



SAM & Cybersecurity

Protect, control and secure your software assets

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

THE PURPOSE OF THIS MINI GUIDE

Recent Ransomware attacks have affected thousands of organizations around the world and have made clear that we all need more visibility and control over our IT infrastructure.

Software Asset Management (SAM) should be used as a key tool in the fight against cyber-crime, not just limited to purely managing compliance. A SAM tool will cover many aspects of software management including purchasing, deployment, maintenance, utilization and optimization of software assets.

SAM gives you the intelligence and insightful data required to protect your software and hardware estate.

Why is Software Asset Management Relevant to Cybersecurity?

Having trust in your own data is vital. A SAM tool will provide you with a clear and complete view of your software licenses and deployments across your organization's network, enabling you to identify high-risk areas, conduct an in-depth security assessment and respond to cybersecurity threats.



THE CHALLENGES

THE CHALLENGES

Using Outdated Software

Use of old software that is no longer supported is a much more attractive target to cyber thieves and increases cyber risk, as shown by the recent WannaCry Ransomware attacking Windows XP vulnerabilities.

Recent ransomware attacks have exploited a vulnerability in a Windows Server component that was fixed by Microsoft and a patch provided for many operating systems. These patches or updates can be downloaded and automatically deployed by the systems SAM tools hook into.

Not updating software

Not using the latest version of software or having patches that are not up to date opens doors to cybercrime. Whilst Microsoft did later release a patch free of charge for unsupported or legacy operating systems these were all at risk for a significantly longer period.

Good SAM tools will always advise you of deployments for versions of software that are no longer supported by the vendor so that you can understand these risks and the level of them to your business.



THE CHALLENGES

Adding software indiscriminately

Illegal digital downloads, or purchasing online from an unknown vendor increases the risk of unknowingly downloading malware. A software asset management tool will identify any rogue IT installations, unmanaged and unregulated IT resources and irregular deployment practices.

One common cyber attack method is for a user to be deceived into downloading malicious code or opening malicious email attachments that can go on to infect an organization's entire network.

Sharing removable media

Use of removable media is a common way that inappropriate software is shared from machine to machine, and can compromise assets, open breaches or cause similar problems.

Staff and contractors

Former staff who still have access to your organization's network because their accounts have not been shut down pose a huge risk to your cybersecurity. Also, staff or contractors who access the network via unmanaged devices will not be receiving automatic patches or software updates - another risk!



Cybersecurity Challenges

JUST TO REITERATE THE RISKS

Organizations cannot hope to satisfactorily secure their IT networks without full knowledge of;

- What is deployed across their estate
- What devices are being used
- If software is up to date
- Who is accessing the network

As well as this information organizations must also be able to identify user behaviour which breaches IT security policies.

A succesful cyber attack could leave your organization with data exposed, at risk financially and unable to continue business as normal for a significant time period. It can also be incredibly damaging from a public relations viewpoint, with the effects lasting long after the initial harm caused is repaired.





THE SOLUTION

Correctly managed software asset management will provide basic security and peace of mind for all of your organization's software and hardware assets.

What is the answer?

ENSURE YOUR IT IS VISIBLE MANAGE THE INTEGRITY OF YOUR IT USAGE PROTECT YOUR ORGANIZATION'S DATA

A SAM tool, used correctly, will provide you with a clear and complete view of your software licenses and deployments across your organization's network, enabling you to identify high-risk areas and conduct an in-depth security assessment.

A SAM tool cannot provide total IT security in isolation, but it will vastly improve your chances of reducing vulnerability and risk. A SAM tool can be used on-premise by an organization's IT team, or deployed as a service, managed by a team of experienced software licensing managers.



One of the major benefits of choosing a service, which shouldn't be overlooked, is having a tailor-made extension to your in-house team, with a like-minded approach that will provide valuable advice and guidance.



BUILDING YOUR BUSINESS CASE

Building your Business Case

THE KEY COMPONENTS

To help develop a case for advancing your Software Asset Management (SAM) program, we've put together some of the key elements for any successful project proposal:

- Executive summary
- Outline of your organization's SAM problems
- Situation analysis behind the problems
- Summary of available SAM solutions
- Project description and requirements
 - Required resource, timings, SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound) objectives
- Cost-benefit analysis
 - Solution and project costs, expected ROI and benefits
- Recommendations
 - Your interpretation and recommended solutions

Our mission is to enable SAM, IT, Finance and Procurement teams to make informed decisions and take proactive action. Along with our partners we offer the most valuable and powerful license management services on the market.

We use a blend of home grown Software Asset Management technologies and licensing expertise to take on the time-consuming and laborious license management tasks and produce the business critical license intelligence required to move forward. From point-in-time Effective Licensing Position (ELP) programs, through to on-going license compliance and Software Asset Management initiatives, License Dashboard and its partners will help you establish, understand, optimize and manage your software assets. All of which can lead to savings of up to 30% in your overall IT expenditure.

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