



SCANDIC HOTELS GROUP

Snow imposed process and compliance on acquisitions spree

COMPANY BACKGROUND

Scandic is the largest Nordic hotel operator by number of rooms – a total of some 55,000, in a network of 280 hotels located predominantly in Scandinavia, it also has a presence in Germany, Belgium, Finland and Poland. The company is going through a period of rapid expansion: in 2014, it acquired the Norwegian group Rica with 70 hotels, and it has very recently bought a Finnish chain, Restel Hotellit Oy, with a further 43 locations. To buttress this growth, the group relisted on the Stockholm Stock Exchange in 2015. Employment numbers are seasonal but average around just under 16,000. In 2016, Scandic booked sales of €1.3 billion.

CHALLENGE

Management of Scandic's wide-ranging portfolio of hotels is decentralized, but it has consolidated a number of functions including HR, product development and IT. The company's growth strategy prompted a re-think of its Software Asset Management, as the processes and solution in place were not aligned with Scandic's ambitious plans. Clearly, the addition of new hotels, with their own servers, devices and legacy software, presented a compliance risk, and Scandic implemented Snow License Manager, Snow Inventory, Software Recognition Service to gain control of its entire applications portfolio on an estate of over 4000 devices including 300 Microsoft Azure Servers.

SNOW'S CONTRIBUTION

Five days after Snow had been rolled out, the IT team had an overview of all its Microsoft and Adobe licenses. The resulting cull of unused software resulted in some early savings. The devices and licenses inherited from Rica in 2014 were integrated within Snow without incident – or costly audits. An unexpected benefit from Snow is that large vendors such as Microsoft are far less predatory when it comes to audits: they know Scandic has the right usage data to hand. The Platform also acts as a gatekeeper to user requests, particularly for Adobe, and to unauthorized software such as games.

BUSINESS BENEFITS AND ROI

- Solid framework to integrate new business within existing IT
- Rapid insight into license landscape
- Audit readiness
- Cost-avoidance by removing unused software

SAM HERO

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THE CHALLENGE

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Clearly, the Software Asset Management processes in place were not in line with Scandic's growth strategy – to extend its IT infrastructure, it needed far more functionality. The choice fell on Snow. "While other providers focused on the features of the technology they were offering, Snow Software wanted to help us use its integrated software platform to optimize our business and to help us become more cost-effective," explains Jonasson. The company implemented Snow License Manager, Snow Inventory and Software Recognition Service.

EARLY SUCCESS

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The next challenge was the acquisition of Norwegian hotel chain Rica which added 70 hotels to Scandic's portfolio. The addition of Rica's servers, devices and legacy software presented a compliance risk, but the integration was completed without incident – or potentially costly audits.

SNOW AND MICROSOFT

Scandic is buying the Snow Platform as a service from Advania, the IT services company. "We tend to use Snow for our agreements with major vendors," says Jonasson. "We use the license compliance part and Advania. They're registering all the licenses we buy in Snow. We can map licenses together with the agreements."

Jonasson compares the reports out of Snow with the Microsoft Toolkit, which scans the networks for every scrap of Microsoft software. "Snow is always accurate," he says. The vendor is aware that Scandic uses Snow, and that this more or less guarantees the company is in compliance – so an audit would very likely be a



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**Björn Jonasson,
IT Infrastructure Architect**

waste of time. The fact that Microsoft has not come knocking represents a considerable time saving for Jonasson.

Scandic buys all its Adobe entitlements under a Cloud agreement, making it impossible to run the software without a license. So with Adobe, compliance is not an issue, but of course optimization is. Jonasson uses Snow to monitor and double-check Adobe usage. "I send an email to all the assigned users in the Adobe portal, and ask them: 'Are you using Adobe software or not, yes or no?' I always get some replies that someone has left the company and so on, and then I have to check in Snow that it's there as well to make sure someone else isn't using that email address for logging in, which can happen." Any unused Adobe licenses are reharvested, or parked in a pool, ready to be reassigned.

Jonasson feels he is on top of Microsoft and Adobe, but the business is buying, or wants to buy, a lot of other software. "They ask me or someone else in IT, 'Do we have any free licenses for this?' and we don't even know the software is there at all! I always check the usage in Snow. 'Oh, we seem to have eight people running it who bought it,' and then we start to dig into that. I am always confident I get the complete picture from Snow."

SNOW AND SCANDIC'S EXPANSION

This confidence in Snow is crucial as Jonasson only has a fraction of his working week to spend on Software Asset Management. "I would be blind without Snow," he says, "especially as Scandic is such a big company. I rely on Snow a lot."

He continues, "I think the biggest strength is that it's very visual. I love the Snow dashboard. It's easy to manage. It's really great because you can export data from wherever you are in the system – I need to send a number of regular reports to Management and Procurement." The insights from Snow that are helping keep Scandic compliant, and saving it time and money, have become indispensable for other management functions within the company.

Scandic is about to get bigger still: it is in the process of taking over the Finnish chain, Restel Hotellit Oy IT, which by midsummer 2018 will have added another 43 hotels to the portfolio. As part of the integration process, Jonasson plans to put the Snow agent on every Restel computer, and to merge the two Microsoft enterprise agreements. "We want to ensure compliance for all software on every device within Scandic and Snow gives me the visibility I need to do so."