



Overview

Country: United States
Industry: Professional Services—
Commercial Laundry

Customer Profile

With US \$280 million in annual sales and more than 700 employees, Mac-Gray is a leader in the commercial laundry industry. Mac-Gray provides laundry equipment and management services in 46 states.

Business Situation

Mac-Gray hoped to implement the inventory function of an existing help-desk tool to assess its hardware and software assets. To assist with that deployment, the company worked with a partner to undergo a Software Asset Management project.

Solution

Through the SAM engagement, Mac-Gray successfully deployed an inventory tool and established a strategic relationship with a single value-added reseller (VAR) to take advantage of a more optimal licensing program.

Benefits

- Saved \$30,000 in licensing
- Gained clear understanding of assets
- Developed a more efficient inventory process
- Established a relationship with a VAR

Laundry Facilities Service Provider Saves Money, Gains Control of IT Assets with SAM

“We quickly got the overview information we needed to manage inventory and compliance and achieved immediate savings through Microsoft Select volume licensing. The SAM program worked well for us.”

Bob Tuttle, Chief Information Officer, Mac-Gray

As a large provider of commercial laundry services with annual sales exceeding U.S.\$280 million, Mac-Gray employs more than 700 people and operates in 46 states. When the company expanded through a series of acquisitions, it invested in a software tool to better manage its help-desk services. Despite success with the tool’s initial usage, the company struggled to implement the inventory function. At that time, Mac-Gray was contacted by Microsoft to discuss the Software Asset Management (SAM) program. Interested in SAM, Mac-Gray worked with Soft-Aid, a Microsoft® Certified Partner for Licensing Solutions, to conduct the SAM consultation. Through the engagement, the company was able to deploy its tool’s inventory function to gain a complete understanding of hardware and software assets, save money on licensing, and establish a relationship with a reseller that led to unanticipated benefits.



“We expect to save an additional 15 percent on licensing costs in the future, due to the SAM engagement and our new licensing program.”

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Chief Information Officer
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Situation

Through corporate acquisitions, Waltham, Massachusetts-based Mac-Gray has more than doubled in size over the past five years. The company now employs more than 700 people in 24 branch locations and provides laundry facility services to schools, multifamily housing properties, Laundromats, and military installations in 46 states. A good percentage of its growth occurred within two years as the company went from conducting business in two time zones to operating within four. That swift expansion put a strain on internal IT teams and drove the company to gain a stronger understanding and more control of its software and hardware assets.

Because much of Mac-Gray's computer hardware and software had been obtained through its corporate acquisitions, compatibility issues arose when the IT team tried to deploy tools across the company. Additionally, licenses had been purchased through two or three different resellers. IT management now needed better access to information about deployed hardware and software assets in order to ensure that users had the optimal computing resources and that the company was in compliance with its licensing obligations. The existing manual system of asset management could no longer meet that need.

In addition, the efforts required to integrate the acquired businesses had caused several significant IT projects to be deferred. IT management wanted to move those projects forward but was aware that some projects might require additional, outsourced IT skills. For some time, the most urgent issue for the IT department had been related to help-desk services. Despite the size of its operations, the company was still managing those services manually. Realizing that there were more effective ways to oversee requests for technical support, the IT department invested in a tool that provided a help-desk ticketing program.

After successfully implementing the ticketing program and seeing the efficiency of the help-desk increase, Mac-Gray was interested in exploring the inventory management functions of the tool, as well, because IT management wanted more accurate and up-to-date information about IT assets. However, system compatibility problems complicated the deployment of the tool's inventory features.

Around this time, Mac-Gray was contacted by Microsoft with an offer to discuss a Software Asset Management (SAM) engagement. Mac-Gray was happy to learn about SAM and hoped to gain better control of its IT assets. Microsoft provided references to some Microsoft® Certified Partners for Licensing Solutions in the area, and Mac-Gray chose to work with Soft-Aid.

Solution

Mac-Gray brought in Soft-Aid to analyze its software assets and review its procurement process. Soft-Aid worked with the Mac-Gray IT team through all aspects of the Software Asset Management engagement, including the companywide deployment of the inventory tool and helping to resolve the compatibility issues. Plus, Soft-Aid helped to configure reports and assisted in gathering and reconciling inventory data. Although Mac-Gray had acquired software through various acquisitions and had purchased licenses from several resellers, the company learned during the inventory process that it was nevertheless lacking some licenses.

Once the asset inventory was complete, Soft-Aid conducted a review of Mac-Gray's procurement process. Because the company was buying from a few resellers, it was not reaping the benefits of available licensing programs. Soft-Aid recommended a single value-added reseller (VAR), a reseller located near Mac-Gray headquarters that offers both purchasing and consulting services. Soft-Aid also introduced Mac-Gray to the

benefits of a volume licensing program. Acting on that recommendation, Mac-Gray chose to enter into a Microsoft Select License agreement.

Bob Tuttle, Chief Information Officer for Mac-Gray, says, "Soft-Aid gave us a lot of practical assistance in configuring our inventory system and worked with our existing VARs to help consolidate all of our license information. We quickly got the overview information we needed to manage inventory and compliance and achieved immediate savings through Microsoft Select volume licensing. The SAM program worked well for us."

Benefits

Now that the inventory management tool has been successfully deployed across the company, Mac-Gray has the information it needs to more easily control its current IT assets and the ability to plan for the future. The company has also established a relationship with Soft-Aid's recommended VAR to take advantage of volume discounts on software license purchases and to plan for future IT projects.

Gained Better Understanding of IT Assets

After resolving its compliance issues through the Software Asset Management engagement, Mac-Gray was able to implement the inventory management function of the tool it had been using. The inventory tool gathered comprehensive knowledge of Mac-Gray's software and hardware assets, across the company, giving Mac-Gray the information it needed to correct any instances of underlicensing. The IT team will also use the inventory function to control future software spending, which will allow the company to better manage compliance. Additionally, the IT department will use the tool to plan for future software projects and deployments.

The engagement has helped the company manage its hardware. Now that the company has a definite understanding of its hardware assets, the IT department is in a position to better plan for upgrades and improvements, as well as for scheduled equipment replacements, which is also referred to as life-cycle planning.

Saved Money on Licensing

Through the SAM engagement, Mac-Gray learned it was eligible for a volume licensing program, Select License agreement, which makes it possible to purchase volume licenses at a reduced price. Tuttle estimates that this agreement has already saved the company over U.S.\$30,000. Again, the company will continue to save money because the Select License program enables Mac-Gray to purchase licenses when they are needed, at a price discounted according to the level of use. "We expect to save an additional 15 percent on licensing costs in the future, due to the SAM engagement and our new licensing program," says Tuttle.

Established a Relationship with a Value-Added Reseller

To Mac-Gray, the most surprising benefit stemming from the SAM engagement was the relationship the company has developed with its VAR. The company had not realized there were substantial benefits to be gained by purchasing through a single reseller. One of the most notable benefits was the Select License program, which is available only through approved resellers.

Plus, Mac-Gray can take advantage of the VAR's consulting services to ease the planning and implementation of several long-desired IT projects that had been postponed due to a lack of internal resources in key areas. "Within a month of signing up with a VAR, we started to execute a major upgrade to our mail server," Tuttle says. "The availability of consulting support from the VAR will quickly get us back on track with our infrastructure upgrades."

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For more information about Soft-Aid products and services, call (781) 569-0410 or visit the Web site at: www.aid.com

For more information about Mac-Gray products and services, call (781) 487-4600 or visit the Web site at: www.macgray.com

Software Asset Management

Software Asset Management is a best practice and process that can help save money, control risk, manage unique and standard deployments of software, provide greater security and reliability, and achieve regulatory compliance. The combination of Microsoft tools and partner services provides a solution to help you understand and implement processes to optimize your software investments, adhere to established business processes and regulatory controls, and build flexible and adaptable capabilities for the future.

For additional information, including complimentary tools and resources, visit: www.microsoft.com/sam

Services

- Software Asset Management

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