

Police Mutual Assurance Society

Police Mutual Assurance Society brings IT estate in line with Centennial

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Police Mutual Assurance Society

Industry

Financial Services

Products

Centennial Discovery

Centennial DeviceWall

Business Benefits Realized with Centennial Discovery and DeviceWall

Control, compliance and cost savings

Ease of use and immediate return on investment

License control, compliance and endpoint security

Background

The Police Mutual Assurance Society (PMAS) is a UK-based financial services company that assists Police officers and their families with savings, finance, mortgage, pension, insurance advice and services. PMAS has its headquarters in Lichfield, UK.

Gaining control for confident regulatory compliance

As a financial services company, PMAS is subject to tight scrutiny from regulatory bodies including the Financial Services Authority (FSA) and faces both internal and external audits to ensure compliance.

However, with 280 PCs spread across two sites, the IT team could not manually audit the network on a regular basis and therefore were not in a position to accurately manage critical operational requirements such as software license compliance.

But it wasn't just licenses that were a concern; the team was also acutely aware of the risks posed by rogue removable media devices (such as USB sticks, MP3 players etc.) on the network.

When David Parker, IT manager at the PMAS, joined the company they had already been struggling for two years to get to grips with software asset management within the organization. David explained: "The regulatory measures we face mean we absolutely cannot be in any doubt where we stand in terms of compliance. Everything

has to be accounted for. When I arrived, the environment was difficult to control and we couldn't say with confidence what we had

in our IT estate or where we were with license compliance. We also didn't have a view or control over what our employees were plugging into the network. This was not a comfortable position to be in and exposed the organization to unnecessary risk."

The IT team had been conducting manual audits but the process wasn't effective. With 280 PCs to work through, once the team completed an audit they found they had to start the process all over again because the first PC audits would already be out of date.

"Manual audits were not efficient or accurate and had significant budget implications," said David. "We had highly skilled technical staff doing low skilled manual audits. This was both time consuming and a morale killer. On top of that we had staff working overtime at the weekends to get the audits done. That just wasn't acceptable from a business standpoint."

Finding a solution

David learned of Centennial Discovery from JCOM, a value-added reseller specializing in helping companies gain control of their software, hardware and data assets.

"The solutions were impressive. Centennial Discovery had the functionality we were looking for in terms of providing a dynamically updated audit of all hardware and software connected to the network. This allows us complete visibility of our estate and provides constant piece of mind whenever an audit rolls around. And with DeviceWall, there was an endpoint and security solution which offered us protection against internal data leakage."

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David Parker
IT Manager, PMAS

Easy installation

David saw a demonstration of both Centennial Discovery and DeviceWall and evaluated both solutions for a couple of weeks. Once satisfied that there wouldn't be any system issues, they deployed the solutions and started running reports. PMAS can now audit the IT estate every day with no impact on user productivity. Both solutions run completely in the background with no impact to the network.

JCOM provided PMAS with training and best practice advice. "We were very impressed with the level of service from JCOM," said David. They didn't have the attitude that they were there just to sell us software – they took the time to understand our needs and knew the Centennial solutions very well. They were a true business partner."

Added benefits lead to cost savings

PMAS has come a long way from the days of manual audits and general uncertainty. Now they have complete confidence and control over their IT environment. Additionally, David estimates that Centennial Discovery has saved PMAS at least 10 man days of overtime which would have otherwise been incurred with the old manual audit process.

Running reports with Centennial Discovery is now a simple task. At PMAS, external auditors can even access Discovery to check figures - with a click of a button they can get full details of what's on the network which doesn't even impact the IT team.

David has also achieved additional cost savings: "From a budget perspective I want to make sure that we keep costs

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down," said David. "I don't want to find out that I've ordered software and someone on the other side of the building already has the software installed but doesn't use it. I want to automatically know about that unused software and be able to re-allocate it where it's needed. Centennial Discovery enables us to do this automatically because I always know what's on the system and how these resources are being used at any given time."

PMAS's corporate network is also more secure: "Employees think that because they have a home computer where they install software whenever they want that they can do this at work as well. As a financial services organization we can't accept that level of risk. The threat isn't necessarily intentional but a risk nonetheless. Now we have control. "With DeviceWall we can allow staff working away from the office, to have temporary use of CD drives or USB ports by providing them with a temporary access code. This code can even limit the number of hours that the device is available for use."

Looking to the future

PMAS has recently acquired an additional office and will be integrating the two systems in the near future. The first priority from an IT perspective is to install Centennial Discovery and DeviceWall to complete due-diligence – that way David and his team can be satisfied that their second office is up to the standards they have worked hard to build in the Lichfield office.

"I definitely recommend both Centennial Discovery and DeviceWall," said David. "Ironically, from initially not having heard of Centennial other companies are now trying to sell me Centennial products all the time. Centennial is definitely making a name for itself and from my experience it's easy to see why. "It's one of the few software products I've encountered where every feature actually works – and provides cost savings on top," concluded David. "If I moved to another company Centennial Discovery and DeviceWall would be the first products I'd look to install – the benefits are that good."

About FrontRange Solutions

FrontRange Solutions develops software and services that growing mid-size firms and distributed enterprises rely on every day to build great customer relationships and deliver high-quality customer service. The company applies a unique combination of innovation and automation with a standards-based approach to simplify core business processes, including: IT service management; customer relationship and sales force management; and PC lifecycle management. More than 150,000 of the world's best-known brands use FrontRange offerings to quickly improve their interactions with external and internal clients and achieve better business results. For more information, call +44 (0) 1793 836200 or visit www.frontrange.com