



CITY OF TAMPA

Tampa saves \$20,000 from harvesting and reutilizing unused software in 12 months



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David Baird, IT Purchasing Leader, city of Tampa

ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

Tampa is located on the west coast of Florida and has a population approaching 350,000. The local government employs 5,000 people to run services locally.

CHALLENGE

Before installing their SAM solution – along with a self-service platform – Tampa used a manual process to monitor and track license usage. Users could order any software they wanted and staff used Microsoft Excel spreadsheets as its document of record for license management. It meant budgets were spiraling out of control, and with the manual effort of gathering and keeping data it went quickly out of date not to mention how that affected productivity.

SNOW’S CONTRIBUTION

The Snow SAM platform was provided by CDW and installed on site by Snow’s service team. Today, it helps Tampa to maintain compliance when it comes to licensing software, ensures illegal software is blacklisted and removed, and provides useful intelligence when planning next year’s budget.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Cost avoidance of \$20,000 due to software harvesting
- Time savings of 48 hours per request on delivering software to users
- Cost and time savings through standardization and rationalization of applications
- Business owners empowered to manage their own software budgets effectively

SAM HERO

David Baird, IT Purchasing Leader says: “I can do more with less with SAM than I could before.”

CREATING ORDER OUT OF CHAOS

David Baird heads a team of three SAM professionals who manage all the software for the City of Tampa. When he took up his role as Leader of the IT Purchasing Team in 2016, he quickly discovered that there was no regulation of software ordering or monitoring of usage.

“When I got here,” David says, “we had no way of responding to audit requests because we didn’t have a program for Discovery. But we wanted to make sure that we were compliant and that there was nothing that would later cause an issue. We knew we had to implement a Software Asset Management (SAM) solution.”



“Having the visibility of software and licenses across our whole estate has been a game changer for us.”

David Baird, IT Purchasing Leader

The previous process of monitoring licenses through Microsoft Excel was a liability. David recounts, “The way that software was purchased by the City of Tampa was cumbersome and manual. A user would send a request, which would be processed into a purchase order, which in turn would go out to the vendor, and then – if someone remembered – they would also send the purchase order over to security to add it into their Excel spreadsheet.

“Deploying Snow’s SAM platform was probably the biggest eye-opener we ever had – discovering all the software that was out there that was unregistered or that we didn’t know about. We were shocked to discover around 5,000 applications that no one knew about.”

Considerations in purchasing Snow were its ability to track hardware assets (eliminating the need to buy a separate solution), to blacklist applications and the ease of reporting. David comments, “Right now I’m using Snow to do our budget planning for next year. It’s filled in a role that, again, had been another spreadsheet-type issue. We would buy a computer, put the warranty information into the computer and try tracking it by serial number.”

In addition to achieving compliance, Tampa sought an easy and automated way of allocating software to users. It wanted a solution where the SAM team could control and manage all

licenses. With Snow’s usage monitoring – or more accurately, non-usage monitoring – Tampa could remove and then reallocate software to other users, instead just buying more licenses. This optimization saved Tampa \$20,000 in the first year of deployment alone. As David puts it, “We’re 5,000 people within the City of Tampa, so that’s a fairly serious saving for us and represents money that we can invest elsewhere to delivery services and support to the city’s tax payers.”

SAVINGS OF 48 HOURS PER REQUEST

Using Snow Automation Platform, Tampa quickly established an employee app store. This lets users get the software they need while ensuring a license is available and expenditures are within budget. “We now have a storefront which has dramatically reduced the number of service desk tickets,” says David. “This represents a huge reduction in time, as it saves us an average of two days’ work each time a user puts in a software request

“Before, we would get a request like: ‘Hey, how much is Adobe Pro? A service desk ticket would be raised, and one of our people would have to check the existing price, verify the quote’s still good, then reply to the customer and close the ticket. The customer would then determine if they had budget or not. After which, they would send another request in: ‘We’d like to purchase this software. Please use our budget code XYZ.’ Then we would go out and send the request off, get the purchase order and send it to the vendor. After acknowledgement, we would set it up in SCCM to be deployed to that user.”

Now the software cost is visible from the outset and a user can see whether a license is available. “We’ve held in-house training courses to teach managers and supervisors – the people that own the software budgets – how to use Snow. They can track software usage within their departments, see high-value software that people aren’t using, harvest it, and let someone else who needs it have that license. We’ve saved a ton of money not having to requisition more licenses.”

Another benefit David has seen from using Snow is the ability to take a pro-active approach to computer management. David explains, “We use Snow to capture how much space is remaining on the hard drives of computers in our estate and see which ones are running out of room. Snow generates a report on how many computers have less than 10mb of space left. We can then help prevent people losing data or having slow computers. Initially we found there were many instances but now, thanks to this approach, we only have one or two a week.”

FORECASTING FOR FUTURE PLANNING

With an eye to the future, David is looking for additional savings. “With the data available on what is being spent on software, we can look at ways to create more savings as we go forward. In the 11 months that we’ve had Snow, it’s demonstrated its value by enabling us to reduce costs, be pro-active, prepare our budgets better and more. The visibility of software and licenses across our whole estate has been a game changer.”

David’s team is working on a project to standardize software as well as rationalize what Tampa already has, thus reducing the number of applications that need support. “Also, this gives us

more leverage with vendors to say, ‘Hey, we need more of this software and we’d like higher discounts’, instead of just buying software licenses one or two at a time. That costs a fortune. Often we discover we already have applications that have similar functionality and provide them as an alternative to the original request.”

Snow has delivered great value to David and his team: “Snow’s SAM platform enables me to be more effective with less overhead and make savings that can be invested elsewhere,” he concludes.