



Customer Solution
Success Story

Curtin University adopts IT asset management to improve fleet life cycle management

Overview

Country or Region: Australia

Industry: Education

Customer Profile: Curtin University is a public university located in Perth, Australia. The main campus and eight remote campuses across Western Australia and Southeast Asia are host to 40,000 students and 3,500 academics and staff.

Business Situation: With nine campuses managed by a single, consolidated IT organization came the challenges of centralization and managing the University’s 11,000 laptops and desktops.

Solution: Curtin University selected the joint Microsoft—Provance solution comprised of Microsoft® System Center, the Provance® IT Asset Management Pack, Provance Data Management Pack and Provance Bar Code.

Benefits

- Complete life-cycle management.
- Significant cost savings through the elimination of end-of-lease penalties.

Curtin University leverages joint Microsoft®—Provance® solution to reduce its inflated annual leasing costs.

“I have never worked with a third party organization that is so professional and customer centric.”

- Jess Wittwer, ITAM Process Improvement Champion and Project Manager

Curtin University is a public university located in Perth, Australia. The main campus and eight remote campuses across Western Australia and Southeast Asia are host to 40,000 students and 3,500 academics and staff. Historically supported by IT groups specific to each location, the nine separate campuses are now managed by a single, consolidated IT organization. With centralization came its associated challenges, such as collectively managing the University’s 11,000 laptops and desktops. Given Curtin’s lease ownership preference, and many different lease return dates, the IT organization was fighting on-going issues meeting the lease return commitments. Curtin University selected the joint Microsoft—Provance solution comprised of Microsoft® System Center, the Provance® IT Asset Management Pack, Provance Data Management Pack and Provance Bar Code to reduce its inflated annual leasing costs.

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The High Risk of Out-of-warranty Costs for Lease Extensions

Following consolidation of the nine campus IT groups, Curtin’s newly centralized IT organization found the University’s the lifecycle management all of its hardware assets problematic. At the “Basic” level of IT Asset Management maturity according to the Microsoft Core Infrastructure model, Curtin did not have sufficient processes or supporting tools in place to effectively manage leases.

“The lack of process around the life cycle of leased assets really caused a massive problem,” said Jess Wittwer, Project Manager for Curtin. Hardware assets would approach end of lease and IT staff would have difficulty locating them in the faculties they were originally assigned to — resulting in business areas having to buy out or extend the lease on the assets. In all, it resulted in a lot of unnecessary manual labor, additional administration over-head and risk around out-of-warranty computers that have to be returned to the leasing company at the end of lease in good working order, with business areas having to repair broken machines before return.”

On the heels of such unnecessary waste and lack of transparency came an executive directive to resolve the University’s challenge. An internal audit conducted by

Deloitte Australia identified areas of opportunity, one of which highlighted the importance of implementing a strong IT asset management (ITAM) function. Deloitte recommended two phases of implementation. The first phase was an internal assessment to determine the current state of the University’s ITAM program and procurement processes. The second phase consisted of four pillars: improving process, reducing duplication, developing a “one touch-point” policy where possible, and better use of technology.

Improving process was seen as the most critical task of the four pillars, since IT asset management is a process based discipline.

Phase One: Assessing the Current State

The phase one assessment identified a functional gap in the University’s existing basic IT asset management and procurement processes, which consisted of manual tasks and the use of HP Open View and HP Service Desk.

With HP Service Desk nearing end-of-life status, Curtin University decided to adopt Microsoft System Center as its IT service management solution. The University was subsequently introduced to Provance IT Asset Management software

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by Diligent, a leading Australian Systems Integrator specializing in Management and Virtualization Technologies on the Microsoft platform.

It was at this time that Jess Wittwer joined Curtin University. Jess had previously implemented a joint Provance-Microsoft project at a large UK-based insurance market.

“From my previous experience, I knew walking in that I’d be dealing with a fantastic and easy-to-use tool,” said Wittwer. “The University felt that while there were plenty of ITAM solutions out there, they were nowhere near as suitable as Provance was due to the decision to adopt Microsoft System Center. Provance and ITAM were also a much more cost effective idea than other improvement ideas, like the adoption of RFID tags.”

Phase Two: Process Improvement

With phase one of the auditor’s recommendation completed, the University moved on to phase two of the project. As part of the second phase, Curtin University deployed the Provance IT Asset Management Pack, Provance Data Management Pack and Provance Bar Code in September of 2013. In addition to software, Provance provided Curtin with a best practice framework, which assisted the University in launching its new combined IT Service Management and IT Asset Management solution.

“The ultimate goal was smarter and simpler management of IT assets through the life cycle,” said Wittwer. “We had a very immature level of asset management processes in place. Having a Provance consultant come in and bring a level of knowledge with respect to the ITAM discipline to show us how things should be approached and how they should be done was extremely valuable. The Provance consultant helped us establish best practices in an intensive one week engagement. The results were phenomenal and the quality of the work even more so. Pictures alone though don’t make an IT Asset Management program. Having those workflows embedded in the product was and is the difference maker.”

Using the Provance software in conjunction with process guidance and services, Curtin University was able to quickly develop and implement an effective lease management program. It begins with shipping notices from Dell containing Configuration Item (CI) information, which allows IT staff to know what to expect. Using the Provance Data Management Pack with PowerShell scripts they were able to easily automate the import of this data into Microsoft System Center and the Provance IT Asset Management Pack. Once received, the asset was scanned using the Provance Bar Code, assigned to users with a location and delivered to them.

For more information
call Provance at 877-438-
1453 or visit the website at
www.provance.com

For more information about
Curtin University, visit
the website at
www.curtin.edu.au

The result was the ability to track an asset from birth to end-of-lease, while eliminating human error and increasing service management efficiency. The University had achieved and conquered the most challenging part of phase two.

Curtin University further benefited from the Provance solution to assist with the implementation of other recommended “pillars.”

Information from the Provance IT Asset Management Pack allows the University to take more informed IT decisions and make “better use of technology.” For example, the University was able to better understand the life cycle of its monitors and revise their leasing policy from three years to 5 years for these devices, resulting in even further cost savings.

The Path Forward: People-Centric IT and Transforming the Datacenter

With full IT asset life cycle management and processes for lease management in place, Curtin is currently monitoring the “one touch point policy” of its phase two project. It is now focusing on leveraging the University ICT Procurement web portal to support IT asset request management. The goal is to reduce turnaround time for request, delivery and set up of equipment, which historically took an average of three weeks.

In the near future, Jess Wittwer will target IT asset management of the University datacenter, consisting of 300 servers and approximately 22,000 software titles. Curtin plans to use the joint Microsoft-Provance solution to address part of the fourth pillar of the phase two project “reducing duplication”.

In the months since deployment of the combined Microsoft and Provance solution, Jess Wittwer believes that they have exceeded expectations, helping the University’s IT department become much more proactive rather than reactive. “The support along the way has been amazing and so diligent. I have never worked with a third party so professional and customer centric,” said Jess Wittwer.

www.provance.com | info@provance.com

490 Saint-Joseph Boul., Suite 203 Gatineau, QC, J8Y 3Y7 Canada | 305-1425 K Street, Washington, DC

