compliance reporting was imperative.

Two years ago, Endsleigh conducted a SAM review and evaluated six different solutions. After careful analysis of the features offered by each in relation to functional requirements, the decision to invest in Snow License Manager was made. Starting in December 2011, the implementation was completed quickly, working in partnership with technical consultants from Snow Software.

"My recommendation is to ensure you have a good, flexible SAM tool able to provide the functionality your organisation needs because licensing compliance is a massively growing industry and corporate governance is critical both from a cost and reputation perspective."

Lois Price, IT Service Assurance Manager, Endsleigh Insurance Services Ltd

Snow was adopted because it offered accurate and intelligent licensing functionality, the capability to recognise software 'bundles' (i.e. Microsoft Office), real-time usage monitoring and integrated databases with 360 degree navigation. Flexible reporting with drag and drop functionality and the ability to add custom information fields to tailor databases to suit the way the company managed its licensing agreements were also highlighted as key strengths.

"We needed a SAM system capable of looking at the software installed on our estate and providing a compliance report of how that compared to licenses owned", says Lois Price, IT Service Assurance Manager at Endsleigh Insurance. "Snow License Manager can provide a detailed breakdown of applications installed, the machines they are on and how this compares to the license count, with a full audit trail linking to agreements and eliminating having to manually cross-reference this information."

Endsleigh also uses Snow to maintain an IT asset register, compiling reports showing installation dates, asset numbers, departments bought for, cost centre and valuation information. This provides a full audit trail of the management process from implementation to disposal.

"Reporting is a huge strength of Snow License Manager and the ability to create customised reports for different vendors and applications, then run a compliance report against it, saves a huge amount of resource time - we use this feature daily," adds Lois Price.

Rather than relying on monthly spot-checks of limited devices, Snow License Manager now gives Endsleigh real-time information on licensing utilisation and entitlement rights across the whole organisation.  This has paid dividends as shortly after implementing Snow, the company was audited by a major software vendor. Endsleigh's SAM team described this as an intense experience, although they were in a stronger position having deployed Snow, as this gave Endsleigh greater confidence it could provide the evidence needed. "Snow License Manager gave us evidence to prove compliance and actually showed we were over-licensed in some areas," adds Lois Price.

In addition to dedicated specialists, IT service desk staff are also involved in 'hands-on' aspects of SAM, sharing data within Snow License Manager to identify any risks via automated reports, deploy any additional software needed e.g. anti-virus software to keep devices at the right security level and re-harvest licenses.  Using Snow, re-harvesting has now become a central part of the purchasing process and helps cut costs by re-deploying underutilised licenses. This is done on a case by case basis with highlighted users based on one of Snow's dashboard reports. "If we examine the usage statistics and see someone is an infrequent user, we question their requirements. It seems a bit 'big brother like', but when dealing with company money you have to be tough."

In addition to driving cost savings through re-harvesting, Snow has helped improve governance procedures and contracts management as a whole. "Contracts management is an expensive area and you need usage records available when renegotiating contracts, plus alerts on the system at specified times about when a contract needs reviewing, renewing or terminating. Snow also helps by keeping all associated documentation and signed copies of contracts all in one place, which allows us to act quickly and prevents wasted money."

Looking ahead, Endsleigh plans to use Snow License Manager to understand software usage on virtualised servers and to optimise cloud based software licensing, generating further savings by re-harvesting hosted applications. In addition, they are considering the introduction of a BYOD policy and an IT chargeback model, whereby users of IT are 'billed' according to the level of servicing obtained from the IT department.  Real-time data within Snow will be fundamental to the success of these initiatives.