



DATACOM

IT consultancy puts its own house in order with Snow

COMPANY BACKGROUND

Datacom is a privately owned IT service based in New Zealand, with offices in Australia, Malaysia and the Philippines. Datacom employs 4,880 people and was the first Kiwi IT firm to hit \$NZ1 billion (\$740m) in annual sales.

CHALLENGE

Datacom delivers Software Asset Management services to its clients in New Zealand and across Asia with many of those clients using Snow. The company felt it ought to practice what it preached and deploy the Snow Platform to bring its own software estate into compliance and manage costs. A Group CIO was recently appointed to drive this SAM initiative, and Snow was installed in mid-2016.

SNOW RESULTS

Datacom has seen rapid growth in recent years and inherited a mish-mash of Microsoft agreements from a clutch of Australian acquisitions. When Microsoft came up for renewal in March, Datacom consolidated its agreements. Time savings were considerable, with the true-up process taking two weeks instead of three months. Snow has also helped keep a lid on costs during Datacom's dizzying pace of expansion.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Visibility across an estate of 10,000 applications
- Consolidation of Microsoft arrangements into one EA
- Engagement of senior management
- More effective marketing of Snow to its own customer base
- Massive timing savings for a Microsoft True-up, from three months to two weeks

SAM HERO

Sean Magner, SAM Consultant at Datacom, believes his job is about much more than managing a budget. He says: "IT should be an enabler, an influencer. IT doesn't want to be seen as a roadblock or as a stifler of initiative. We're trying to be a dynamic, agile organization. If there are delays, or roadblocks, or things that might affect our ability to deliver for our customers, then that's not acceptable."

COMPANY BACKGROUND & CHALLENGE

Datacom is a privately-owned IT services provider with head office in Wellington, New Zealand, and offices in Australia, Malaysia and the Philippines. The company has seen strong growth recently and now eclipses the New Zealand businesses of IBM and Hewlett-Packard combined. Datacom employs 4,880 people and global revenues for the last financial year stood at \$NZ1.16 bn.

The company delivers software management services to clients in New Zealand and across Asia. With many of those clients having implemented Snow, it made commercial sense for Datacom to use Snow's Platform internally for its own compliance and vendor contract negotiation.

Datacom's rapid pace of expansion had created a sprawling software estate of some 10,000 applications provided by 3,500 vendors. The software used by its 1,500 developers was proving particularly tricky to manage. However, Datacom's immediate concern was a clutch of disparate Microsoft contracts – a legacy from its many acquisitions.

Snow was the only choice to help the company achieve this – after all, it advises clients that Snow is the best solution in the market. Software License Manager, Snow Inventory and Software Recognition Service were rolled out.

Using Snow internally obviously deepens product knowledge and helps Datacom take its customer service to the next level. "We use Snow as a test bed," says Sean Magner, SAM Consultant at Datacom. "And Sales uses it for demos. We go, 'Look, this is Datacom's actual data. This is what our environment looks like.' This gives our clients and potential clients great confidence in the product – and in us."

Datacom's agreements with Microsoft came up for renewal. "Snow helped us identify what we had," Magner explains, "and what our actual usage environment looked like." He used Snow to consolidate Datacom's patchwork of Microsoft agreements under a single EA.

Datacom markets time-savings as one of the key benefits of Snow, but all the same, Magner was staggered by the

speed with which his Microsoft true-up was completed. "Instead of having to query different systems, and talk to different people, and build up a profile of usage and a profile of deployment, we had that from Snow instantaneously." A process that had taken probably three months previously was done in two weeks with Snow.

SNOW = EFFORTLESS OPTIMIZATION

Next on Magner's "big-vendor hit list" is Adobe. "We've got multiple agreements. We've got some Creative Cloud. We've got some perpetual. We've got off-the-shelf stuff." Snow is collecting that data and consolidating it to start delivering the cost savings of bulk purchasing.

Datacom employs 1,500 developers – a dynamic and fluid environment that is notoriously difficult to manage. As Magner describes it: "People standing things up and down, deploying and removing, having multiple deployments, testing – all that sort of stuff." Magner is identifying Datacom's non-production environment by grouping its machines and software within Snow. MSDM licenses used by developers are allocated to non-production machines and excluded from production license counts.

Magner is looking to leverage Snow across the company as well as build out his reporting structure. "Security isn't using Snow yet," he explains, "although with [the cyber attack] WannaCry we did use the Snow script." Did this help identify who had not been on the network to get that patched? "It did, yes. So we had some benefit out of that."

Magner believes savings and cost avoidance around Visio and Project as well as Snow's help in getting the right usage mix around Office 365 E1/E5 have helped contain costs.

The biggest single benefit Snow has brought is visibility. "We can see if there are five products doing the same thing. For example, with PDF writers or something like that. And we can go, 'We will standardize on Acrobat.' Even within Acrobat there may be six versions. 'Right, we will go to DC.' Visibility enables you to inform such decisions."

"I've used a lot of solutions over the years," says Magner. "Some do discovery really well, some do inventory very well, but not a lot are good at normalization. That leaves you constantly massaging and pulling all the data in and applying weird little rules around to identify what's part of a bundle or what's not." "The effort in doing that is huge, and Snow takes all of that away, which is great."



"We are delighted we completed our Microsoft true-up in just two weeks, previously it took three months"

Sean Magner, SAM Consultant, Datacom

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