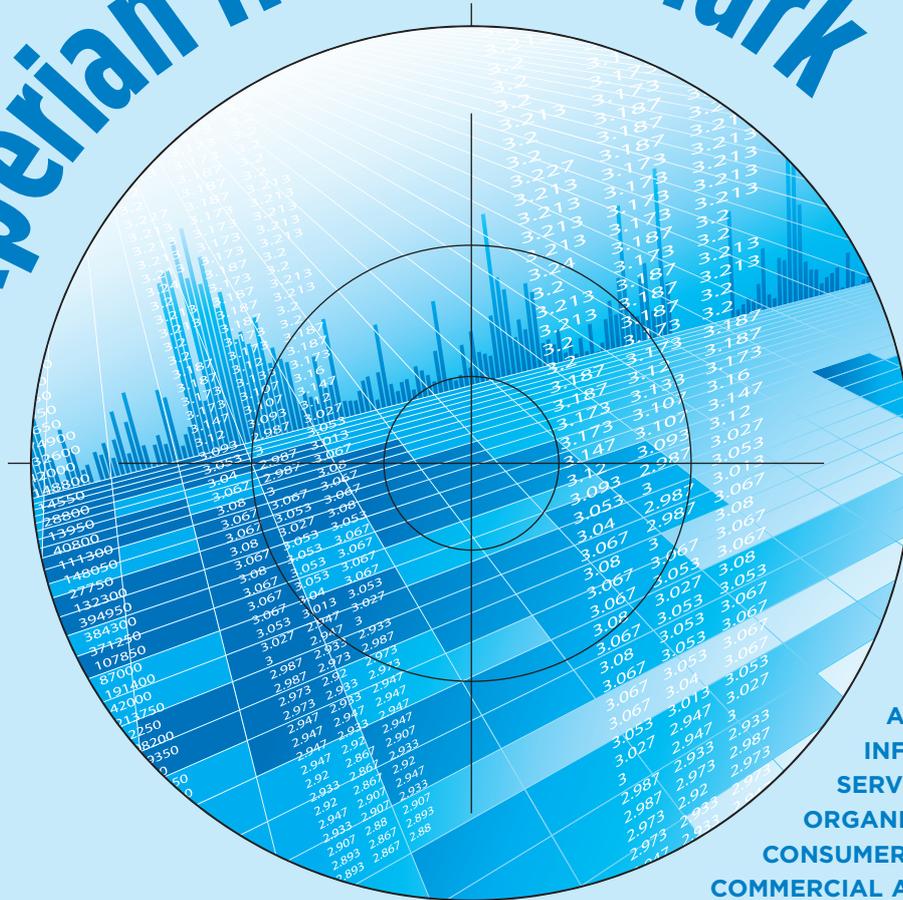


Experian Hits The Mark



EXPERIAN IS A GLOBAL LEADER IN PROVIDING ANALYTICAL AND INFORMATION SERVICES TO ORGANISATIONS AND CONSUMERS TO MANAGE COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL DECISIONS. BY EFFECTIVELY REDUCING BUSINESS RISK AND PROVING COMPLIANCE, LAST YEAR EXPERIAN ATTAINED THE GOLD AWARD OF THE FAST STANDARD FOR SOFTWARE COMPLIANCE, BECOMING ONE OF THE FIRST BUSINESSES OF ITS SIZE TO ACHIEVE THIS IN A MULTI-PLATFORM ENVIRONMENT.

“Experian is a large organisation with thousands of users across a number of locations. Gaining the FAST Standard for Software Compliance is therefore a major achievement...”

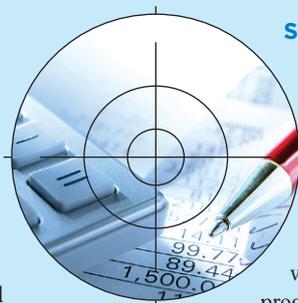
Experian delivers critical information enabling individuals to make financial and purchasing decisions with greater control and confidence. The company is a household name, most commonly known for its ‘credit search’ capabilities. Listed on the London Stock Exchange (EXPN) and a FTSE 100 company, Experian’s operational headquarters are in Nottingham, UK, and Costa Mesa, California. It has more than 12,500 employees spanning 34 countries, supporting clients in over 60 countries.

A key goal for the company since 1999 was to achieve software compliance for its 600,000 software licences and, at the same time, to put in place a best practice framework and set of procedures to maintain and manage ongoing purchases of software and licences. In June 2006, Experian attained the FAST Standard, becoming one of the first businesses of its size to achieve this in a multi-platform environment. Over this eight-year timeframe, Experian enlisted the help of Business Continuity Services and its Software Organiser tool to successfully achieve FAST Gold status.

“...The award demonstrates that the people, policies and procedures in place for managing software licensing across Experian’s large multi-platform IT environment are of the highest calibre.”

Software Organiser helped Experian to:

- gain a clear view of its software assets
- reduce the risk of non-compliance and any associated costs/fines
- realise savings which equate to 30 man-hours a month
- become compliant and achieve the FAST Standard
- provide regular reconciliation reports to maintain software compliance moving forward
- progress to the next stage and start software harvesting so that the company can actually start to reap the benefits.



So near yet so far

Over the next few years the task of obtaining this licence information, raising awareness, building processes and collecting audit data continued – no easy task in a company which was seeing double-digit growth year-on-year. Nevertheless, Experian was awarded FAST Bronze in 2003 and then Silver in 2004.

At this time, Experian’s risk committee identified that the consequences of non-compliance for a company of its size could be very serious, and so a project team was set up to assist in the programme. The company invested in a software deployment tool, Marimba, which also gave important audit data on all of Experian’s mid-range technology. This tool detected over 2,000 different applications installed across the user environment. The Experian Board signed off a Software Policy in April 2005 and a six-week software amnesty helped reduce the amount of ‘unwanted’ software on machines.

Achieving senior-level buy-in

Experian UK’s IT department is vast, managing users across 10 sites around the country with a total of 5,000 PCs, 1,100 Wintel Servers, 100 Unix Servers and two mainframe units. Back in 1999, the company initiated a campaign to raise awareness of software licensing regulations and, as a result, it became a FAST Corporate Member in November 1999.

Richard Brown, Head of Business Improvement, Experian takes up the story:

“Maintaining compliance of all our assets is an enormous challenge, as we purchase hundreds of licences every month. Back in 1999, the company simply didn’t have a clear view of its software estate and this needed to change. The first step was actually recognising this, obtaining senior level buy-in and subsequently starting a programme to achieve compliance. The first step in this process involved becoming a FAST Member.”

Once the decision was taken, the journey towards the Gold award commenced. The programme was initiated with Proof-of-Purchase collation and the Commercial Services Purchasing Operations team registering all licence information into Software Organiser. Software Organiser is a licence management tool which enables companies to qualify, assess, address and reduce the risk of non-compliance through the effective management and tracking of company software licences. In early 2000, Experian changed from using an Excel spreadsheet to complete this task, to Software Organiser, which was infinitely more manageable. At the same time, the relevant processes were implemented to ensure that all purchases of software from Experian’s software suppliers were recorded.

Richard Brown continues:

“In the early stages, it was really important that if an auditor came into our business we could demonstrate how our software was purchased, how it was logged and distributed. In addition, this process needed to be clearly documented, so that we could point a new starter to our policy and procedures from day one.”

And the rest is history

In June 2006 Experian achieved registration to the FAST Standard for Software Compliance (FSSC-1:2004) by FAST Corporate Services. At the time, Experian was only the third company, with more than 4,000 UK-based employees, to achieve the FAST Gold Award.

The award follows a full audit of Experian software compliance processes and policies by FAST. The review confirmed that Experian has up-to-date licences for all software installed on desktop clients, servers and the mainframes throughout the organisation, and that the policies and procedures for managing software licensing have been considered and approved at Board level.

Tiku Patel, Managing Director of Experian UK and Ireland comments: *“Experian is a large organisation with thousands of users across a number of locations. Gaining a Gold standard for software compliance is therefore a major achievement. The award demonstrates that the people, policies and procedures in place for managing software licensing across Experian’s large multi-platform IT environment are of the highest calibre.”*

Now that Experian is compliant it can start to reap the benefits. The next stage for the company is to start a software harvesting programme. This allows licences to be passed between staff and departments where needed, rather than buying additional licences.

Richard Brown concludes:

“Throughout this process, Software Organiser has been a pivotal tool enabling us to achieve compliance. We have saved 30-man hours a month, as we now log, store and manage all our licence reconciliation using this tool. It has effectively enabled us to accurately reconcile over 600,000 licences from 5,700 Proof-of-Purchase entries for over 6,000 computers.”



For more information about Software Organiser please visit www.right2use.com