AGORA

Agora uses Snow Software for continuous license optimization

COMPANY BACKGROUND

Agora is one the largest Polish media companies. Its media portfolio comprises a cinema network, a quality daily and dozens of periodicals in printed and digital versions, the largest outdoor advertising company in Poland, popular internet and local radio stations, a publishing house and TV channels. The conglomerate employs 3,000 people and across its estate has 6,000 devices of which 4,000 are PCs or laptops.

CHALLENGE

The company needs insight into its software estate, especially its Oracle datacenter and associated entitlements, with the aim to optimize and streamline its assets. Ensuring compliance is another challenge for the business to be able to successfully defend a software vendor audit with the right information in order to minimize punitive costs and mitigate risks ahead.

SAM HERO

Aneta Kozłowska is Software Asset Management (SAM) Team Manager at Agora – she explains how Agora uses Snow's SAM platform to optimize licensing, proactively report on and plan software spend that deliver an impressive return on investment.

BENEFITS AND ROI

- 180% ROI in less than six months through software optimization – reallocating unused licenses and being smart with license pools and subscriptions.
- Visibility of the entire software estate, covering all vendors – especially Oracle.
- Automation of SAM Processes.

❄ snow

SAM SUCCESS

Around 2006/2007, Agora's IT department started to build competence in Software Asset Management (SAM) as it recognized the need to control and manage the organization's software and hardware licenses, and with the right insight it would be able to inform its purchasing processes, get a handle on the IT budget and at the same time introduce automation into the process, eliminating repetitive tasks and freeing up time to concentrate on other work.

Move forward eight years and the company had developed its own SAM processes. These showed a decent level of savings but there were issues, as many of the processes were still manual and in particular, there were challenges when addressing Oracle licensing as there was no intelligence on usage. Unfortunately, the in-house tool that had been developed was unable to scan devices so the company started to look at deploying a commercial SAM solution instead.

The main drivers to replace its home-grown solution were the ability to scan and report on the Oracle environment and to have access to usage statistics of installed software so that the company could take informed purchasing and procurement decisions in the future. In addition, having had the experience of a few audits, the company actively sought a solution that could inventory all vendors; enable it to optimize the software estate; and automate many SAM processes.

As the company had already been working with SoftwareONE on other projects it turned to its SAM practice experts for advice. The partner proposed Agora to implement Snow's SAM platform which could inventory the whole estate (including its Oracle databases) and help the company reduce software costs and compliance risks.

> *We are delighted that we can derive an accurate level of costs around our non-compliance and with the automatically generated real-time data reports, the company has the necessary insight to give regular updates to Management and demonstrate tangible costs savings that we've been able to achieve with SAM."*
>
> **Aneta Kozłowska**
> **SAM Team Manager, Agora**

FULL VISIBILITY OF SOFTWARE ASSETS

Early in 2016, the company deployed Snow License Manager and the Oracle Management Option to get full visibility of software usage across the estate. The installation process was hassle-free, with the SAM team benefiting from constant support from Snow and SoftwareONE.

"From the moment Snow was deployed, we loved the fact that we could get real-time reports, have full insight into our Oracle usage and see what software assets were unused," enthuses Aneta Kozłowska, SAM Team Manager. "We are delighted that we can derive an accurate level of costs around our non-compliance and with the automatically generated real-time data reports, the company has the necessary insight to give regular updates to Management and demonstrate tangible costs savings that we've been able to achieve with SAM."

Aneta's team has seen a 180% ROI in less than six months through recycling unused software. By identifying and harvesting unused software, the company pooled those licenses. It then reissued many of those licenses via subscription to users that requested them. It also reassigned several licenses to software that had been installed previously without a license to ensure the company was fully compliant.

A new process was put into place whereby users would 'subscribe' to software for a limited time period. This way software that would otherwise stop being used could be identified for uninstallation. The company has been able to avoid buying new licenses unnecessarily and now has a more sophisticated way to plan and predict future software needs as the software estate becomes optimized.

Aneta says, "We no longer have to guesstimate whether we have the right number of licenses and entitlements, in just a few clicks we can calculate compliance and work out where the best areas are for optimization."

With Oracle Management Option, the company is able to generate reports with precise data on all the metrics that affect Oracle licensing, including Options, Management Packs, feature usage and database settings. Costs can be optimized as the organization only needs to license those Options and Management Packs that are used.

Aneta says, "In just a few minutes we can get an accurate and transparent view of our investment in Oracle databases without complicated and time-consuming work." For Agora this is a huge bonus, as one small error in managing Oracle licenses could put the company at risk of significant non-budgeted costs and true-up fees.

"In addition, we can demonstrate we are compliant to auditors, so when an audit comes around it becomes a painless experience and we save weeks of time in gathering data, all I have to do now is run a couple of reports from Snow," she adds. For Agora, SAM is a continuous exercise having to constantly monitor changes in licensing and technology trends, continually streamline the estate and find new efficiencies. "Our only regret is that we wish we'd deployed Snow earlier!" concludes Aneta.

✸ snow