Rapid Completion Of Equipment Inventory In Compliance With ISO 27001

Food Industry Research and Development Institute (FIRDI)

X-FORT provides the most comprehensive software and hardware asset management functions without affecting system operations on the client. It immediately notifies the administrator when there are any changes to hardware devices. After taking an inventory, the software and hardware specifications of each computer is printed out and pasted on the client device, making it easier for IT personnel to manage equipment.

As enterprises continue to adopt information technology, if they do not have a set of tools to manage their computer assets, which enable them to enjoy the benefits of digital data, it will inevitably affect their operating efficiency and competitiveness. The computers may even become springboards for hackers to launch cyberattacks. For example, when the Food Industry Research and Development Institute (FIRDI) was applying

Liao Chu-Hsien, IT Manager of the FIRDI

for ISO 27001 certification, it decided to purchase X-FORT, the Enterprise Electronic Data Surveillance System developed by FineArt Technology Co., Ltd., and use the asset inventory function provided by the system to monitor the status of its software and hardware assets. This initiative aims to meet the Executive Yuan's information security requirements on Grade C Agencies.

Liao Chu-Hsien, a manager at the IT department of the FIRDI, pointed out that FineArt Technology's X-FORT is highly acclaimed in the industry. It allows IT personnel to rapidly and accurately determine the current

status of software and hardware equipment through a simple and easy-to-use management interface, which greatly reduces the difficulty of equipment management. In the future, we hope to expand the software's scope of application to obtain ISO 27001 certification, and thereby provide Taiwan's food industry with even more complete services.

Purchasing X-FORT to meet ISO 27001 specifications

The Food Industry Research and Development Institute (FIRDI) is a non-profit organization established in 1965 with donations from the Canners' Association of Taiwan, the former Council for International Economic Cooperation and Development of the Executive Yuan, and former Joint Commission on Rural Reconstruction. When the FIRDI was first established, its main mission was to help Taiwan's canned food industry enhance the international competitiveness of its products. This successfully led to Taiwan's pineapple, mushroom, asparagus, and bamboo shoot exports ranking first in the world for several consecutive years. Following the changes in Taiwan's economic structure, the FIRDI gradually expanded its research and development in hopes of developing key technologies for the food and biotechnology industry. The FIRDI thus became Taiwan's largest food research and development and professional training institution.

As "information security is national security" became a global trend, the Executive Yuan in 2015 announced operating regulations for the responsibility of grade A, B, and C agencies with respect to information and communications security. Government agencies were required to establish necessary information security mechanisms and obtain different certifications, in hopes of reducing the risk of being hacked. The FIRDI was classified as a grade C agency and was required to install a variety of information security software, as well as complete the implementation of ISMS for one core information system before the end of 2017, so as to strengthen its defense against malware. Despite its great attention to information security over the years, the FIRDI's limited human resource of IT and lack of an automated inventory tool made it difficult to obtain ISO 27001 certification.

Liao Chu-Hsien said, "The FIRDI has over 450 professional R&D personnel, numerous new products from biological resources, a platform for new food product development and technology applications, and provides services to over a thousand companies each year. In order to meet the needs of research units, departments are authorized to make software and hardware procurements by themselves, but this has made it harder for the IT department to monitor the current status of equipment. This is why the FIRDI began testing the asset inventory functions of FineArt Technology's X-FORT as recommended by the Industrial Technology Research Institute when applying for ISO 27001 certification. After evaluating its functions, implementation cost, and management interface, the FIRDI finally decided to purchase the software in 2017."

The ability to rapidly determine the current status of hardware equipment reduces the IT department's workload

The IT department has outsourced the maintenance of client equipment due to its limited human resources, but it is still required to take inventory of IT equipment due to the business secrets that are stored in such

equipment and the restrictions of the new Personal Information Protection Act. Due to the considerable size of the FIRDI and large number of computers in each department, the annual inventory count is extremely time-consuming, and there are often considerable discrepancies because employees are allowed to independently install software. Luckily, this dilemma can now be resolved by FineArt Technology's X-FORT.

FineArt Technology's X-FORT supports Windows XP/Vista/7/8/8.1/10 and provides software and hardware asset management functions without affecting system operations. In the case of hardware management functions, the client agent automatically reports hardware information, such as CPU, memory, and hardware devices. Combined with the hardware device change warning function, administrators will immediately be notified when the hardware device on a client is changed. This can prevent equipment from being stolen.

"Besides the previously mentioned functions, our deepest impression of the computer equipment inventory function is that it allowed the IT department to gain accurate information on the quantity and current status of computer equipment" said Liao Chu-Hsien, "After taking an inventory, we were also able to print out the current status of software and hardware on each computer and paste it on the client equipment. If there is an emergency, we can use it to immediately find any discrepancies, greatly lowering the difficulty of managing so many computers."

An inventory of software use eliminates the risk of copyright infringement

As mentioned before, the FIRDI authorizes departments to independently purchase software to meet their work requirements, but the variety of software used by researchers for their work prevents the IT department from determining whether if the software is legal. IT personnel can use the software asset management function of X-FORT to monitor the types of computer software on the client, and effectively manage the distribution and lawfulness of software. When IT personnel discover that a client has software that it has not used for a long period of time, they will check with the user and remotely remove the unnecessary software.

Liao Chu-Hsien explained, "Taking an inventory of software is an extremely complex task. Luckily, all we need to do is use the software asset management function of X-FORT to rapidly and accurately determine the types of software on clients." X-FORT is able to manage software licensing models, i.e., divides software into licensed, copyrighted, and free. Besides preventing copyright infringement incidents, it also benefits the establishment of a software management system. The IT department is highly satisfied with X-FORT's overall performance.

Under the collective efforts of the Industrial Technology Research Institute, the IT department, and FIRDI employees, the FIRDI has successfully obtained ISO 27001 certification and also met the Executive Yuan's information security requirements on grade C agencies. In light of the excellent functions of X-FORT's IT Asset Management module, the IT department plans to further implement the Remote Function module, which will lower its workload by remotely dealing with issues on the client end. This will also provide all employees with a more stable work environment. **F**

* Reference from Chinese version.

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