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## Acrodex Supports ACTRA National's Growth With The Microsoft Enterprise Agreement

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### BEN SWITZER

Information Technology Manager  
ACTRA National

The Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA) are a national organization made up of more than 21,000 professional performers working in the English-language recorded media. Members are self-employed artists working in feature films, TV, radio, digital media, corporate videos and commercials as dramatic actors, comedians, dancers, background performers, voice over specialists, singers, puppeteers, stunt performers – and more.

Founded in 1943, ACTRA's core mission is to protect and promote the rights of Canadian performers. ACTRA also works to raise the profile of members and pursues performer-friendly policies at all levels of government.

ACTRA Plays a leading role in collective bargaining by negotiating collective agreements, offering insurance and retirement benefits, promoting performer's rights for compensation collection, celebrating Canadian talent through numerous initiatives, advocating political action for the arts and the right for Canadians to have opportunities to tell and see their own stories.

ACTRA also works closely with many other trade unions, ad hoc industry advocacy coalitions and public interest groups on a wide range of cultural and economic issues facing not only artists, but also all Canadians.

### **The Challenge: Lacking A Forward-Thinking Approach, ACTRA Was Buying Software As-Needed And Losing Track Of Its Licenses**

Before approaching Acrodex to negotiate a Microsoft Enterprise Agreement, ACTRA National was "buying what we needed when we needed it. We had little long-term planning vision," explained ACTRA's Information Technology Manager Ben Switzer. "Not having a good understanding in our licensing options meant we had no long-term goals in place to support planning or sustainability." This was especially affecting the department's budgeting process.

Besides the challenge of trying to manage their Microsoft agreements and licenses, IT staff were finding they couldn't forecast far enough into the future to see what the longer-term needs of the organization would be, especially as it related to software purchasing.

### Key Benefits

- Microsoft Desktop Pro EA with software assurance created cost savings over the next 3 years
- Gave ACTRA IT department ability to plan long-term
- Acrodex provided licensing expertise to ensure ACTRA were setup for long-term success

**The Solution:**

**Microsoft EA agreement Supports ACTRA’s Growth**

ACTRA approached Acrodex to help it bring all of its agreements under one umbrella, allowing the department to gain a clear understanding of its software licenses and find an easier way to manage and budget for software procurement.

Acrodex helped the organization understand what is available through a Microsoft EA, and ACTRA was able to immediately determine it had a need for infrastructure applications like Microsoft Exchange 2010, Software Management Center, Microsoft Office Communicator Server and other reasonably priced applications. “From the beginning it was evident this agreement would precisely satisfy ACTRA’s IT needs,” added Matthew Eyman, Acrodex Client Manager.

“I’m surprised this is something our department hadn’t done this sooner,” explained Switzer. “I suspect that previous IT officials didn’t want to spend money and maintain the farm with respect to software and they perhaps lacked that longer-term vision. But with this particular agreement, Acrodex was able to help me prepare a business case for management that illustrated the cost-savings and ROI. From the beginning it was self-evident this was the right approach.”

Switzer said he was particularly attracted to the flexibility of the EA program. For instance, when ACTRA recently reincorporated one of its regional locals into the National organization, Switzer said they were able to easily add 50 client access licenses (CALs) at a moment’s notice without having to arrange a brand new agreement.

Similarly, Switzer is finding the new single-agreement setup has made life easier for his entire department.

“The EA provides us simpler management, so now all client licenses and service licenses are all on the same agreement and all expire on the same date.”

He added, “Now our Microsoft Developer Network subscriptions can be managed by the lead developer, our TechNet administration and subscriptions are easier to manage, and we’re able to upgrade without upfront investment which is provided by having purchased the Microsoft Core CAL, and overall, we’re finding it easier to manage our time.”

As they plan for the future – something they can now do with ease and strategy – ACTRA’s IT department has plans to upgrade to Office 2010 and refreshing its desktops with Windows 7.

“By working with ACTRA from the start of their licensing review, Acrodex was able to ensure they got the maximum value in their long term investment and could support ACTRA through the planning process to user deployment to adoption,” added Eyman.

“Our experience with Acrodex was great. They’ve got a good team behind them and they have been responsive. We got everything we needed and some,” Switzer said. “We have a good working relationship and it’s one I’m hoping will last many years in the future.”

**Acrodex Software Licensing Services**

*Advancing your business through technology leadership*

The Acrodex vision of supporting our customers in all aspects of their IT needs includes services around software licensing.

Our team of specialized software professionals routinely work with Business and Technical decision makers to identify and guide customers to the appropriate software solutions that enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of your technology assets. They function as software brokers to ensure the selection and timely procurement of your software assets by leveraging the most advantageous program and strategy in the procurement process, including industry or volume discounts, software consolidation, and evaluation of any ongoing program benefits.