Livingstone Group

Case Study | Trade Credit Insurer

in year one Atradius reduced the scale of unused software by 47%

Deborah Robins, IT Asset Manager at Atradius, shares her experiences of working with Livingstone on the journey to achieving a highly effective SAM business function.

A Strategic Investment

The opportunities to quickly realize the significant cost savings, software license optimization and superior risk mitigation capabilities that can be derived from better management of a software estate are often overlooked. Not so in the case of Atradius, who see their decision to select Livingstone's managed service to support their software asset management team as a strategic investment from which they continue to reap significant rewards.

Immediate Return On Investment

The business relationship kicked off in January 2014 and the on-boarding exercise only took three months to complete. In the first Effective License Position (ELP) some 39 vendors were reconciled and by the end of year one this number had risen to 103. The value of the information derived from the initial ELP was, in Deborah's words, "...staggering especially in terms of identifying unused software." In year one Atradius reduced the scale of unused software by some 47%. In year two, this had been reduced by a further 23%, and Atradius continues to achieve month on month reductions. Additionally, very early on during that first engagement Atradius was able to remove significant costs through product consolidation and from the overall software maintenance and support budgets. The initiative to recover unused software licenses continues to deliver considerable savings and has the full support of both the CIO and IT Director.

"Our partnership with Livingstone helped us reach an internal goal to reduce our software maintenance and support budget, a full 12 months ahead of our stated target."

Company Background

The Atradius Group provides trade credit insurance, surety and collection services worldwide, and has a global presence through 160 offices in 50 countries and 3,300 staff. Atradius has access to credit information on 200 million companies worldwide. Its products help protect companies throughout the world from payment risks associated with selling products and services on credit. Atradius' mission is to strengthen customers' credit management and support customer growth and at the heart of the strategy is a desire to create an enduring business with sustainable revenue growth.

Software As a Cost Of Doing Business

Deborah Robins, IT Asset Manager at Atradius explains, "You only have to look at your company accounts to see the value of your hardware and software assets. In our 2010 annual report, every euro of our €1.2bln revenue would have required software and systems to support its generation. The impact of unnecessary or ineffective expenditure on software and in particular on maintenance and support was becoming a major concern. This, coupled with the implications of non-compliance which can result in potentially punitive financial, operational and reputational risk issues is something we are not prepared to tolerate and as an organisation we take our obligations in this area very seriously."

"The value of the information derived from the initial ELP was staggering, especially in terms of identifying unused software."

The Software Asset Management Opportunity

Atradius understood that software asset management could provide opportunities to not only ensure compliance with license terms and conditions, but to remove unnecessary support and maintenance costs and would also help them with broader IT asset management activities such as the depreciation of software assets on the balance sheet.

Deborah continues, "To have any chance of achieving these opportunities we were faced with two choices, either create an in-house SAM function, or engage with a managed service provider who could demonstrate in-depth SAM expertise together with a proven track record of success. When we looked at our software catalogue, the diverse range of vendors in scope, the complexity of our licensing models and the variety of toolsets and scripts needed to perform the data gathering we very quickly came to the conclusion that this was something it would be impossible to do alone. For us, it was obvious that the most practical solution was to appoint a small in-house team comprising of a SAM manager and administrator and to partner with a managed service provider who really understood our needs and would work with us to achieve our ambitious goals."

A Reliable Effective License Position Was The Imperative

Before making the decision to select Livingstone, Atradius undertook an in-depth analysis of their overall needs and the capabilities   of a number of potential external service providers. Atradius learnt a great deal from their initial SAM experience and as a result had a very clear vision. Top of the list of their requirements was the chosen partner's proven ability to deliver Effective License Management capabilities and, of equal importance, was that the potential vendor was not simply a software reseller. The Atradius Sourcing team then sent out an RFI to six potential vendor's who appeared to meet this selection criteria. Ultimately three, including Livingstone, were selected for further evaluation.

"Positive Contribution"

Deborah said, "The first time I heard about Livingstone was at an external conference where one of their existing customers were sharing the excellent experience they had of working with them and the benefits they had derived from their SAM managed service capabilities. Great customer references that support a vendor's claims are so important when choosing a new service provider and I was intrigued to find out more. Overall the evaluation process took around 12 weeks to complete. Apart from satisfying our specific ELP requirements and not being a software reseller, each of the vendor's was

"To have any chance of achieving these opportunities we were faced with two choices, either create an in-house SAM function, or engage with a managed service provider who could demonstrate in-depth SAM expertise together with a proven track record of success".

invited to perform a proof of concept with complex Oracle data. Livingstone passed with flying colours, but ultimately it was our discussions with their designated team that really clinched the deal and gave us the confidence that together we could achieve our goals. What was particularly impressive was how engaged they all were, irrespective of whether it was the data analysts, license specialists, account team or the directors. Every single individual involved in the sales process had a positive contribution to make. This was a very refreshing change and the decision to select Livingstone was made."

"Livingstone passed the proof of concept using complex Oracle data with flying colours."

The Livingstone Difference

Livingstone deliver cost savings, risk mitigation and license compliance to its clients through its unique managed service solution for SAM. Our clients receive regular ELPs, a comprehensive set of software estate reporting and data analytics delivered through our portal and tailored executive reports delivered by senior consultants and specialists, all underpinned by our proven service management methodology. Independent, data source agnostic, delivery focussed and experienced, we strive to create a trusted partnership with our clients and have a laser focus on consistently delivering value that sets us apart and makes us the benchmark in managed services for SAM.

"Together We Have Made Sam A Success"

Deborah adds, "Our relationship with Livingstone has gone from strength to strength, and they continue to deliver value every step of the way to the Atradius SAM function. The on-boarding team did a great job and the handover to BAU was seamless. Livingstone provides a dedicated account manager and we have a weekly review of the account tracker. We use our internal software renewals calendar to plan the ELP delivery for key vendors. As the relationship has matured, our internal SAM function became an integral part of the IT Asset Management Group. We now have full visibility of our software estate whether it be Windows or Linux. The knowledge of Livingstone license consultants has significantly increased the knowledge within the ITAM team. We are now much better prepared should we receive any software audits as a direct result of having a reliable ELP and validated data to hand.

Our partnership with Livingstone has enabled us reach the internal goal of reducing our software maintenance and support budget to the 2012 position by the end of 2014, a full 12 months ahead of the stated target. This was an exceptional achievement and is testament to just what can be done when everyone works together towards a common goal. The Executive Service Report (ESR) is distributed within IT Services so all of the IT departments get to see the value of having an effective SAM operation in place. There is no doubt that if you follow the recommendations in the ESR you will see savings. We each have our own roles and responsibilities but together we have made SAM a success."

"Our relationship with Livingstone is going from strength to strength."

"As the relationship has matured, our internal SAM function became an integral part of the IT Asset Management Group. We now have full visibility of our software estate whether it be Windows or Linux. The knowledge of Livingstone license consultants has significantly increased the knowledge within the ITAM team".

It's a Journey

Deborah concludes, "Our view is that we are on a SAM journey and that we are on that journey with Livingstone. We are delighted with what has been achieved so far, but there is more to do. For example, non-instance data collection can be time consuming and together with Livingstone we are looking to identify the right data centre tools strategy. By the end of the year we will have completed the Livingstone SAM 1-2-3 process review, evaluating our software asset lifecycle. This will enable us to benchmark our SAM operation, see the progress made over the 2 years and update our strategy for remaining activities. We are also looking at whether Livingstone's Proactive Service Desk and Package Services are part of the next step in our SAM journey. We are about to take on configuration management, something we were not mature enough to do previously. We will keep you posted."

The Benchmark For Managed Services In Software Asset Management

Livingstone is the global leader of managed services for software asset management. We are the trusted partner for many of the world's largest enterprises. Our proven track record of delivering hard cost savings, quantifiable risk mitigation, license optimization and vendor audit readiness is second to none - coupled with an impressive customer satisfaction and retention record.

"The first time I heard about Livingstone was at an external conference where one of their existing customers were sharing the excellent experience they had of working with them and the benefits they had derived from their SAM managed service capabilities".

About Livingstone Managed Services

Livingstone is trusted by technology decision makers at large and complex organizations around the world to reduce their software licensing costs and risks. Our global team of SAM professionals and software licensing experts, backed-up with our own in-house optimization technologies, help internal SAM owners overcome skills gaps and tool shortcomings, delivering reliable and actionable SAM intelligence that drives bottom-line savings.

info@livingstone-tech.com
livingstone-tech.com