



Discovery eases software license worries at Leicester Mercury Group



BUSINESS DRIVER

Software Compliance, IT Cost Control

INDUSTRY SECTOR

Media, publishing

NETWORK TYPE

600 PCs, Windows and Mac platforms

WHY DISCOVERY

Complete visibility of software and hardware assets

BUSINESS BENEFITS

Reduction of new software license purchases, lower network management overhead

Total network visibility brings unexpected benefits

Like many organizations around the world, software compliance is a major concern for the Leicester Mercury Group, the company behind one of the UK's largest regional newspapers. But rather than accept the costly burden of managing software manually, the group is recognizing significant savings by using Discovery 2005 from Centennial Software to create a dynamic audit of all hardware and software deployed across its 600-PC network.

According to Paul Woodward, Head of Business Systems at Leicester Mercury Group: "My fear was that we were spending too much time and money trying to keep on top of the company's software usage. With hundreds of users all wanting the latest applications, there was a danger that we could lose sight of who was using what, which could put the company at risk of a serious fine if we were found to be in breach of software licensing agreements."

Previously, Paul and his team had to supplement purchase and paper records with regular time-consuming manual audits which could take up to two weeks to complete when done along side all the other pressing IT support tasks. The Leicester Mercury Group was introduced to Discovery 2005 by CTMS, an asset management specialist and Centennial Platinum partner. Thanks to CTMS' vast experience with the Discovery installation, the software was up and running across the newspaper's network in just a couple of hours.

Now, just weeks after installing Discovery 2005, Paul has complete visibility of the Leicester Mercury Group network and can see at a glance exactly how many copies of each application are in circulation. What's more, Discovery 2005 can even help him identify where applications have been installed but are not in regular use.

"There was a risk that we were spending too much on new licenses, as we never seemed able to re-use any of our previously-deployed software assets," said Paul. "Now whenever someone asks for a new application, the first thing I do is check on Discovery 2005 to see if we've got any copies out there that aren't in regular use. By showing us where we can re-deploy software, Discovery 2005 will, in the future, save us a considerable sum of money."



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As well as auditing the software in use across the newspaper, the Leicester Mercury Group is also benefiting from Discovery 2005's advanced hardware tracking features. As Paul explained: "We recently undertook to manually deploy a security patch to all our Windows PCs. But within hours of installing Discovery 2005, I was shocked to find that it had highlighted a number of computers where the patch hadn't been installed properly. Without Discovery acting as an extra pair of eyes, we would probably still have a significant security hole on our network."

Discovery is also having a positive impact for end users, as it enables Paul and his colleagues to see at a glance which PCs on the network need attention. The IT team at Leicester Mercury Group can now quickly build work lists of exactly which PCs need a memory upgrade, which computers are running out of disk space and which are due for retirement.

With Discovery 2005 set to conduct a full network audit twice a week, the Leicester Mercury Group now gets six updated inventories in the time it used to complete just one walk round audit. What's more, with Discovery 2005's dynamic hardware agents, the IT team is alerted to important computer configuration or location changes as soon as they happen - even if a scheduled audit is two or three days away.

Although only five weeks into the deployment, Paul is already convinced he made the right decision to implement Centennial's asset management solution: "Discovery 2005 has made me feel much more comfortable that I know exactly what's on my network. It has become central to my IT management strategy to the point that I now check it every day to see what has changed on the network and what, if anything, requires my urgent attention."

And with their software compliance fears now allayed, Leicester Mercury Group can concentrate on leveraging the significant benefits that come from having complete visibility of the network with Discovery from Centennial Software.



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www.centennial-software.com

UK	+44 (0)1793 836200
USA	+1 503-238-7455
Australia	+61 2 9973 4151
Germany	+49 (0) 6047 6281
SA	+27 (0) 83 604 0 603