

German Car Manufacturer Cuts Global Licensing Costs with Aspera

Overview

- Premium German car manufacturer
- 100,300 employees
- 7,000 software products distributed across 106,000 clients and servers in over 150 countries

Challenges

- Centralize, consolidate, and manage inventory data from operations across the globe
- Ensure full compliance for *all* commercial software
- Introduce integrated SAM processes, roles, structures and technical systems
- Identify areas for substantial cost reduction

Solution

- [Aspera SmartTrack](#)
- [Aspera Master Catalog](#)
- [Aspera Managed Services](#)
- [Aspera License Management Consulting](#)

Why SmartTrack?

- Centralized license inventory and reporting functionality
- Comprehensive Master Catalog for accurate identification and reconciliation with purchased licenses
- Advanced software recognition and interfaces to record usage data and maintain worldwide data quality with the CMDB

Benefits

- Efficiency gains due transparency and centralized management of licenses through new SAM office
- 100 % visibility of global licensing estate has lent itself to significant cost savings through license optimization and review of support and maintenance agreements.
- Internal investment in training and technical knowledge means on-going cost reduction and license management

Headquartered in Munich, this German car manufacturer with activities in over 150 countries worldwide wanted to make substantial cost savings without impacting their workforce. Instead of creating redundancies they opted to take a closer look at their software licensing spend.

Cost Cutting Via License Management

The company initiated its SAM project in 2007 before software vendors had drastically become more aggressive in controlling and auditing their customers. When the recession hit its peak in 2008-2009 and most companies were announcing their first wave of layoffs, this German car manufacturer's management team decided to give their Software Asset Management project an additional boost. The general census was that it was better to cut licensing costs rather than reduce staff numbers as a measure for rapid cost reduction.

Initial Phase Brings Returns in 6 Months

The key challenge they faced was to centralize and consolidate licensing data from operations across the globe as well as introduce processes, roles, structures and technical systems to manage, track and reconcile all commercial software licenses with a view to gaining compliance, mitigating legal risks and drastically reducing software costs.

In June 2009 Aspera SmartTrack was implemented. It was chosen for its scalability, Master Catalog, enhanced software recognition functionality and intelligent interfaces that would record software usage from traditional and virtual servers and integration with the CMDB.

The initial phase began with the organization's SAM team processing all the accumulated license and installation data from Germany, Austria and the UK. Within six months, they had full visibility of all licenses and software assets.

They also achieved compliance on more than 2,000 of their portfolio of 7,000 software products from more than 600 vendors. During this time the team successfully identified where they could make substantial reductions in support and maintenance costs as well remove surplus costs associated with duplicate licensing.

Think Global, Act Local

A central SAM office was established by December 2009 and global roll-out of SmartTrack began in 2010. The USA, Italy, and China were among the list of 57 countries involved in the 37 projects that were underway. The key set-back for license management in a company of this size is the decentralized organizational structure and nature of operations. Getting a grasp of all the licenses they owned globally was no easy feat. Few SAM providers have experience in successfully implementing tools and consulting on processes on such a grand scale.

To ensure success, the SAM team had to get full cooperation from the CFO and all the heads of purchasing and IT at each of the 300 legal entities that made up the organization, as this would ultimately help them collect all the necessary data for license management. This was not without its own challenges. The staff thought it would add to their daily workload and needed to be convinced that, in fact, it would decrease their workload through transparency. Also, data from across the different regional inventory systems had to be connected; hence being able to process data feeds from different sources was a key criterion when choosing SmartTrack.

Control and Savings through License Optimization

As the company gained an increasing global overview of its licenses, the potential for cost savings became more apparent. For example, several countries such as South Africa, Germany, and the United States were all licensing the same software from the same vendor but paying different fees. In this case Aspera helped the organization to adapt and absorb these contracts to take advantage of economies of scale and decrease the amount of work at the management level.

Internal Investment Garners Long-Term Rewards

In total SmartTrack will manage approximately 106,000 clients and servers. Despite the scale of the implementation presenting its own obstacles, training the responsible role members has proven to be an even greater challenge as the organization has chosen to invest internally and not with an external SAM outsourcer. The lack of know-how especially during the implementation phase and the learning phase that subsequently follows were made up for with the services offered by Aspera. The “Train the Trainer” teaching concept together with ongoing “coaching” consulting, particularly for process and tool training, help ensure successful knowledge transfer.

Clear knowledge about software products, license contracts, product use rights, and installation and usage data is essential for on-going improvement and continuous cost reduction. Aspera was chosen not only for its SmartTrack software license management tool, but also for its excellent reputation for technical capability and successful knowledge transfer.

For more information and to arrange a private introduction to Aspera and our software license management solution, please contact:

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