

CASE STUDY: REXAM PLC



Concorde helps Rexam take control of its global software estate

The Client

Despite turning over nearly £5bn, employing around 23,000 staff and operating in more than 20 countries, Rexam plc is still relatively unknown among consumers. Yet you may well reach for one of its products in the course of reading this article since the FTSE 100 company produces cans and plastic packaging containing everything from soft drinks to make-up on a massive scale.

The Challenge

With over 10,000 seats spread across its operating sites worldwide, and a history of growth by acquisition, Rexam's software licensing had become extremely complex by the time it was asked by Microsoft to prepare for a licensing audit. Rexam's acquisition model meant that its software licensing model was decentralised, with many sites managing their own agreements, and consequently visibility of its global software estate had become blurred.

"We had no standard desktop image in place, which meant different versions of software were being used across the organisation," says Stuart Ince, Rexam's Global Sourcing and Vendor Relationship Manager for the company's Information Management Centre of Excellence. "It's hardly surprising therefore that, almost one year on, we were still unable to reconcile our extensive Microsoft estate."

After reviewing alternative suppliers, Ince consequently invited Software Asset Management (SAM) specialist Concorde Solutions to help complete the task. "We were keen to exploit the groundwork already achieved, so we were very impressed by the fact that they were able to quickly complete the audit to Microsoft's satisfaction."

The Solution

Keen to reduce cost on excess licence usage, Ince says Rexam felt it was high time to get a better grip on its overall software estate. He therefore issued a formal

Invitation to Tender for this task and, based on their earlier performance, subsequently appointed Concorde as Rexam's long-term SAM partner.

Once Rexam's internal network team had successfully integrated all of the subsidiary sites onto its corporate network, Concorde was able to begin using ComplianceConsole, its innovative SAM platform, to gather meaningful information and reconcile usage against licence entitlement to products from SAP, Oracle, Adobe and others.

"In the absence of the necessary in-house resource, Concorde was able to program, refine and interrogate our Altiris software deployment tool to gather the necessary data," says Ince. "This tool was originally implemented as a means of deploying McAfee antivirus products organisation-wide and therefore provided an endpoint to every computer within the company. It means Concorde now has access to every device, enabling them to see exactly what software is being used at any given time."

The Outcome

After Microsoft, Rexam's next biggest licensing concern was SAP, of which the company has historically run four major instances as the result of company acquisitions. "Although SAP simply require data reflecting our annual global usage of their products, Concorde was able to break this down further by sector, enabling us to accurately recharge each of our business divisions for their specific usage. This task had previously taken time and resources from our supply chain team due to the lack of a SAP naming convention and the need to dedupe multiple logons."

Having provided Concorde with virtual private network (VPN) access, Rexam now receives quarterly reports on actual usage of all software in real time. This means Rexam is now in a position to provide SAP with more granular feedback, which in turn enables it to negotiate licensing terms from a more solid, reliable base.

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Adobe too is now happy in the knowledge that Rexam's usage of its products is being closely monitored by the Concorde team. "Each time they call us, we simply give them an up-to-date report and we don't hear from them again for 12 months," says Ince. "And the same goes for other software houses - the minute they know Concorde is managing our estate, they are satisfied and just let us get on with it."

Now that Concorde has full access to the relevant data, Ince says it's zero-touch from Rexam's perspective. "We simply tell them what our licence entitlement is and they do the rest. Whenever we pick up the phone or send them an email, they then pull down the data they need and send us a report - simple as that."

"Whereas before it was difficult to get a handle on our licence usage, thanks to Concorde's software management skills, we're now much more mature as an organisation when it comes to SAM because we know exactly what we've got on any day of the week. So confident are we in the service they provide, in fact, that we've now invited SAP and other vendors to talk directly to Concorde on our behalf. There's no longer any real need for us to be involved on a day-to-day basis."

"If any employee has a licensing query, they no longer ask me or our service desk for the answer - they go directly to Concorde, who are now an integral part of our business. To date, I cannot think of a single thing I've asked them to do without it being included in our annual fee."

Added to the fact that Rexam no longer runs any risk of software non-compliance, Ince says the internal perception of IT has been vastly improved. "Licensing is often one of the forgotten elements when a project is being rolled out, but we can now predict what each business sector will require over twelve months and cost it right down to the very last penny. And whereas we previously raised more than 600 purchase orders for software licences each year - we've now managed to consolidate that down to around 10."

About Rexam PLC:

Headquartered in London, Rexam is a leading global consumer packaging company. It is one of the largest global beverage can makers, making around 60 billion cans a year, and a major global player in rigid plastic packaging. It is business partner to some of the world's most famous and successful consumer brands. Rexam's sales from ongoing operations in 2010 were in the region of £4.9 billion. It has 105 plants in 20 countries across Asia, Europe, North and South America, and employs around 23,000 people. Rexam is a member of the FTSE 100 as well as FTSE 4Good.

The Future

"Our next step is to look at more proactive management of our licensing by taking advantage of Concorde's reharvesting tools to introduce further rules into the system. Having now signed an Enterprise Agreement (EA) with Microsoft, we not only have a standard desktop based on Windows 7 and Office 2010, but also access to System Center Configuration Manager (SCCM). This will allow Concorde to pull the data they need from SCCM rather than the Altiris tool. It has already enabled us to remove other vendors from our supplier base and to focus purely on the Microsoft platform."

By having its estate managed more proactively in this way, Rexam will be able to save licence costs further by automatically removing software from users' machines if it has not been used for 90 days. "Equally, users will be able to download software they need from a central repository and it will auto-install," says Ince. "In this way, we will give our users flexibility and control, allowing them to manage their own desktop."

"Moreover, all our software can now be installed automatically at the click of a button, which is saving us large sums in terms of the time saved on manually downloading software to over 10,000 desks around our estate. We will then look at becoming fully accredited with the SAM kitemark, which will demonstrate to the vendor community as a whole that we've truly got a grip on our entire estate," concludes Ince.

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Stuart Ince, Global Sourcing and Vendor Relationship Manager