

Aviva and Axios partner to deliver effective IT Asset Management

When Aviva was seeking an IT Asset Management product to help it gain tighter control of its IT infrastructure, its solution of choice was an end-to-end service offering by Axios Systems consisting of its core product, *assyst* and Centennial Discovery. Not only would these integrated products meet demanding and evolving product requirements - but Axios Systems was able to offer a 'partnership' approach to the entire vendor relationship - key to ensuring overall success of the project.

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Industry Sector: Finance

Benefits

- Tighter control of IT infrastructure
- Removal of IT obsolescence
- Reduced cost of IT ownership
- Support for software audits
- Better use of IT resources through asset re-use
- Improved IT user satisfaction
- Adoption of Best Practice
- Improved staff efficiency

Background

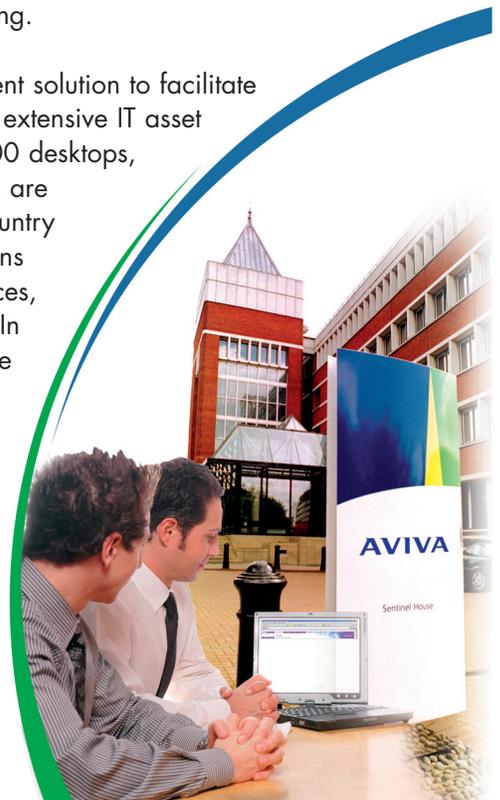
Aviva is the largest insurer in the UK. It is the leading long-term savings provider with a life market share of about 12% and more than six million customers. It is also the largest general insurer with an overall market share of 14% and 4.3 million customers. Aviva insures one-in-five households, one-in-seven motor vehicles and more than 800,000 businesses in the UK.

Aviva is part of Aviva, the world's fifth-largest insurance group which has around £364 billion of assets under management. Aviva has 59,000 employees serving 40 million customers worldwide.

Aviva UK IT Services is a distinct area of the business, focusing solely on providing support services to Aviva across a variety of areas that include IT, Property & Facilities Management and Printing, Distribution & Purchasing.

Aviva required a fully integrated Asset Management solution to facilitate cradle-to-grave management of the organization's extensive IT asset portfolio. Its distributed assets include some 45,000 desktops, laptops, and over 4000 Intel servers. These assets are widely distributed in many locations across the country with hardware assets in Aviva main centers, regions and branches, data centers, insurance broker offices, storage facilities as well as in employees' homes. In addition, numerous assets are being utilized by the many mobile Aviva employees.

Driving this requirement was the Aviva IT Infrastructure Standardization Program – an initiative introduced to ensure that the thousands of employees across the country were provided with a standard PC build, standard software versions and a common network. Through implementation of this program, Aviva hoped to achieve a number of asset-related benefits, including reduced asset support costs.



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IT Change and Configuration
Manager

“To ensure success of the standardization program, we needed to know what assets we had, where they were located, how fit for purpose they were, how much they were worth, and how effectively they were supporting our business,” says Richard Oliver, IT Change and Configuration Manager at Aviva.

The Solution

“Whichever Asset Management solution we selected to support this program needed to be fully fit for purpose and capable of growing and developing to meet future business requirements and grow into additional technology areas,” continues Oliver.

The requirement, therefore, was not just for the supply of a product, but a structured plan for pilot, rollout and ongoing management of processes and procedures.

After rigorous assessment of many potential suppliers’ capabilities and their solutions, Aviva selected Axios Systems and its proposed integrated end-to-end service, consisting of its IT Service Management product, and Centennial Discovery as the best overall fit for its needs.

“To us, the vendor we selected was as important as the product. It was essential for us to be able to work in close partnership with the supplier of such a business critical application, and ensure a strong long lasting partnership could easily be achieved and maintained,” Oliver says.

[assyst](#) by Axios Systems is an award-winning IT Service Management solution, developed from inception around Best Practice and ITIL (IT Infrastructure Library) principles. In addition, it offers a unique lifecycle approach to IT Service Management through the integration of all ITIL processes in an out-of-the-box solution with a single underlying Configuration Management Database (CMDB).

The [assyst](#) CMDB was able to offer Aviva much more than a simple registry of its physical assets; it also provided Aviva with an accurate inventory of IT resources and the relationships between them.

To populate the [assyst](#) CMDB, Axios Systems implemented Centennial Discovery as part of its end-to-end solution offering - an automated asset and software-tracking tool. [assystDiscovery](#) from Axios integrates comprehensive, accurate asset information directly into the Aviva [assyst](#) CMDB from Centennial Discovery.

“We also chose [assyst](#) with the knowledge that it was so much more than simply an Asset Management tool and it delivered immediate and long term functionality with minimal customization. Axios was also able to offer proven integration to the Centennial asset tracking tool with [assystDiscovery](#),” says Oliver. “This meant we’d be implementing our standardization program based on asset facts, not assumptions.”

Richard continues, “Throughout the meetings and product demonstrations with Axios Systems, it was clear that they were in touch with their customers’ requirements, had a good appreciation of service expectations of the product, and the level of account management required to facilitate a partnership of this scale – something which was very important to us, as we wanted to work closely with our vendor of choice.”

The Implementation

The plan was to logically phase the implementation, initially focusing on Aviva's distributed and midrange platforms, with plans to expand the solution to manage network components and data surrounding mainframe systems in the second phase.

To ensure a successful implementation of **assyst**, Aviva worked in close partnership with consultants and technical specialists from the Axios Global Services Group to deliver the first phase of its Asset Management project - an initial inventory management solution.

This first phase was centered on the population and building of the **assyst** CMDB using Centennial Discovery and the integration power of **assystDiscovery**.

The **assyst** CMDB offered Aviva the ability to record a wealth of technical, financial, user and relationship information for each asset. This was a vital exercise as the Aviva IT estate was made up of a very diverse portfolio in terms of equipment type, location, Operating System and network infrastructure.

After successful implementation of the first phase and with further ongoing support from Axios Global Services, the next phase started to successfully deliver the full Asset Management requirements of Aviva.

The partnership approach adopted by Aviva and Axios has worked well, and the deliverables to date now include: asset depreciation and warranty replacement forecasting, feeds for unitary charge back, feed to the groups IT fixed asset register and base data to support software entitlement and an ITIL-aligned Configuration Management service.

The Benefits

Aviva still has more work to do, particularly in the areas of non-Intel platforms and software mapping, but it has a defined plan in place to work with Axios to ensure all its goals are achieved.

Aviva has experienced numerous of benefits thanks to its Asset Management program and **assyst**.

One of the most significant benefits achieved is that of superior asset visibility. Aviva UK IT Services now has the first estate-wide view of all its distributed assets - especially valuable in tracking the dynamics of the changing estate as a result of the standardization program. This has also been highly valuable in providing support for audits.

"The **assyst** solution has acted as the key enabler for significant six figure financial savings year on year due to its ability to track assets, their specification and suitability for re-use," says Oliver. He continues, "This re-use not only services business growth, but also allows us to identify the kit of higher specification that can be fed in the UK-wide standardization program preventing unnecessary spend."



"What really clinched the business for Axios was the professionalism of its consultants"



"The key in selecting Axios was their in-depth knowledge of ITIL."

The re-use of assets has created some interesting challenges for Aviva – one of which being staff reaction to receiving what they consider to be ‘second-hand’ equipment. “To overcome this reluctance, support has been gained from the Key Buyers and senior management in each business to promote the re-utilization. In order to lessen the negativity, a new policy to clean all reutilized equipment prior to issue was adopted which was well received by the customer base,” continues Oliver.

In addition to this, the information stored in the [assyst](#) CMDB helps Aviva identify assets suitable for disposal when they are below the standards defined for economical and technological use.

With stock levels more closely aligned to industry standards, Aviva was able to expand its in-house services to base building of desktop and laptops - a task that was previously carried out externally. Through bringing this task in-house, a further six figure financial savings - over and above those mentioned earlier was made.

“Through the implementation of [assyst](#), we have saved the business in the region of a seven figure sum,” says Oliver. “This new service also feeds the internal chargeback mechanism for the deployed technology allowing billing on actual, rather than assumed volumes, as well as looking towards being one of the primary feeds for the Group Fixed Asset register for the items under its management,” he concludes.

The Future

The ever-increasing and proven value of the Asset Management service and the [assyst](#) product is now acting as a springboard to migrate more of Aviva’s IT services towards a Best Practice and ITIL-aligned model.

Aviva has already adopted Change processes for hardware and software installation, as well as Incident and Problem Management, Release to Production services for the central IT Service Desk and workflow for user administration.

The asset management service has provided previously unavailable data feeds to Infrastructure Refresh programs with criteria set around tracking metrics such as warranty replacement and depreciation. However, this asset service is also providing the baseline data for the development of a maturing cross platform Configuration Management service – allowing Aviva to experience the full benefits that Best Practice and ITIL can bring to its organization.

“[assyst](#) is not only an IT Asset Management solution – it’s an ITIL Service Management toolset in a box upon which to implement the revised processes, procedures, culture and services derived from an ITIL-aligned operational organization. We’re looking forward to making the most of the product functionality in the future and working together with Axios to ensure we maximize the benefits,” Oliver says.

Details correct at the time of printing

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