

xassets

IT Asset Management for a Global 2000 Company

The Success Story of Saint-Gobain APAC

The Company

Founded in 1665 and headquartered on the outskirts of Paris, Saint-Gobain began as a mirror manufacturer and now also produces a variety of construction and high-performance materials. Saint-Gobain operates worldwide and includes Saint-Gobain APAC, which covers the Asia Pacific region including, Australia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and Vietnam.

The Existing Systems

Saint-Gobain APAC primarily tracked and recorded information technology (IT) assets through Excel spreadsheets. Some offices and operations consolidated asset details in Microsoft SMS, and later SCCM. User information and some asset details were tracked in Active Directory. However, no centralized or uniform system existed across all offices to inventory, track and manage IT assets.

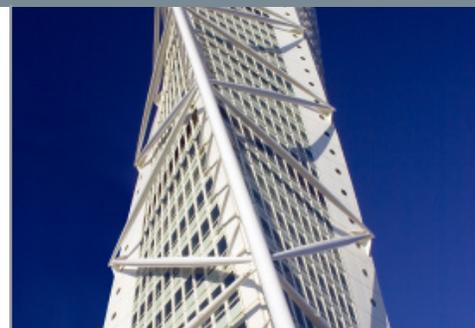
Based on existing records, the company estimated that IT assets consisted of:

• Desktops and laptops	8,000
• Servers	300
• Non-networked computers	200
• Other IT assets	500



The Challenge

In 2010, Saint-Gobain APAC decided to take a more organized and automated approach to managing its IT assets. The strategic vision was to provide the company with improved visibility into its IT asset infrastructure and also provide links to existing key strategic systems, including Active Directory and SMS/SCCM. The new system would make asset information readily available and provide a centralized and holistic database of IT asset, software and hardware information.



xAssets worked with Saint-Gobain APAC to develop a system that offers full visibility of IT asset infrastructure at both country and enterprise levels.

The solution is:

Holistic—capable of receiving data loads from multiple source systems, including Active Directory and SCCM

Highly customized—defined by and designed to meet Saint-Gobain's specific needs

Flexible—created to evolve with Saint-Gobain as it grows and changes

The company required that the selected solution support integrations with information collected by Active Directory and SCCM 2007 (previously SMS). In addition the new system had to accept, process and integrate regular imports from existing spreadsheets. Data from all sources needed to be amalgamated in a single database that would allow reporting within individual entities, across countries and throughout the region. Exception reporting was required to notify asset managers in various regions of anomalies among the data from these multiple sources. Barcoding was planned as a future project, and the selected application should support barcode tracking of assets.

Preparing for the future, Saint-Gobain also focused on the configurable nature of the new software solution. As Saint-Gobain required new functionality—whether just a few reports or a completely new, asset-related business process—the company wanted to be able to meet those requirements by configuring the software through in-house trained technicians or by enlisting services from the selected vendor.

xAssets created customized imports to facilitate transfer of classification data, suppliers, assets and software licenses.

The Plan

Saint-Gobain wanted the new system to leverage existing information to the greatest extent possible. To that end, xAssets created customized imports to facilitate transfer of classification data, suppliers, assets and software licenses.



xAssets designed a SCCM integration to capture Saint-Gobain's specific data, such as computer image build versions. They customized integration with Active Directory to import additional user details, departments and locations. They also structured the system to automatically produce and email weekly exception reports based on differences found between asset data imported from the various sources to avoid errors and duplicate records. To accommodate the linguistic differences in the Saint-Gobain APAC offices, xAssets configured the system to support character sets in Chinese, Japanese, Thai, Vietnamese, Arabic and other languages.

The Test

xAssets conducted an initial live demonstration of the software to exhibit its capabilities and followed up with an online trial of the software on the Saint-Gobain network by IT managers across the region. The company decided to further evaluate the xAssets product with a proof of concept (POC) that involved loading data from a subset of the region and producing sample reports. Initially hosted on xAssets' cloud servers, the POC ran until December 2011, when Saint-Gobain requested to host the system internally on their servers. The database was transferred, and Saint-Gobain provided VPN (virtual private network) access to the servers for xAssets support staff.



The Implementation

During the POC implementation, the system was used live by Saint-Gobain IT staff. A number of users trained to use the xAssets product, and they also provided feedback on the product. At the conclusion of the POC, Saint-Gobain determined that the POC had met their goals. They held a series of workshop meetings with xAssets, and together, produced a statement of work (SOW) for the full implementation, which began in April 2012.

In August 2012, implementation was completed, and the system was signed off and accepted by Saint-Gobain. Implementation and support were provided primarily by the xAssets UK office, which had a good time-zone overlap with the Saint-Gobain China office for collaboration, and most work was done outside of Saint-Gobain's working hours to minimize impact on their team.



The Results

Since completion of the full implementation, Saint-Gobain has undergone a server migration and a migration from integrating with SCCM 2007 to SCCM 2012. The xAssets software played a key role in managing these migrations.



In addition to making the migration processes efficient and systematic, xAssets is used by a wide range of staff members at Saint-Gobain, including:

- Service Desk Staff
- Asset Managers
- Operations Managers
- Infrastructure Support Staff
- Management Reporting Staff
- System Administrators

In all cases, users are restricted, based on their level of reporting requirements to view and report only on assets in their specific country or region, or to view consolidated data from all regions. In addition, administrators and regional asset managers are provided with a quick access filter system that enables them to quickly switch the system to show only assets in the country they need to view or to show all assets in the region(s) for which they are responsible.



The xAssets reporting system enables customization of menus and dashboards to suit each user group's specific requirements. Each asset type has customized fields and forms to meet Saint-Gobain's internal needs. Data entry forms are optimized for quick data entry and automatic completion of fields based on the data that was initially entered.

Saint-Gobain uses customized versions of standard reports to detail:

- Assets by region
- Assets by site
- Assets by manufacturer
- Assets by age
- Warranty information
- Banned software
- License compliancy

Using the xAssets software solution, Saint-Gobain can manage IT assets across the entire APAC region. Previously manual processes are automated, creating a current, constantly updated and auditable database of all IT assets. In addition, regional managers now can leverage the information for their respective offices, enabling them to make local decisions on IT assets while coordinating through a centralized database.

READY FOR YOUR SUCCESS STORY?

If you are ready to turn your IT asset management into a success story, xAssets can help. You can start by visiting our website and getting a **free trial** of our software asset management solution. Or, feel free to contact me with any questions.

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