



Microsoft Software Asset Management Customer Solution Case Study



Overview

Country: United States

Industry: Manufacturing

Customer Profile

Ampacet, based in Tarrytown, New York, is a leading manufacturer of color and additive masterbatch solutions. With 25 locations worldwide and more than 1,500 employees, the company markets a line of pigments that are used in multiple industries.

Business Situation

After experiencing substantial growth, Ampacet wanted to gain control of its software assets before upgrading to Microsoft® Office Professional 2007 and standardizing on that software worldwide.

Solution

The company underwent a SAM consultation to gain a comprehensive understanding and inventory of existing software assets and prepare to upgrade to the company's new desktop standard.

Benefits

- Expedited a large deployment worldwide
- Saved more than U.S. \$300,000 in licensing costs through optimal licensing
- Streamlined license-budgeting process
- Improved internal network security
- Implemented SAM best practices

Worldwide Dye Manufacturer Expedites Deployment of Desktop Software with SAM

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Bob Woods, Global IT Director, Ampacet

Ampacet is a leading manufacturer of masterbatch solutions sold to the plastics industry. Since the 1990s, Ampacet has experienced tremendous growth, resulting in more than 1,500 employees and a network of offices spanning the globe. Managing software was increasingly challenging, so Ampacet decided to standardize its software platform for easier management. To do so, the company required a detailed inventory and thorough understanding of its software assets. Ampacet worked with Universal Management Solutions, a Microsoft® Certified Partner for Licensing Solutions, to conduct a Software Asset Management (SAM) consultation. In three months, Ampacet expedited a large deployment, eliminated compliance concerns, saved U.S. \$300,000 in licensing costs through an optimal licensing program, improved network security, and implemented SAM best practices for the future management of software assets.



SAM Software Asset
Management

optimize. assure. build.

“As a result of the SAM consultation findings and Microsoft Enterprise Agreement, we were able to save over \$300,000 in licensing costs.”

Bob Woods, Global IT Director, Ampacet

Situation

Founded in 1937, Ampacet is a producer of chemical dyes and pigments that are sold to the plastics industry. Products sold by the company include utility and specialty white, black, and additive masterbatches, as well as custom and stock colorants. Ampacet has 17 manufacturing sites on four continents and four major research and development facilities in the Americas, Europe, and Asia. The company employs more than 1,500 individuals with industry experience and knowledge.

Bob Woods, Global IT Director for Ampacet, joined the company in 1992. During his tenure, the company has enjoyed substantial, consistent growth. As the company expanded around the world, managing the IT environment became a greater and greater challenge. Different sites used various operating systems and software. Local IT department heads managed the purchasing, deployment, and security of software at the local level. In some cases, individual users downloaded and installed software, and the company relied on the honor system to ensure that employees were adhering to licensing requirements. Most software inventories were maintained in spreadsheets—a manual process that created difficulties for Woods when he decided to roll out companywide upgrades. Woods quickly realized that the company was missing important asset management data and, in some instances, licensing for software.

The company was preparing to conduct a large rollout of new software, but it first wanted to gain control of its software assets and IT environment. The company's concerns centered on compatibility, compliance, and the overpurchasing or underpurchasing of licenses.

Solution

It was during this time that Woods learned about the Software Asset Management (SAM) Consultation Program. He realized that this process would be an excellent way for Ampacet to prepare for its upcoming software rollout.

Ampacet chose Universal Management Solutions (UMS), a Microsoft® Certified Partner for Licensing Solutions, to facilitate the SAM consultation. UMS began by deploying an inventory tool on the Ampacet network. The tool conducted a thorough inventory of all machines on the network. As each user logged on to the network, the inventory tool conducted a scan of the individual machine and reported the software and versions loaded on each. As a result, Ampacet was able to see the number of machines, software, licenses, and versions of all software on its network. The inventory also provided oversight to Woods. “The SAM inventory was a real eye-opener,” says Woods. “It allowed us to see everything on the network and uninstall the software that was not necessary.”

In addition, UMS reviewed the company's policies and procedures pertaining to ongoing software asset management. Drawing on industry best practices, UMS provided recommendations for updating and improving the overall effectiveness of the Ampacet SAM policies and program.

Benefits

The Software Asset Management consultation provided Ampacet with a comprehensive understanding of software assets and suggestions for continued management. Further, the consultation yielded opportunities for Ampacet to improve business processes and efficiently manage a successful SAM program.

Expedited a Large Deployment

With an accurate and detailed inventory of the entire network, the IT group was able to significantly clean up the network environment before engaging in a companywide upgrade to the 2007 Microsoft Office system. This preparation permitted the company to perform the upgrade more efficiently while also minimizing the risks associated with a networkwide upgrade to a single platform. "After engaging in the SAM consultation, we were able to complete the network upgrade 25 to 30 percent faster because we were prepared. We had the data and knew exactly what systems had been installed, which enabled us to identify and address problems prior to the deployment," says Woods.

Improved Network Security

Before the SAM consultation and inventory, Woods struggled to effectively monitor the IT departments at the local offices, where the local IT managers were responsible for purchasing, distributing, and installing software. Now the inventory tool helps Woods monitor all offices to ensure that software is being used and tracked correctly.

Also, acting on recommendations from UMS, Ampacet has removed the local download and installation rights from all machines. Currently, all requests for new software are routed to and, if appropriate, fulfilled by corporate management. This policy helps ensure that the network stays secure because only administrators are permitted to download and install software on company machines, thus reducing the chance that viruses or other malicious software are inadvertently downloaded with programs. Also, the IT department can monitor machines to prevent any compatibility issues that may arise.

Ampacet has also standardized the desktop environment to Microsoft Office Professional 2007, which provides automatic updates and other security features. Ampacet can help its people stay productive because the 2007 Microsoft Office system makes it possible for updates to be scheduled during slow times rather than in the middle of the workday. The security updates run in the background, so that workers aren't interrupted by update installation. Automatic updates also mean that all computers are kept up-to-date more efficiently.

Gained Peace of Mind by Eliminating Compliance Concerns

As a global company with numerous local offices, Ampacet was aware of the importance of compliance and the potential vulnerability that any licensing discrepancies might cause for the company. The inventory tool's comprehensive view of the company's entire network allowed Ampacet to address any instances of overlicensing or underlicensing. In addition, the visibility provided by the inventory tool will allow Ampacet to continue to simplify and efficiently maintain its compliance efforts in the future. "After the SAM consultation, I can easily assure management that Ampacet is 100 percent compliant with software licensing, thus minimizing the company's liability and risk of noncompliance," says Woods.

Saves Money with Optimal Licensing Program

The baseline inventory resulting from the SAM consultation enabled Ampacet to select the most optimal licensing program for the company. Ampacet chose a volume licensing program, Microsoft Enterprise Agreement. "As a result of the SAM consultation findings and Microsoft Enterprise Agreement, we were able to save over \$300,000

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in licensing costs," says Woods. "The return on investment will help our IT department justify future investments, and management has peace of mind that we are in compliance with our software licensing."

With an accurate inventory, Ampacet is now able to budget more efficiently as well. Because Enterprise Agreement provides fixed pricing for three years, the company can accurately anticipate costs for the next three years. Woods can conclude what adding a new user would cost today, which enables management to formulate the precise IT costs of hiring a new employee or even acquiring a new company.

Implemented SAM Best Practices to Support a New IT Position

Previously, Ampacet had documented a few policies and procedures for software management. However, keeping those guidelines up-to-date and communicating them to employees during periods of rapid growth and acquisition were challenges. Because the company recognized the need to address and update SAM policies, Ampacet was eager to adopt some of the SAM best practices resulting from the consultation. The company plans to conduct biannual software inventories. And, as mentioned earlier, all desktop machines are now locked down and installations can be performed only by an administrator.

Also, the efficiencies gained through the inventory process allowed for the

realignment of IT roles. The inventory process, which used to require six to eight weeks, is now automatic. Woods was able to justify the creation of a new role specifically for the ongoing management and coordination of license management because it presented no additional cost to Ampacet. This employee is responsible for global license management as well as handling and fulfilling licensing requests. Software is no longer sent to local offices for them to manage deployment, storage, and installation on their own.

Software Asset Management

Software Asset Management is a best practice and process that can help save money, control risk, manage unique and standard deployments of software, provide greater security and reliability, and achieve regulatory compliance. The combination of Microsoft tools and partner services provides a solution to help you understand and implement processes to optimize your software investments, adhere to established business processes and regulatory controls, and build flexible and adaptable capabilities for the future.

For additional information, including complimentary tools and resources, visit: www.microsoft.com/sam

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Document published December 2006

Part Number: 098-107025

Services

- Software Asset Management