



Boise State University

University streamlines compliance audits with EMC Smarts Application Discovery Manager and H&W Computer Systems, Inc.

The Boise State University Office of Information Technology (OIT) is using EMC® Smarts® Application Discovery Manager (ADM), powered by award-winning nLayers® technology, to gain a better understanding of how IT services are deployed and used across the University's application infrastructure. Together, EMC and H&W Computer Systems, Inc., a leading provider of software solutions to enterprise data centers, help Boise State's OIT track IT changes, more effectively manage compliance efforts, streamline software asset management efforts, and pinpoint network vulnerabilities.

Effective management, simplified audit preparation

The OIT is responsible for Boise State's network infrastructure, mission-critical applications, and IT services. Since nearly every activity at the university is affected by IT, the OIT is governed by careful strategic planning and is subject to frequent audits and measurement. The OIT first decided to implement EMC Smarts ADM as a way to cut the time and staff resources involved in preparing for the various internal and external audits it frequently undergoes.

"As the largest institute of higher learning in the region, Boise State has a vast, open infrastructure serving tens of thousands of users," says Jamie Nolan, practice strategy manager for H&W's Application Infrastructure Management division. "We were confident that our expertise combined with EMC Smarts software would give Boise State the visibility it needed to manage its complex environment in the most effective way possible. It did just that."

Discovery and mapping in three phases

In September 2005, the OIT partnered with systems integrator H&W Computer Systems, Inc., to deploy EMC Smarts ADM through a phased approach. In the first phase, the solution's passive discovery was used to give the OIT a complete, big-picture view of its network, components, and applications, and show demand, usage, and the relationships between applications and infrastructure.

In the second stage, the OIT selected several specific application systems for EMC Smarts ADM to map and track more closely, including a third-party food services point-of-sale system and a medical records application. EMC Smarts ADM enabled the OIT to gain a granular understanding of how the applications were functioning within the University's network and help uncover possible compliance issues or other vulnerabilities.

"We are subject to several audits, covering a range of different parameters," says David O'Neill, executive director. "At the end of the day, we are accountable for the security and compliance of all of the various systems and applications that we support. Basically, EMC Smarts ADM 'turns on' and dynamically creates an application dependency diagram that gives us the visibility we need to prepare for audits and ensure that all of the applications are compliant—even those that are managed by outside vendors. It's pretty slick."

"Implementing EMC Smarts ADM to get a better understanding of how our applications are deployed and used enables us to provide better service to our users, manage risks, and ensure compliance."

David O'Neill, executive director

In the final phase of the implementation, the OIT used EMC Smarts ADM to compile a comprehensive inventory of the University's applications—including actual usage information. By comparing the information EMC Smarts ADM gathers against the University's software license records, the OIT can assess the real demand of licensed software served versus the number of licenses purchased. As a result, the OIT now contracts for the "right" number of licenses, ensuring compliance with license agreements and enabling better overall software purchasing decisions.

The cornerstone for effective IT operations

For any organization looking to improve IT service and optimize operational efficiency through consolidation, change management, software asset management, and other similar process automation initiatives, the EMC Smarts solution provides instant value.

The ability to quickly get to the "who, what, where, when, and how" of an IT environment by tracking all of the relationships between applications and infrastructure components now enables the OIT to maximize resources and minimize vulnerabilities.

"EMC Smarts ADM looks at our applications, servers, and network and immediately gives us an accurate and detailed picture of exactly what is going on," says O'Neill. "It shows us what we have, how it is being used, who is using it, and how often. Implementing EMC Smarts ADM to get a better understanding of how our applications are deployed and used enables us to provide better service to our users, manage risks, and ensure compliance."



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Customer Profile
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