



ARDENT HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Microsoft optimization recoups \$150,000 in first year of deployment

COMPANY BACKGROUND

Ardent Healthcare Services is the second largest private for-profit hospital operator in the US. Based in Nashville, Tennessee, Ardent runs 19 hospitals in six states, and has revenues of \$3 billion.

CHALLENGE

Ardent needed to get insight into its software estate against the background of a hectic program of acquisition. Its various hospitals were purchasing software independently and under different vendor agreements so Ardent had no clear overview of who deployed what, and whether a license had been procured for it. The company also wanted to be able to have clear budgetary projections for its software procurement – and the solution to do all these things would have to be cost effective too.

SNOW'S CONTRIBUTION

The Snow Platform was implemented in 2016. Since then, Ardent has added five hospitals to its portfolio, so the first – and ongoing – job of the one-woman SAM team was to roll out the solution across these acquisitions without losing sight of Ardent's initial goals: visibility across its entire estate, centralized purchasing and cost savings. A quick win thanks to Snow was to move 1,500 users of Microsoft Office from Pro Plus down to Standard, saving the company \$150,000.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Visibility across the entire software estate
- Quick (but significant) savings on Microsoft licenses
- Confidence to relinquish Microsoft EA
- Strategic planning for quarterly capital and software expenditure

SAM HERO

Rebecca Snoblen, Software Licensing Analyst at Ardent, is solely responsible for managing its software estate. "That's why I need Snow," she says. It is testament to Snoblen's tenacity and the virtuosity of Snow that she is adding thousands of end users and saving money. "I didn't do it by myself," she says modestly. "Snow customer support were great. I've not received customer support like that with any other manufacturer that I've worked with."

COMPANY BACKGROUND

Ardent Healthcare Service is the second largest private for-profit hospital operator in the US. Based in Nashville, Tennessee, Ardent owns and runs 19 acute care hospitals and has revenues of \$3 billion. Most of its facilities are based in Oklahoma, Texas and New Mexico, but the acquisition of LHP Hospital group, which was completed in March of this year, extended its geographical reach to New Jersey.

THE CHALLENGE

Rebecca Snoblen was brought in two years ago as Software Licensing Analyst to source a solution that would report accurately on Ardent's deployments and entitlements. The organization already had a solution, Tivoli Endpoint Manager, but this had proved inadequate to the complex needs of Ardent.

Its hospitals in New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas were acting independently of each other – and of Ardent's management in Nashville. "There was no cohesion among the different markets," Snoblen recalls. "Some [hospitals] were purchasing Microsoft licensing under open agreements and some were doing select agreements, and it really was a nightmare to try to figure out what are our software assets and what is actually deployed based on what we own?"

Snoblen went out and did her research and picked Snow as her best option. In 2016, the company rolled out Snow License Manager, Snow Inventory, Snow Software Recognition Service and Snow Virtualization Management Option.



"Snow gave us the insight that 90% of users didn't need Microsoft Office ProPlus so we downgraded 1500 licenses, making a saving of more than \$150,000"

Rebecca Snoblen, Ardent Health

SAVINGS WITH SNOW

"Implementation was seamless and speedy. "We were collecting data within the next day or two," Snoblen says. This process is still going on, as the LHP acquisition has added five hospitals – and thousands of users – to the Ardent portfolio. The company currently has 12,000 endpoints but Snoblen is solely responsible for software licensing and contract management. "It's just me, that's why I need Snow," she says.

As Snow finally gave her full visibility of Ardent's estate, Snoblen was able to cull big-vendor licenses and save money. "You get a lot of employee turnover in the healthcare industry and so we had many, many licenses that were deployed – but with the co-worker long gone. Snow showed us what was being used, and what wasn't, and this allowed us to reclaim a lot of unused licenses for the likes of Microsoft and Adobe."

Snoblen drilled down deeper into usage of Microsoft Office Professional Plus. Snow detects and breaks down usage of Excel, Access and PowerPoint separately and this provided Snoblen with the astonishing insight that up to 90% of users did not need the expensive Pro Plus offerings; they could be moved to Microsoft Office Standard without them really noticing, a saving of \$106 per license. Snoblen downgraded 1,500 licenses, a saving of more than \$150,000.

Snow has given Snoblen the confidence to relinquish its Microsoft Enterprise Agreement. "Companies sign EAs out of fear," she explains, "They see it as a safety net. But Snow is our safety net." Much to the frustration of the Microsoft sales team who argue that an organization the size of Ardent needs an EA, Snoblen smiles. "And we're like, 'No, we really don't'."

Ardent was audited by Microsoft before the Snow Platform was fully up and running. Not that Snow didn't prove useful. "We did actually check our SCCM reports and everything that we submitted to Microsoft with what we had in Snow. In retrospect, I feel we could have just used Snow, but it was too early for us to make that decision."

BUDGETING WITH SNOW

Previously, licenses were bought if and when needed, on a one-to-one basis, but now – with projections based on data from Snow – Snoblen buys quarterly, incurring an administrative cost just once. "What we buy is based on growth, or if Snow was showing a deficiency," Snoblen explains. "Sometimes, obviously, those deficiencies could be that someone's deployed the wrong version of a license. So, it allows me to clean that up before we just go and buy a license for something that got installed incorrectly."

SAVING TIME WITH SNOW

The acquisitions are adding hugely to Snoblen's workload, but Snow has lightened her burden. She describes the time savings as "extraordinary", adding: "I have to look at some many licenses, I can't deal with them in one sitting. So to leave it and be able to come back and look at the Snow License Manager portal from where I left off, and not have to try to figure out what I figured out the previous time, is great."

Snow frees up time to get the acquisitions embedded in the Platform. "I can focus on other things," says Snoblen, "such as working with the new hospitals and training them on how to gather the data that I need to put into Snow."

PEARL OF WISDOM

Looking back on her journey with Snow so far, would Snoblen do anything differently? "Yes," she says, "I would do it immediately!"