



Case Study

Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain

Royal Pharmaceutical Society of GB implements SAM process and achieves software compliance

The Society

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain is the professional and regulatory body for pharmacists in England, Scotland, and Wales. The primary objectives of the Society are to lead, regulate, develop, and represent the profession of pharmacy.

The Society has responsibility for a wide range of functions including controlled entry into the profession, education, registration, setting, and enforcing of professional standards; promoting good practice, providing support for improvement, dealing with poor performance, and dealing with misconduct.

Through its Publications Division - the Pharmaceutical Press - the Society is a major publisher in its own right, producing a wide range of books, journals, digital texts on pharmacy, and the pharmaceutical sciences and related disciplines.

IT systems play a vital role in the Society's administration, especially in its core Membership system for its 44,000 members and in its publishing activities. There are 300 members of staff, each with a networked PC running a wide range of software applications from Microsoft, Oracle, Network Associates, and other vendors.

The Requirement

Soon after joining the organisation as its Head of IT, Andrew Langler realised that the Society urgently needed to implement a Software Asset Management (SAM) strategy.

"Before I joined, the Society had a disparate approach to IT with different parts of the organisation to some extent doing their own thing", explained Langler.



The lack of a centralised software purchasing system and the absence of an implementation policy had inevitably led to problems of version control and there was no consistency of common applications.

"There was a central IT Department, but people were still able to go out and buy their own software. There was no real overall control of policy for the roll-out of software."

He realised that it was vital for the Society to achieve total compliance with software copyright regulations, not only in order to accomplish substantial business savings and avoid penalties from software regulators, but also because the Society is itself a publisher who depends on intellectual property.

"It is important that we offer the same courtesy to other publishers that we expect to receive; besides we are also a regulatory body and if we can't regulate ourselves, how can we regulate other people?", he pointed out.



The Society's IT needed a hardware and software licence audit in place to gain a clearer understanding of exactly what hardware and software were available. As an example, the organisation had a number of different versions of Microsoft Office running on different operating systems and it was clear that the deployment of software was being done in an ad hoc fashion rather than under a controlled policy.

Andrew explained that *"there were important questions that we needed to answer i.e. were we actually compliant and using the licences we were entitled to? Equally, how much money were we wasting with people going out and buying software they felt we needed without even checking if we already had copies that could be used?"*

The Solution

Andrew Langler approached Jcom UK Ltd to conduct a software license audit at the Society and the project was carried out in several phases. Initially, Jcom's consultants undertook a full audit of hardware and software installed and the licences issued. Jcom used Centennial Discovery which provides automated software and hardware inventory, software usage metering, and dynamic hardware location functionality.

Discovery also allowed automated reconciliation between products installed versus licenses used. This helped the IT roll out software more effectively for the future and better manage the deployment of new software onto the desktops.

As a result, all of the Society's software is now ordered through a single department and when the software is delivered all is logged into a new software licence asset management database before deployment. This provided the Society with a centralised, policy-driven software and patch delivery system, achieved by implementing Prism, which allows IT to remotely install and remove applications on PCs and Servers.

"We can't stop someone going out with a credit card and bringing new software into the organisation, but we have stopped them actually being able to install it themselves - everyone now needs permission from the IT department."



The final stage of the solution reviewed the policies and procedures for Software Asset Management (SAM) and compared these against ITIL best practice, but more importantly carried out the baseline for license reconciliation.

Benefits Achieved

"Our main objectives were improving business efficiency, achieving substantial cost savings, standardisation, consolidation and, of course, software compliance", explained Langler.

The Society has achieved compliance with a number of leading software vendors, such as Microsoft, Oracle, and Network Associates. The organisation is now moving down the chain to the smaller but equally important suppliers. The process pushed the Society closer to achieving total compliance and in case they face an investigation from one of the major software suppliers or regulators such as the BSA the Society can prove that all software running within the organisation is legal and compliant.

"Jcom's consultants had an excellent understanding of our requirements and addressed exactly what we were trying to achieve. This made it very easy to move the project forward."

"As a result of the changes we have put in place, the IT Department has achieved significant cost savings on software licensing and is now able to offer a more efficient service to other departments within the Society", finishes Langler.

