

Eight Simple Steps To Effective Software Asset Management

The requirement to follow regulatory acts and initiatives from the legalization to toughen up the protection of intellectual property has necessitated in many organizations rethinking about the way they dealt with software asset management. For effective management of software assets, organizations require an approach, which is long lasting and one that blends both process and infrastructure to protect and control the software assets across every stage of their lifecycle. Lots of organizations underrate the huge volume and the preciousness of their software assets. These organizations own a large quantity of software without any accurate knowledge rendering it hard to make a precise list of software owned by them and also to deploy the right software in the correct place. Even though IT assets, which are physical in nature (hardware), are typically given careful consideration, few possess the ability to efficiently or sufficiently manage the software assets they have on a regular basis, making them susceptible to increased risk. The steps given below are recommended for developing a centralized licensing approach and setting up an efficient program for software asset management.

- 1. Assemble the License Agreements You have** It is crucial to assemble every licensing agreement under the ownership of the company, no matter who purchased them. Ideally this also comprises invoices and purchase proofs. Licenses are of various formats and they come from various places, making invoices and sales receipts priceless in establishing that purchase of the software was made from a proper source. A license certificate may not be sufficient during audit of external software licenses.
- 2. Determine Your Actual License Position** After collecting every license agreement, assessment must be done to produce a statement regarding your actual license standings specifying the license rights for each software application and the number of licenses owned. Evaluating post collation of licenses can be difficult, according to the volume and type of licenses inside the organization. However, it is vital for the establishment of the actual standing on current licenses owned for each piece of software.
- 3. Familiarize With Your Current Software Assets** To familiarize thoroughly with your current software assets, auditing of used software is required. It is primarily done to find out the software that has been installed on computers and to create a list of total installations per application. A software audit has to identify the right item that utilizes a license, i.e. per user, per process, per computer.
- 4. Evaluate the Software Inventory You Have** Software audit information in unverified form does not deliver a precise understanding of the software licensing needed, because all software do not need similar kind of license. After finishing the licensing analysis, evaluating the data gathered by the software inventory will be required in order to find out whether the licenses required for all software are in use currently.
- 5. Match Your Software To Licenses** For finding out license compliance accurately, one must have a precise count of license and a precise audit of software. Also, it must be ensured that comparison is done between the right software and the right license(s) to find out the over/under compliance position related with licensing for each application.
- 6. Face Reality** If you are under- or over-licensed, possibilities are that your current approach to software asset management is inadequate or not strict enough. Even if you are under- or over-licensed, it is recommended highly to establish a remediation plan for execution.
- 7. Develop a Well-Ordered Procurement Policy And Processes** After auditing, defining a company policy for software purchasing becomes significant, comprising approved vendors, purchasing authority and the way to tackle exceptions. Create a database for software inventory to keep track of approved software versions, titles and purchase information of license. Software titles should be standardized and this will allow all employees to have similar versions, and replace obsolete PCs and software.
- 8. Support Ongoing Management** The software needs and software environment of an organization evolve constantly and should be subjected to periodic review. The ongoing process of software asset management requires to be synchronized with the requirements of the organization. This will enable you to limit the legal liability of your organization resulting from insufficient procedures for license management. This could lead to and/or failure in obviating copyright infringements/illegal software utilization and under-licensing.

About the Author

[Datacraft is the leading independent IT services and solutions company in Asia Pacific.](#) Datacraft combines an expertise in networking, security, Microsoft solutions, storage and contact centre technologies, with advanced skills in consulting, integration and managed services, to craft IT solutions for businesses.

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