

MRM CASE STUDY • CITY OF BÖBLINGEN

The Value of Unused Microsoft Office Licences

How the City of Böblingen Turned Surplus Software into Budget



Software Licences Still Have Value Provided You Act in Time

The town of Böblingen sold Microsoft licences that were no longer in use to MRM Distribution – and is sharing this experience with other local authorities.



What else is in the licence cupboard?

Many public sector organisations hold software licences that are no longer being used. Old Office licences acquired under previous contract models, server licences from earlier procurement cycles, or surplus licences left over after cloud migration projects often remain unused for years. In many cases, IT teams are uncertain whether a public authority can legally resell software licences. As a result, valuable assets are simply left unused.

However, software licences have a limited resale window. Once Microsoft support ends, they quickly lose market value and may become unsaleable. For municipalities working under tight budget constraints, this can mean a missed opportunity to generate additional revenue.

Between Nursery School PCs and Cloud Migration

The City of Böblingen demonstrates why it is worth reviewing existing software assets. The city's IT department supports approximately 1,500 users and more than 1,000 devices, ranging from office workstations to computers used in municipal childcare facilities. A team of ten specialists within the Organisation and Information

Technology Department is responsible for ensuring that technology keeps pace with an increasingly digital public administration.

Like many local authorities, Böblingen operates a mixed IT environment. Some services have already moved to the cloud, while others continue to run on-premises. Licensing agreements evolve, subsidiary organisations use separate procurement channels, and new subscription models replace traditional perpetual licences. This creates an important commercial question: What happens to the licences that are no longer required?

Böblingen – A Practical Example for Other Local Authorities

In Böblingen's case, Office 2024 Standard licences had been purchased for the Böblingen Thermal Spa, a wholly owned municipal subsidiary, under an Open Value agreement. Later, it became apparent that the city's existing Microsoft Select Plus agreement would have been the correct procurement route. As a consequence, the licences could no longer be used by the subsidiary.

Fortunately, the licences were not simply forgotten. Manuela Ivezaj from the IT User Services team maintained a clear

overview of the city's licensing inventory. Böblingen works closely with the IT service provider Bechtle on licensing matters. „We actively manage our software licences and regularly review them together with Bechtle. The idea of selling licences that were no longer being used had been discussed for some time, so I followed up with our contact.“ Bechtle subsequently introduced the city to MRM Distribution.

What Is Required for a Successful Licence Sale? Tim Bloemke, Purchasing Manager at MRM Distribution, reviewed the city's Office licences. „We always require a clear and complete audit trail,“ explains Tim Bloemke. In Böblingen's case, all necessary documentation was readily available, including: Original purchase invoices and Microsoft licensing agreements. Evidence that the thermal spa is a wholly owned subsidiary of the city and therefore authorised to transfer the licences

Manuela Ivezaj was able to provide all supporting documents. The final step was confirmation that the software had been decommissioned within the organisation. As a result, licences that were no longer being used were successfully converted into revenue for the municipal budget. „It is definitely worthwhile.“

MRM Distribution as a Trusted Partner

Not every municipality has a complete set of licensing records readily available. Invoices may be stored in different departments, filing systems may have changed over the years, and the original purchaser may no longer be with the organisation. In these situations, determining whether licences can be sold often becomes a detailed

review process. MRM supports customers by:

- Reviewing existing licence inventories
- Identifying missing documentation
- Assessing whether licences are eligible for resale
- Guiding organisations through each step of the process

„We explain exactly what documentation is required, why it is needed, and whether a licence inventory can be clearly verified.“

This support is particularly valuable for public sector organisations, which must demonstrate responsible use of public funds and maintain clear records of their decisions. Recovering value from unused software is more than a bookkeeping exercise. It demonstrates prudent management of public resources.

The Importance of Timing

Böblingen's experience also highlights the importance of acting early. Alongside the newer Office 2024 licences, the city still possessed hundreds of older software licences that were no longer in use. Unfortunately, many of these had become largely unattractive for resale. „Looking back, we should have reviewed the possibility of selling licences during our migration to Microsoft 365.“ This forms Manuela Ivezaj's key recommendation for other municipalities: Do not wait too long. Otherwise, the licences may lose their value.

For local authorities planning future licensing strategies, it is worth reviewing existing software assets before they become obsolete. By involving MRM Distribution early in the process, organisations can maximise the financial return from unused software.

„MANY ORGANISATIONS DO NOT REALISE HOW MUCH VALUE REMAINS IN THEIR UNUSED SOFTWARE LICENCES. BÖBLINGEN WAS DIFFERENT.“

THE DOCUMENTATION WAS AVAILABLE, RESPONSIBILITIES WERE CLEARLY DEFINED, AND THAT ENABLED THE CITY TO QUICKLY CONVERT UNUSED SOFTWARE INTO REAL FINANCIAL VALUE.“



TIM BLOEMKE,
PURCHASING MANAGER,
MRM DISTRIBUTION

MRM CLEARLY EXPLAINED WHICH LICENCES WERE SUITABLE FOR RESALE AND WHAT DOCUMENTATION WAS REQUIRED. AS A RESULT, WE HAD NO CONCERNS REGARDING LEGAL COMPLIANCE.

PARTICULARLY IN ECONOMICALLY CHALLENGING TIMES, IT MAKES SENSE TO **TURN UNUSED SOFTWARE LICENCES INTO ADDITIONAL REVENUE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES.**



MANUELA IVEZAJ
BÖBLINGEN CITY COUNCIL
IT USER SUPPORT



Key Takeaway

Unused software licences can generate valuable revenue for public authorities, provided they are reviewed and sold in time. The City of Böblingen demonstrates that effective licence management, complete documentation and expert support can transform dormant software assets into budget that can be reinvested elsewhere. Review your licence inventory early, act before support ends, and unlock the hidden value in unused software assets.

Get in touch with your IT partner now!

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