

Manchester Metropolitan University

Manchester Metropolitan University Maximizes On FrontRange Discovery Functionality As It Embarks On A £250 Million Change Program

Customer

Manchester Metropolitan University

Industry

Public Sector (Education)

Solution

FrontRange™ Discovery
Network Type: Windows Server
2003 (Novell site)

Partner Involved

CTMS

Why FrontRange Discovery?

Ease of use, comprehensive functionality

Business Drivers

The need to have comprehensive data and more granular knowledge of its software estate as well as an audit trail to clearly understand where its assets are at any given time.

Business Benefits realized

- Greater compliance throughout the organisation. With 5,000 users to keep track of across seven dispersed sites, understanding what assets the organization has would be near on impossible without an advanced IT audit solution.
- With a major change program underway, this is now more important than ever as the University consolidates its sites from seven to three over the next five years.

Background

Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) was established as a Polytechnic in 1970 (it was awarded University status in 1992) and is now one of the most extensive education centers in Europe. Offering over 1,000 courses in subject areas that service industry, commerce and the professions, the University has built up an enviable reputation for providing work-ready graduates that employers want. Some 92 percent of the University's graduates go straight into work or further study within six months of graduation. The University occupies five sites in Manchester and two in Cheshire, and is organized into eight faculties. MMU has approximately 34,000 students and employs around 4,400 staff, comprising almost 1,500 full-time teaching staff, 700 part-time teaching staff, and 2,200 support staff.

A £250 Million Investment Program

As part of its change agenda, the University aims to strengthen the student experience with an emphasis on high-quality teaching and course provision. A £250 million (US \$410m) investment program is now underway and this will produce the largest physical change to the University's estate since its foundation. The consolidation from seven to three sites will also bring huge benefits in terms of academic and research collaboration and opportunities for interdisciplinary work. Technology is a critical enabler for the University and the IT team is incredibly busy servicing and supporting around 5,000 users at any given time.

In an environment comprising a mix of students, full-time and part-time teaching staff and over 2,000 support staff, keeping track of all the University's hardware and software assets is no mean feat.

In order to ensure that these IT assets are tracked effectively, the IT department depends on FrontRange (formerly Centennial) Discovery.

Rowena Budrys, IT Manager for MMU takes up the story:

"We have quite a complex IT estate and keeping track of our assets is almost a full time job in itself. With everyone being that

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IT manager for Manchester Metropolitan University

much more mobile in today's environment, the fact that the campus is spread over a number of sites means that it is incredibly difficult to know where our hardware and software assets are at any given time. That is why we originally purchased FrontRange Discovery over six years ago now and why we are still actively using the product today. FrontRange Discovery provides both hardware and software asset management so that we can clearly see the breakdown of our PC base."

A Long-Standing History

FrontRange Discovery was deployed with the help of CTMS, a specialist IT Asset Management consultancy. Implementation was quick and painless and MMU needed very little support throughout the process. The product was installed, configured and the team was trained in less than one week.

Today FrontRange Discovery provides a dynamically-updated audit of all MMU's hardware and software connected to the network, enabling the University to automatically discover its network devices such as PCs, servers, laptops, printers, switches and software application installations. At the same time, FrontRange Discovery audits all installed applications on these PCs and servers, tracking software usage, updates and upgrades, patches and any other changes.

Prior to having FrontRange Discovery implemented, MMU had to do everything manually and this would have involved IT staff auditing individual machines to get the information required to keep track of MMU's PC estate. With the size and complexity of the University campus, this was an unenviable task and very resource intensive. With FrontRange Discovery in place, IT staff can now be alerted whenever an asset fails or is tampered with, which is very useful when managing remote sites. When FrontRange Discovery detects a potential threat on the network it alerts the support team so that these incidents can be dealt with accordingly.

An Evolving Environment

Since introducing FrontRange Discovery the University has gone through a number of changes. MMU currently uses a Novell operating system and because it is a Novell site as opposed to a Microsoft site, it is often harder to roll out new clients and to upgrade to new technology. FrontRange Discovery helps the University identify which assets are on what version of software so that it can more accurately pinpoint those that need to be upgraded, changed or indeed retired. At the same time, licenses can be re-harvested and reused if a user leaves the organization or moves departments.

Rowena Budrys continues:

"We regularly review and monitor our IT estate, which as you can imagine is constantly evolving. We have just completed a major upgrade and the environment is now stable. Our next rollout is probably a year down the line, and knowing what, who, when and how this needs to be managed and gaining this visibility would be nigh on impossible without an audit tool like FrontRange Discovery."

Next Steps

Although the University has a long history, it is also committed to the future. To ensure its place as a world-leading University, over the next five years a £250 million pound investment and change program is underway. This will provide high quality, cutting edge teaching and training facilities and course provision to students and technology is an integral part of this initiative.

Rowena Budrys continues:

"The University relies heavily on technology and the IT department is committed to delivering a high quality service to our students and lecturers. Key to this is knowing what we have and how we are using it. This type of visibility would be hard to achieve without FrontRange Discovery."

Rowena Budrys concludes:

"In the modern world that we operate in today, most companies want to quickly gain a picture of their software estate within as short a space of time as possible and FrontRange Discovery can help you achieve this. I would have no problem recommending the product. It is an extremely simple, yet incredibly powerful software and hardware asset discovery tool that can be used as a base for asset management."

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 customers use FrontRange offerings to quickly improve their interactions with external and internal clients and achieve better business results. For more information, contact your local FrontRange office or visit www.fronrange.com



MORE INFORMATION

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