

Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Sector Recognise Benefits of Software Compliance

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•FAST Ltd helps deliver effective Software Asset Management (SAM) Programmes to organisations in the increasingly regulated pharmaceutical and healthcare sectors

Maidenhead, UK, 22nd July 2009: FAST Ltd (<http://www.fast-ltd.co.uk>), a leading UK authority on Software Asset Management (<http://www.fast-ltd.co.uk>) and IT Compliance (<http://www.fast-ltd.co.uk>), providing software, education, consulting and managed services is demonstrating how it can help companies in the pharmaceutical and healthcare industries - that are subject to stringent regulation and legislation - become software compliant.

According to recent research undertaken by FAST Ltd, 60 percent of companies are under-licensed and 40 percent of companies are over-licensed with their software. Therefore, with software accounting for approximately 30 percent of a typical IT budget, it's imperative in today's climate for companies to understand their software licences and recognise that implementing effective and regulatory compliant Software Asset Management (SAM) policies will minimise cost and maximise efficiency.

Eisai Ltd, which manages the functions of marketing and sales, finance, medical information, market research and business operations for the pharmaceutical R&D operations of Eisai Europe and Eisai UK, is one company in the pharmaceutical sector which has benefited from implementing a Software Asset Management (SAM) programme with FAST.

Bente Roa, corporate affairs personal assistant at Eisai Ltd said that due to its role in the pharmaceutical industry, Eisai Ltd is subject to stringent regulations, and as part of its ongoing compliance commitments turned its focus to the IT infrastructure and ensuring the correct software licenses were in place.

"The nature of our work means that we use many different types of software, from SAP and Oracle to specific pharmaceutical applications, and therefore have a large number of licences to manage across 250 PCs. This meant that keeping abreast of all new installations and upgrades was a difficult task. At first, the path to software compliance seemed a long and daunting one. However, working towards the FAST Standard for Software Compliance enabled us to approach the process more easily. The programme allowed us to initiate procedures one step at a time as well as set realistic short term targets."

As a result, the process has created a good return on investment for Eisai, which was first awarded the Gold Award of the FAST Standard in 2005.

"Achieving compliance has given us piece of mind. We now carry out regular software audits and always retain the most up-to-date information, therefore we know we can demonstrate compliance even if the worst happens," said Roa.

King's College Hospital, which provides the full range of hospital services for a population of 700,000 in the London Boroughs of Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham has also recently benefited from implementing

the FAST four-step software management programme and was one of the first NHS Trusts to achieve FAST certification. The programme involved reviewing and amending existing policies; undertaking a full audit of the hospital's network system; removing unauthorised software; and amending the software ordering process to control purchasing and help build a more accurate licence database.

Derek Farlow, IT security manager at King's College Hospital said that the hospital now completes an audit every year as part of its ongoing software management plan and this re-certification process ensures that proper focus is maintained on the hospital's software management procedures.

"As an NHS body we are subject to heavy regulation and directives, and high standards are applied to our key business activities and the IT systems that support them. We are required to be compliant with the Information Security Management Standard BS7799 (now ISO27001), and the FAST certification scheme very usefully covers a significant portion of this."

Farlow added: "Our aim with software management and control is one of continuous improvement, and we wouldn't readily have been able to achieve this without the help and support of FAST."

FAST Ltd managing director Andy Pearce said that Software Asset Management (SAM) delivers good IT governance and the benefits of effective management of software assets are not widely enough appreciated.

"Despite the economic downturn, companies are still struggling to get buy-in from their Board on implementing effective Software Asset Management. Many executives still do not understand the risk to organisations' finances and reputation from failing to take action to achieve software compliance, preferring to 'leave it to IT' to sort out."

"As well as giving piece of mind to organisations, implementing effective Software Asset Management programmes can deliver significant cost savings, by maximising the investment companies have already made and to save money in the future on licensing contracts with all vendors."

To find out more about FAST Ltd's Software Asset Management and IT compliance programme and professional services, please visit the website: www.fast-ltd.co.uk or call 0844 815 5741.

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About FAST Ltd:

FAST Ltd, part of IRIS is a leading UK authority on Software Asset Management and IT Compliance, providing software, education, consulting and managed services. For over 24 years FAST Ltd has helped over 8,000 organisations control their IT costs, mitigate risk and deploy best practice IT using expert impartial and independent advice.

The FAST Compliance programme focuses on helping organisations achieve 'best practice' in IT and software compliance. The business supports its 2,700 customers 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 Investors in Software (FAST IiS), which aims to combat software piracy, endorses the Standard.

FAST IiS, which is a not for profit organisation limited by guarantee is owned and funded by its members – software publishers, solicitors, IT resellers etc. FAST Ltd has a mandate from FAST IiS to advise and help UK organisations on the issue of software compliance and promote the legal use of software and it is the only organisation that meets the FAST IiS' mandate.

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