

## **Data Synergy PowerMAN at the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford**

*“PowerMAN has got something for everyone across the organisation...It’s simple, you just roll it out in a day and the documentation is great. It’s a win win. The software is built very well.”*

The Ashmolean Museum originally opened in 1683 and has gone through many changes since then. The present Ashmolean was formed in 1845 by combining two ancient Oxford institutions - the University Art Collection and the art and archaeology collections of the original Ashmolean Museum. In recent years much of the museum has been rebuilt and expanded with the help of Heritage Lottery funding and the updated museum re-opened in November 2009. As the oldest University Museum in the world it has some of the world’s finest collections of art and archaeology from around the globe and is an integral part of the University, supporting teaching and research, as well as acting as a public attraction with over one million visitors in the year since the reopening.

The Ashmolean makes extensive use of IT technology for in-house administration, research and public displays. The IT team maintains a varied range of IT systems, including approximately 200 desktop computers. Most of these are PC’s running Windows XP, but the museum also maintains a handful of Apple and Linux based computers as well as slowly growing number of Windows 7 systems. As a University department the museum has the support of and uses central IT services for some functionality but implements in-house solutions where appropriate or necessary.

The majority of PC’s are used for back-office functions such as administration, marketing and management. A few are also used as shared terminals for email access and as public in-gallery display units. The display PC’s use a central power control system that was installed as part of the redevelopment. The IT team estimate that about 90% of desktop computers have an exclusive user.

*“This is the first activity based monitoring system we’ve had. Other reporting systems are binary – just on or off. They don’t tell us about actual PC activity.”*

*“PowerMAN really helps us monitor the situation”*

The Museum IT team originally found PowerMAN through the Liverpool University’s case study while researching an optimal solution with input from the Oxford University Central Computing Service Green IT Team. They were keen to see how the solution could improve upon their existing arrangements, contribute to their Carbon Reduction Commitments (CRC), and reduce their estimated £12,000 annual IT energy bill.

*“It is really important to reduce costs... We have to get the most from our limited budget.”*

The on-premise edition of Data Synergy's PowerMAN Enterprise Server was selected as this kept all of the (anonymous) data in-house and met their requirements for strict data confidentiality. The team started the project by using a commercial plug-in power meter to baseline representative equipment which they used, together with their energy costs, to configure the PowerMAN reporting software.

The Data Synergy PowerMAN PC agent software was configured using Group Policy and linked to the existing directory structure using the Active Directory integration feature. The software was then quickly and painlessly deployed using Group Policy to over 150 computers.

*"The advantage of PowerMAN is that once it's set up it works in the background."*

The powerful monitoring features of PowerMAN showed the team where the least often-used, and hence most wasteful, computers were located. This meant they were able to create a target list on which to focus remedial action.

The remedial phase began by using PowerMAN to reduce back-end system running costs, as it identified that some of the most underused PCs were actually stale virtual machines. PowerMAN was used to shut these down when not required.

*"PowerMAN showed us problems we didn't even realise we had. As we go forward we will use even more capabilities"*

The team has since begun to plan the management of live desktop systems. This is a more sensitive area because the approach selected has to take into account user expectations, a range of operating hours and the requirement for some users to have out-of-hours remote access. However, the intention is to reduce the annual IT power costs by about 25%, or approximately £3,000.

Looking ahead, the team will continue to use the monitoring features of PowerMAN to provide an overview of the on-going situation. This will allow them to spot new problems and further refine their strategy. Beyond that the Museum is also developing its virtual domains, in particular the use of virtual desktops to allow remote and local users to connect from low specification machines and enable them to access resource intensive museum applications such as the Museum's collections management system. Managing this pool has similar issues to managing "real" computers. PowerMAN will help manage the power consumption of the virtual host by logging off inactive users and shutting down redundant virtual sessions.

The challenge for the Ashmolean, if not all institutions, is not just to become Green, it is to remain Green. PowerMAN is one of the tools that will help the Museum accomplish this.

## About Data Synergy



Data Synergy is a British company based in Sheffield. We have over 10 years' experience developing and supporting software solutions for enterprise PC deployment and management. We do not resell other vendors' products and do all our development, sales and support from our UK base.

Our products have evolved through listening to customer ideas and applying our unrivalled knowledge of PC internals. If you have a suggestion for a new product or feature we would love to talk to you.

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