

# FAST Narrows The Compliance Gap!

Submitted by: C8 Consulting

Wednesday, 23 July 2008

---

- 400 UK businesses have carried out a FAST GAP Analysis over the last six-months to May 2008

Maidenhead, UK, 23rd July 2008: FAST Corporate Services Ltd, the Membership organisation providing education, training and consulting programmes around IT compliance to UK businesses, both large and small, announced today that more organisations are being subject to increasing audits and as a result a high proportion of its Members have undertaken FAST's high-level review, known as the GAP Analysis, to better understand the infrastructure and processes adopted by their organisation to manage their IT environment and ensure licence compliance.

Today, over 400 UK firms embarking on Software Asset Management or IT Asset Management projects have seen the benefits of this independent review which identifies any vulnerabilities and areas of unmanaged risk within a business as well as recommending solutions based on individual company requirements. These GAP Analysis reviews have either been undertaken directly by the organisations themselves, using the online self-assessment tool or with the help of a FAST Corporate Advisor who spends time on site examining several key areas from a risk perspective including:

- Senior management awareness
- Policies and procedures
- IT procurement (hardware and software)
- Software storage and control
- Audit and reconciliation strategy
- Software/hardware procurement and disposal

In this year's FAST Annual Membership Survey carried out in May 2008, 82 percent of the respondents cited the GAP Analysis tool as being either very useful or quite useful. The survey highlighted that 44 percent of FAST members who have had a FAST GAP Analysis have conducted it using the online assessment tool. 56 percent have had their GAP conducted on-site by a FAST Corporate Advisor. 35 percent of organisations have been subject to an audit or inspection of their software by a publisher or other body in a 12 month period (Gartner). In FAST's experience, of these over a third (35 percent) had been audited by more than one.

According to Phil Heap, Head of Membership Products & Services for FAST Ltd: "For those companies that had a GAP Analysis conducted by one of our Corporate Advisors, some have also benefited from software entitlement and use rights readiness reviews. This shows the number of installs of each software application against number of licences held enabling the organisation to see where it is over or under licensed.

In today's current climate we are seeing compliance issues hotting up, with government stepping up activities with Trading Standards to have more foot soldiers policing the industry and software publishers undertaking more customer audits. These audits can be extremely disruptive for any business and our GAP reviews can be used to show organisations the areas they need to address so that they can quickly and easily demonstrate their compliance should the need arise ."

This highly effective IT compliance tool was introduced into the FAST Corporate Membership Programme in November 2007, following beta testing, phasing and guidance from Member organisations earlier in the year. The GAP Analysis is aimed at helping organisations achieve compliance but with minimum disruption to the day-to-day running of their business. It was launched as a result of Member organisations telling FAST that they needed more guidance on how to achieve software and IT compliance and ultimately achieve registration to the FAST Standard for Software Compliance (FSSC-1:2007).

John Lovelock, Chief Executive of the Federation Against Software Theft (The Federation) comments: “Over the last five years, companies have paid out more than £1.8m in fines to the Business Software Alliance for using unlicensed software and in excess of £8m has been recovered in the last seven years as a result of FAST activities. But if we can encourage organisations to be more proactive in this area, using tools like the FAST Gap Analysis and understanding more about their own licence management, it is far better than having to endure the legal route.”

Every time a GAP Analysis is carried out it gives a percentage readiness against each level of the FAST Standard and highlights specific tasks that need to be completed in order to gain Bronze, Silver, and the various stages of Gold accreditation. Regular independent GAP reviews enable organisations to track their progress towards achieving registration to the FAST Standard and identify key areas of risk that need to be addressed. The GAP analysis report includes a risk summary in relation to software and a project planner showing outstanding task recommendations.

For more information about the FAST programme and the GAP Analysis please visit FAST Ltd's website: [www.fastcorporateservices.com](http://www.fastcorporateservices.com)

-ends-

Notes to editors

About FAST Corporate Services:

FAST Corporate Services Limited, part of IRIS, is a membership organisation that provides an education, training and consulting programme to the corporate end user, using proven tools and methodologies. The FAST programme focuses on helping organisations achieve 'best practice' in IT and software compliance. The business supports its 2,700 members to reach and maintain The FAST Standard for Software Compliance (FSSC-1:2007), a private Standard which was developed in collaboration with BSi. The FAST Standard also addresses a significant proportion of the requirements of ISO/IEC 19770-1 the International Standard for Software Asset Management. The Federation Against Software Theft (The Federation), which aims to combat software piracy, endorses it.

The Federation, which is a not for profit organisation limited by guarantee is owned and funded by its members – software publishers, solicitors, IT resellers etc. FAST Corporate Services Ltd has a mandate from The Federation to promote the legal use of software and educate corporate UK on the issue of software compliance.

For further information:

Paula Elliott  
C8 Consulting Ltd for FAST Corporate Services Ltd  
+ 44 (0) 118 9001132  
paula@c8consulting.co.uk