

The SAM Spotlight

A Publication of Soft-Aid for the
ITAM/SAM Community

Vol. 3, Issue 2, July 2008

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ECPWeb/IBSMA SAM
conference**

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You are receiving this newsletter as someone who has expressed interest in Software Asset Management and/or Soft-Aid in the past. In this month's e-newsletter, David Yashar, our Managing Consultant, shares his impressions of a recent SAM industry conference. And Paul "Doc" Burnham, one of our SAM consultants, provides a good overview of Software Asset Management and the value of following SAM best practices.

Quick Links

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Thank you for reading and please forward this newsletter to others who might be interested in ITAM or SAM!

[Past Newsletters](#)

An archive of past e-newsletters is always available on our web site at www.aid.com/enews

***"Experience is a hard
teacher because she
gives the test first, the
lesson afterward."***

All the best,

Adam Fast, SAM Consultant
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-Vernon Law

Industry News

"No reprieve: XP phase-out begins June 30," Mary-Jo Foley, *ZDNet Blog* [More](#)

"Study: 637 million Google users surfing with insecure browser," Ryan Naraine, *ZDNet Blog* [More](#)

"IDC and BSA release latest study on global piracy," *Computer Technology Review* [More](#)

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Impressions from the ECPWeb/IBSMA SAM Summit, Chicago, IL June 2008



Author: David Yashar, Managing Consultant dyashar@aid.com

This is my third year attending this annual conference hosted by ECPWeb and IBSMA (www.ibsma.com) and the eighth year they have sponsored one. Judging by the topics that were covered and the range of speakers, I was pleased to see that the IT Asset Management market continues to grow and mature.

As in past years, there was a mix of sessions from industry practitioners (case studies) and SAM consultants. There were also sessions to update attendees on the state of adoption for the ISO standards for SAM. A year ago, when I asked a group of IT Asset Managers about their familiarity

Our Favorite Web

Links

Man flies 200 miles in lawnchair [Link](#)

Only sixteen years old and ready to conquer mountains [Link](#)

Seagate unveils a 1.5 terabyte desktop drive [Link](#)

2 cars and 2 motorcycles driving on a wall in India. Precision required [Link](#)

with the ISO SAM Process Standard (19770-1), very few hands were raised. I am happy to report that this has changed; market recognition of the ISO standard has increased as we forecasted in our [October 2007](#) issue.

While I learned something from each presentation and from the various attendees with whom I talked, there was one session in particular that stood out for me.

The presentation was from Lynn Barbour of Medavie Blue Cross of Canada, who runs their IT Asset Management program. She discussed how they built their IT Asset Management program in a methodical way from the ground-up. It was interesting to see how decisions were made as their program evolved from wayward, decentralized practices to one where the user community and business units became involved in the decision making process. As her group invested considerable time in training end-users in how to seek new software and adhere to compliance policies, the user base became more accepting of their responsibilities.

All of the training and committee formations paid off in the long-run as employees felt that their service requests for IT assets were being met. Ultimately, Lynn and her team also invested in a software inventory, license management, and usage monitoring tool from Express Metrix, which nicely supplements prior efforts to do away with their permissive culture around software. They also complemented their approach with a set of metrics to monitor license compliance and SAM performance. One of the many take-aways from the presentation is that a well-constructed, end-to-end system, with both a carrot and a stick approach, can be very effective in ensuring compliance with software standards and licensing requirements.

Feel free to reach out to me for other impressions about the conference or Software Asset Management in general.

How SAM can benefit your organization

Five specific areas where a formal SAM program can provide value

Author: Paul "Doc" Burnham, SAM Consultant pburnham@aid.com.

Most organizations understand that software is a valuable asset. In fact, many organizations find to their surprise that they have more invested in software assets than they do in hardware. So it should not be a surprise that these organizations would want to implement software asset management (SAM) programs to more efficiently and effectively manage their software assets.

A good SAM program enables an organization to answer the following questions:

a) What software do we own?



- b) What software is deployed?
- c) What software is actually being used?

The ability to answer these questions provides an organization with the knowledge it needs to reduce or eliminate risks and increase efficiency in several areas. Some of these benefits are directly associated with SAM while others are not. Over-licensing and under-licensing of software are probably the most well-known reasons to develop good SAM practices. However, other benefits of SAM, often overlooked, are just as important. These include platform stability, productivity, security, and disaster recovery. Let's briefly review some of the areas where SAM can provide value.

SAM reduces over-licensing and under-licensing

Without an effective SAM program in place, the risk of being under-licensed on some applications and over-licensed on others is high. The elimination of under-licensed software lowers the risk that the organization will face unbudgeted software expenses and penalties. On the other hand, eliminating over-licensing of software provides cost savings benefits. Organizations can save by cancelling unnecessary renewals of support, and harvesting and re-using under-used licenses instead of buying more.

SAM improves platform stability

Without an effective SAM program in place, there is a high probability that employees will install and use software that is not company-approved and has not been compatibility tested. Such software could have a negative impact on critical business applications or network stability. SAM enables detection of unapproved software so it can be removed. SAM also provides knowledge of all the software installed in your IT environment, so you can perform complete compatibility testing for proposed new applications.

SAM improves productivity

Without an effective SAM program in place, it is likely that office productivity applications will not be kept on the same version throughout the organization. This may result from employees independently upgrading their software, or non-centralized purchasing departments buying new computers with the latest versions pre-installed. Running multiple versions of productivity applications often results in users being hampered working together. Difficulties arise from an inability to share files and data between newer and older versions. For example: how many versions of Microsoft Office are in your environment? Are the same data files supported by every version?

SAM improves security

Without an effective SAM program in place, it is difficult to maintain complete knowledge of all the software in your environment. SAM can provide this knowledge. For example, SAM can ensure all systems have the most current security patches. It also makes it easier to detect unknown software installed on corporate systems such as malware that could be compromising your network or data security.

SAM improves disaster recovery readiness

An effective SAM program enables an organization to effectively facilitate its business continuity/disaster recovery plans. SAM helps you recover systems more efficiently by providing knowledge of which applications are needed on which machines. It also ensures you have the necessary media and key codes available to install.

As organizations mature their SAM programs, their knowledge and understanding related to SAM will also mature and expand. And as an organization realizes that SAM is about more than software license compliance, they can begin to leverage their SAM practices in these other areas.

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