

Case Study | Central Government

Livingstone Group helps Public Sector organization to boost the governance of its software estate

This Livingstone Group client is a major Public Sector organization, employing more than 4,000 staff.

The nature of the organization's work means its underlying IT infrastructure must adhere to the highest possible security standards. In addition, as a Public Sector body funded by the taxpayer, it is absolutely vital that all of its IT investments are optimized, with no unnecessary spend. This is particularly the case with its software estate, where unused and unmanaged licenses can easily cause costs to escalate.

The organization had previously relied on Flexera's tool – Flexnet – to provide out-of-the-box reports on its software deployments and usage. However, without specialist ITAM experts to scrutinize these reports and plug any gaps in the data provided, it was delivering limited value.

Initially the organization made the decision to appoint specialist ITAM experts, who could help extract maximum value from its Flexera deployment, create a blueprint for the way it governs its software estate, and ultimately optimize its commercial position.

Assessing the client's SAM maturity

Livingstone Group was appointed following a competitive tender process, as well as a referral from the client's approved IT services and solutions provider, which was also a long-term partner of Livingstone Group. Livingstone's experience of delivering ITAM services to similarly risk adverse organizations – including other Central Government Departments – was also a major contributing factor.

The initial contract was to deliver managed services for a two-year period, with an option to extend. While the client's tender process only stipulated that it needed basic license reporting from its new ITAM partner, Livingstone elected to undertake a SAM Maturity Assessment of the software deployed on the client's network. SAM processes and policies were also reviewed.

This helped ascertain how well the client understood its deployments and licensing entitlements, and enabled Livingstone to identify key areas where the client could immediately rationalize spend. Furthermore, this assessment provided the basis of action plan to help the client achieve 100% visibility of its software estate.

“This client recognizes that best practice ITAM involves much more than deploying a tool to automatically generate reports. Instead, it requires a robust governance framework, with multiple stakeholders working together in order to continuously improve the way software is deployed, used and licensed”

Ian Carmino, Chief Revenue Officer,
Livingstone Group



Extracting maximum value for its Flexera investment

The organization had made a significant investment into Flexera's SAM tool, Flexnet, but without day-to-day expert management, the data it was reporting on was error-ridden and incomplete, and did not provide a full or accurate picture of the software deployed across the client's network.

Livingstone's team was able to review this data to identify any discrepancies and gaps. It then worked with another supplier, which manages the Flexnet deployment on the client's behalf, to reconfigure the tool so it was fit for purpose and providing comprehensive reporting.

In addition to improving the quality and richness of this data, the Livingstone team also manually configured the tool to compare this deployment and usage information with the client's actual licensing entitlement, thereby aiding compliance. Livingstone continues to manage this process for the client's top five vendors: Adobe, Microsoft, Oracle, Symantec and VMWare.

Best practice governance drives better commercial decisions

The deployment, usage and licensing data that Livingstone extracts and scrutinizes is delivering considerable value to the client. Today, these reports help drive commercial decisions in application management as well as in the organization's supply chain. The data is also being used by the client's finance and procurement departments as well as feeds into its Software Renewals Portal. In addition, it was used as the basis of a recent renegotiation of the client's Enterprise Agreement with Microsoft.

The intelligence provided also enables the client to identify how its estate can be rationalized and where licenses can be re-harvested. Crucially for such as high security organization, Livingstone's reports provide an early warning system for when software is approaching end-of-life or end-of-support, presenting a potential risk to their future operations – unthinkable for an organization operating in this sector.

Ongoing management & collaboration

To ensure the ongoing success of this ITAM program, Livingstone suggested and now chairs a monthly meeting with all key stakeholders, both from within the client's organization and from its main contractors. These include representatives from the client's financial, procurement, SAM and software lifecycle management teams, as well as from Livingstone and other strategic third-party providers.

This joined up approach ensures that the insights extracted from the licensing reports can be actioned immediately, and all key parties are working collaboratively to ensure the client's estate is accurately documented and continually optimized.

Security is number one priority

The nature of the client's operations means the standard approach of managing an organization's software estate simply cannot apply. For example, all Livingstone's work must adhere to the client's stringent security policies.

Strategic partnership

Following the initial successes of this ITAM program, the client has already activated the option to extend Livingstone's Managed Service contract beyond its initial two-year period. Livingstone continues to work closely with the client and its other partners to drive further optimization of its software estate, helping it achieve substantial and measurable cost savings.

“This is also a great example of how Livingstone Group is able to adapt the way it works to the very exacting standards of highly secure, policy driven organizations. With sensitive and classified information on its network, an out-of-the-box approach to ITAM just won't work – it needs team which isn't just expert at ITAM and software licensing, but is also incredibly flexible, professional and committed”

Ian Carmino, Chief Revenue Officer,
Livingstone Group