KROENKE

Kroenke Sports & Entertainment teams up with Snow for savings on IT operations

COMPANY BACKGROUND

Denver-based Kroenke Sports & Entertainment (KSE) is one of the world's leading ownership, entertainment and management groups. As owners and operators of Pepsi Center, the Paramount Theatre, Dick's Sporting Goods Park, the Colorado Avalanche (NHL), Denver Nuggets (NBA), Colorado Mammoth (NLL) and Colorado Rapids (MLS), KSE's sports and entertainment assets are extensive. Additional properties under KSE's umbrella include Altitude Sports & Entertainment, a 24-hour regional television network; Altitude Authentics, the company's official retail provider; and Altitude Tickets, the official ticketing provider for KSE teams and venues.

CHALLENGE

KSE has been expanding rapidly: the employee headcount has more than doubled between 2009 and 2017. The business needed to have insight into the legacy software of its acquisitions and saw this as an opportunity to beef up its Software Asset Management (SAM) processes generally. It hired SoftwareONE to host Snow's SAM Platform to do precisely that.

SNOW'S CONTRIBUTION

Thanks to Snow, KSE now has almost 100% reach into the companies it recently acquired. Hard cost savings through Snow have come from renegotiating Enterprise Agreements and optimizing SQL servers. The solution has brought intangible savings as the data from Snow gives Kroenke the necessary data to maintain compliance with software licensing requirements.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

• Savings on Enterprise Agreements and SQL deployment
• Proof of Compliance at all times
• Efficient execution of non-BYOD policy
• Standardized configurations on desktop and laptop hardware

SAM HERO

Chad Payne, Executive Director IT Operations at KSE, says: "Snow has helped us integrate our businesses and made SAM compliance easier and quicker. We've saved money. But the biggest factor is probably intangible. It's hard to put a price on confidence that we maintain appropriate software licensing."

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SAVINGS WITH SNOW

Kroenke Sports & Entertainment (KSE) has been expanding rapidly: the employee headcount has more than doubled between 2009 and 2017. The business needed insight into the legacy software of its acquisitions and insight into growing Software Asset Management processes.

The vendor SoftwareONE helped organize an evaluation of SAM solutions. Snow's light-weight client was an important consideration in the evaluation process. KSE implemented Snow License Manager, Snow Inventory and Software Recognition Service, hosted through SoftwareONE.

Two people in Kroenke's 30-strong IT team are responsible for SAM: Jeff Walters, Director of IT Support Services, and Chad Payne, Executive Director IT Operations. They have achieved full roll-out of Snow into Kroenke's acquisitions. Walters says, "If something flags in our antivirus endpoint, or we see some network activity that we're trying to track down, or any end-users complaining about a device that we're not aware of, Snow can tell us exactly what's there."

Snow helps KSE's policy around standardizing software configuration on desktops. "Thanks to Snow we can see not only what software is on a device but what version. For some specialized software that may not be an off-the-shelf type of package that's normally reported, we can see which version of the executable that is installed," reports Walters.

Also, Snow has been essential for the company's big push to move to Office 365. "Now we shall be able to report on usage and ensure that people are on the optimal licensing plan," he adds. This process of connectivity and access is ongoing – the 'daily chase and recovery', as Walters calls it. But Kroenke has also leveraged Snow to bear down on IT spend, notably through server optimization.

Payne explains: "Because we're using Snow, we've been able to move our stacks around and really analyze our SQL deployment within our virtual environment, and avoid costly licensing increases by implanting SQL efficiently within Microsoft's model." It also helps with true-ups and renewals. Payne explains, "The process is much quicker now and we have confidence that we've accounted for our usage accurately. Snow gives us that valuable insight and intelligence."

Additional savings are made through rooting out rogue software – the classic example being a co-worker who, on his own initiative, purchases and installs non-approved software. "But then it's costing our service department time to troubleshoot why it's not working for them," says Walters. Snow gives him the visibility to spot rogue software before accidents happen.

INTANGIBLE BENEFITS

Walters and Payne see compliance as one of the big wins they have had with Snow. "There's a huge value in not getting fined by a vendor," Payne comments. "And to a lesser degree," adds Walters, "not having to do the investigation from point zero. We can easily demonstrate that we've been using Snow for a period of time; SoftwareONE helps us identify where we may have issues and we rectify them while we are still compliant."

Kroenke's strong non-BYOD policy is bolstered by Snow's SAM Platform, as Walters explains. "We could be unaware of some software that's out there that wasn't purchased through our IT department. Snow gives us the necessary insight into what is out there that, without it, it would be over the horizon and hidden from us."

Kroenke is switching its support ticketing system to the hosted platform TOPdesk and wants to use Snow to populate it. "There's an API for that integration. Even if at first it is a CSV dump out of Snow, that will automate that process and the database will be accurate, populated with cleansed, normalized data of all the hardware and software across all IT in the company," says Walters. I want our ITIL solution to be humming smoothly in our environment and Snow's contribution will make that happen."

Kroenke needed a Software Asset Management solution as agile and powerful as a player for the Denver Nuggets, one of its basketball teams. Walters says: "With Snow we got just that. I also like it that the software doesn't rest on its laurels, but always strives to do better – like all top sportsmen! It's nice to see the product evolve and mature."

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> **Chad Payne, Executive Director IT Operations at KSE**

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