



## Overview

**Country:** UK

**Industry:** Sports, Entertainment

### Customer Profile

Southampton F.C (Saints) is a premier league football club with a 32,500-capacity stadium. Its IT department supports more than 100 users, including those who work remotely.

### Business Situation

The club's IT Manager wanted to confirm that its software licensing policies were effective. It wanted to maintain control and avoid the penalties associated with non-compliance.

### Solution

SAMwise worked with Southampton FC on a software asset management (SAM) process using its asset-sniffing tool, AssetSearch. This included an audit to match records with the software actually installed.

### Benefits

- The club can now maintain control over its software assets.
- The SAM process was completed with minimum disruption to users.
- A trusted SAM partner helped establish more effective policies.
- Southampton FC has adopted best proven practice
- The football club has a solid foundation to build on to resolve problems before they become too great.

## Licensing with Software Asset Management

“I was expecting lots of disruption, but there wasn't any. I simply switched the machines on, logged SAMwise into one PC as administrator, and left them to it. Within one day it had all the audit data.”

Mark Wierzbicki, IT Manager, Southampton FC

Southampton FC wanted to ensure that it was managing its software assets as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible. The club was already well-versed in carrying out regular, manual audits. However, these often proved time consuming and didn't deliver real-time results. Working with consultant SAMwise, Southampton FC embarked on a software asset management (SAM) programme to audit its network and cross reference the data discovered with software actually installed. As a result, as well as ensuring complete compliance, the club is benefiting from enhanced policies and better use of IT resources.

## Situation

Premiership Football Club Southampton (Saints) FC plays host to a 32,500-strong crowd when its stadium is full for a home game. To ensure scores are accurately recorded, and commentary audible, like many football clubs, Saints relies heavily on IT.

Its IT department of four has to support a vast infrastructure that encompasses around 40 systems including closed circuit television (CCTV), audiovisual and TV distribution systems, electronic point-of-sale (POS), and turnstile monitoring access control. More than 100 staff rely on the club's IT infrastructure, so it has to ensure they are using resources responsibly and with the correct software and licences.

As a club spread out over many sites, constantly monitoring all network activity often proved too time consuming. However, the club was aware of the benefits of ensuring more adequate control.

The club previously carried out manual audits. These were conducted using a rota system, generally when a work experience student was onsite. In collaboration with the IT department, the student would visit each computer to check that the software actually installed matched the records held by club.

In 2003, one of its suppliers, Centerprise, suggested it work with Grey Matter's asset management services division SAMwise to ensure that the existing software licence management policies were sufficient.

Mark Wierzbicki, IT Manager, Southampton FC, says: "Licensing can be very complex and seems to change on a daily basis. I'm certainly not a software licence expert and there aren't many people in the world who can say they are. But having said that, we're in a rather good position at Southampton FC as the majority of our equipment is leased or

licensed by an original equipment manufacturer (OEM) version.

"We had a great deal of confidence that we were 100 per cent compliant. But no matter how safe you think you are, it's always worth confirming what you already know."

## Solution

SAMwise is the asset management division of software reseller and Microsoft Certified partner Grey Matter. In September 2004, it met with Southampton FC to discuss how the two companies could work together.

Alan Cross, Head of SAM Solutions at Grey Matter, says: "According to Gartner, software costs alone constitute approximately one-fifth of an organisation's IT budget (Gartner) so SAM solutions have been developed to reduce the total cost of asset ownership (TCO), improve asset use, and eliminate unnecessary spending.

"Just as a human resources department (HR) maximises a company's investment in people, SAMwise maximises a company's investment in IT assets. And, as all companies are different, we offer a range of tools and services to meet varying requirements."

SAMwise uses four stages in its SAM process:

- 1) **Scoping to understand the current asset management practices and compare them to best practice, review the potential benefits and, then, identify the best means of achieving these goals.**
- 2) **Discovery, which involves auditing the infrastructure to understand IT asset deployment and usage, identifying which assets can be redeployed or retired, understanding the current licensing situation, and monitoring the efficacy of current policies.**
- 3) **Correction, which involves the issue of updated policies and procedures,**

redeploying assets, training staff, creating an up-to-date asset register, and moving to a more cost-effective licensing model where applicable.

4) **Maintenance to ensure the continuance of an up-to-date register and regular reviews.**

After an initial health check to review the previous policies and procedures in place at Southampton, SAMwise implemented its auditing solution, AssetSearch. AssetSearch is non-intrusive and records data about machines without changing their configuration. The resulting report compared what was discovered against the IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) industry-standard approach to IT service management. It listed all of the club's software and hardware and was then used to move to the next stage of the SAM process — licence reconciliation.

SAMwise and Southampton worked together to analyse all paper licences, and box copies. It was important that laptop licences were also fully audited, but those users rarely dialled into the office. To remedy this, SAMwise deployed AssetSearch via email so that users could run the necessary scripts remotely.

Cross says: "Once you've checked what's out there on the network, it then becomes a maths exercise. We work out where there's a shortfall or surplus, and often can help customers amalgamate their licence schemes so that they get a more cost-effective solution than they have now."

## Benefits

### Minimal Disruption to Users

Southampton was pleasantly surprised at how simple and quick the SAM process was. Many traditional audits involve physical visits to computer equipment, which hinders productivity. However, SAMwise's remote

auditing tool negates the need for this disruption.

Wierzbicki says: "I was expecting lots of disruption, but there wasn't any. I simply switched the machines on, logged SAMwise into one PC as administrator, and left them to it. Within one day it had all the audit data."

### Maintaining Control

It's vital that companies maintain control of their software assets. Licensing is a corporate responsibility with stiff penalties, including prison, for non-compliance. Establishing an effective SAM policy lays the foundations that make compliance much easier to do both now and in the future.

"I was amazed at how in-depth the audit process was. It would have taken us weeks of manual auditing to achieve the same level of detail," says Wierzbicki.

Southampton now has independent validation to confirm its licensing is under control. Wierzbicki says: "Corporate stupidity is not a good way of getting another job. Going through a SAM procedure was partly for my peace of mind as well as to ensure corporate responsibility. If, for example, I was producing something, I certainly wouldn't be happy if anyone tried to rip me off. Companies like Microsoft spend a great deal of time producing these applications, so it should be a fair day's wage for a fair day's work. As a Microsoft Certified Professional, I need to make sure I'm living up to those values."

### Finding the Right SAM Partner and Adopting Best Practice

Because of the penalties associated with non-compliance, companies embarking on a SAM process need to ensure that they choose the right partner.

Wierzbicki says: “The only way to ensure success is to make sure that you’re totally happy with the company you’re working with. If you’re going to allow someone into your network, you have to have a hundred per cent trust in them. If you haven’t got that trust, the relationship will never work and you certainly won’t trust the results.

Choosing an untrustworthy party could be detrimental to a football club like us as it would be privy to confidential information that could affect our position. We need to make sure that we protect our interests. This partnership has been such a success for us that I wouldn’t hesitate in recommending SAMwise to my peers.”

Jill Davis, Operations Manager, SAMwise, adds: “If you’re an IT manager and you don’t necessarily have a great deal of licensing expertise, it’s very easy to fall into the trap of buying an SAM tool and thinking that it’ll do all the work for you. You just end up facing a massive licence reconciliation job, and you don’t have the skills or know the rules to do it justice because your job is to provide services for the business you’re in, and not to be a licensing expert. It’s far more cost-effective and beneficial to engage with a SAM consultant.”

The engagement with SAMwise has allowed Southampton to adopt proven best practice that will make it easier for the IT department to do its job. “We have learned a great deal from this experience. We have tidied up our directory service Active Directory® and reviewed our equipment naming policy. We now use asset codes to track where PCs are located, which is helping us manage our hardware assets too,” says Wierzbicki.

### **Overcoming the Fear of Software Auditing to Enjoy the Benefits**

Many companies are daunted by the prospect of a software audit and worry that it will

uncover dramatic inefficiencies and result in massive increased costs. As Southampton FC discovered, this is not the case.

“It was a pleasure and an education to work with SAMwise. With SAM, there’s nothing to be afraid of but fear itself. By working with an expert in this field, you can have the peace of mind that comes with a clear conscience, but without having to struggle to get there,” says Wierzbicki.

Cross says: “IT Managers typically see needing licensing help as a failing, and that they will be criticised for needing third-party help. But, as Southampton FC has discovered, that’s simply not the case. There shouldn’t be a stigma attached to such a relationship as it’s all about being proactive and maintaining control.”

## For More Information

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For more information about Grey Matter products and services, call or visit the Web site at: <http://www.greymatter.com/>

For more information about Southampton Football Club products and services, call or visit the Web site at: <http://www.saintsfc.co.uk>

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Document published February, 2005

## Partners

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