



Strategic outsourcing solves global SAM issue for EC Harris

Overview

Country or Region: United Kingdom

Vertical: Property & Business Services

Customer Profile:

EC Harris is the leading international built asset consultancy working in the real estate, infrastructure and construction sectors. They have 46 offices worldwide employing over 3,400 people with an annual group turnover in excess of £250 million.

Solution:

Managed SAM – fully hosted software asset management service for Microsoft, Adobe, Symantec, AutoCAD and WinZIP installed software across the organisation

Business Benefits:

- Cost savings: £40k saving in first three months after implementation
- Better budgeting
- Improved software procurement/management processes
- Absolute visibility of IT estate
- Improved compliance - Lowered business risk
- Minimum administration
- Rich reporting environment – management information
- No investment in staff or equipment required
- Fixed price

“This was the most attractive option for us because it provided rapid results, had minimal impact on our IT infrastructure and delivered everything we needed for a fixed price per quarter.””

Stijn Kuijpers, Asset Management Executive , EC Harris

Customer Profile

EC Harris is the leading international built asset consultancy working in the real estate, infrastructure and construction sectors. They bring together a wide range of professional skills, (such as quantity surveying, project management, building surveying, management consultancy, software development and facilities management) to successfully deliver all aspects of a capital project and its on-going operation. This allows them to advise on the initial investment and through each stage of construction - to occupation and day-to-day operations. EC Harris has 46 offices worldwide employing over 3,400 people with an annual group turnover in excess of £250 million. Current major projects include Heathrow Terminal 5 and Scotland’s new Forth crossing.

Business Requirement

With the organisation spread worldwide across 46 locations, and a substantial investment in licensed software, EC Harris recognised that a lack of accurate information surrounding software assets meant that it was unable to meet its own high corporate governance standards for software management. This presented the business with exposure to unnecessary risk and unplanned cost when required to demonstrate compliance against vendor licensing agreements. Whilst procurement records might identify exactly what software had been purchased, this information was time-consuming to obtain and, on its own, was not enough to demonstrate EC Harris’ software license position. This was made more difficult by the complexity of software vendors’ licensing programmes and the lack of specialist software licensing knowledge within the firm.

In conjunction with a wider asset-management project covering furniture, office equipment and IT hardware, EC Harris initiated a 5 month project to research and implement an effective software asset management (SAM) solution to solve the dilemma.

The assembled project team quickly identified a partial implementation of Centennial’s Discovery software across the IT estate. Discovery is the market-leading SAM tool and has the ability to locate, identify and report on all installed software. Stijn Kuijpers, Asset Management Executive at EC Harris commented: “This was a key finding for us because despite the fact that the implementation was incomplete and the data store being out of date, we knew that Centennial’s Discovery could form part of our final solution and therefore our initial investment wouldn’t be wasted.”

Choosing a SAM partner

At the outset, a number of partners had been engaged to advise EC Harris on SAM best practice and the potential combinations of tools, processes and policies to achieve the desired result. Teksys was chosen from a shortlist of four because they were industry-recognised SAM experts, presented a detailed project plan from the outset and went the extra mile to suit EC Harris' international requirements.

Kuijpers explained "I had attended a Teksys SAM seminar in April 2007 and was impressed by Teksys' depth of knowledge in this specialist area. Subsequently, when they pitched for the business, they had really grasped how critical this was to our organisation and gave us a number of flexible options that not only focused closely on our areas of specific concern but were also sensitive to business requirements and budgets."

The Solution

Teksys implemented their innovative Managed SAM service for EC Harris. The service monitors and records the entire software installed base across the organisation and provides a dynamically updated license positions service for all the vendors' products in scope – currently identified as Microsoft, Symantec, Adobe, AutoCAD and WinZip. Using Centennial's Discovery agent deployed on each desktop, laptop and server, encrypted information about installed software products and versions is passed securely to the external Teksys Managed SAM server farm. On these bespoke servers a complete record of the installed software base is recorded and dynamically updated in the data store. Each month the data is analysed and compared with EC Harris' procurement records and software vendors' consumption reports. During this monthly process any discrepancies are analysed to identify not only potential compliance issues but also show where savings can be made in the procurement process.

Kuijpers outlined why this was an ideal solution: "This was the most attractive option for us because it provided rapid results, had minimal impact on our IT infrastructure and delivered everything we needed for a fixed price per quarter." This however was just the start –

Kuijpers continued "Early in our SAM project, I realised that in order to achieve the results required by the business, we would potentially need to make a significant investment in people and training to develop the in-house expertise. By outsourcing this particular task, we were able to hit the ground running and benefit from ongoing expert advice. In addition, Teksys delivers bespoke SAM Process and Policy workshops for our staff so that we get the benefit of skills transfer across our organisation."

Business Benefits

The Managed SAM solution has delivered significantly more benefit than was originally envisaged by EC Harris' asset management and IT teams. It has enabled local asset managers across the world to have near complete visibility and remove the guesswork that was part of the original problem. Managed SAM has enabled EC Harris to reach a state of sustained compliance which leads to better budgeting, accurate reporting, minimum business risk and no vendor-enforced audits.

Kuijpers added more detail "We achieved a significant set of cost savings very rapidly. In the first three months after implementation we were able to save almost £40,000 by re-harvesting software licenses that we didn't know we had available - this gave us the immediate ROI we were looking for". EC Harris' asset management team members around the globe have secure access to an online data store that contains a wealth of information that enables them to procure software more intelligently, plan IT projects with accurate information and reduce the total cost of ownership for software licenses.

For More Information

Teksys is a specialist Microsoft services business providing a range of consultancy skills and software services to optimise customers' Microsoft-based infrastructure platforms.

For more information about Teksys products and services, call +44 (0)1256 827 555 or visit the Web site at: <http://www.teksys.co.uk>