ENTERPRISE SAAS MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION REPORT – USU

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AJ Witt
ITAM Analyst
The ITAM Forum

USU Software Asset Management Achieves Enterprise SaaS Management Certification from the ITAM Review

Executive Summary

The ITAM Review certifies USU Software Asset Management as having met the requirements for Enterprise SaaS Management certification in accordance with our community-sourced **open standard**.

This solution was first certified in 2023, and this report includes updates and features made available within the tool since then.

About USU

USU is a German-founded and headquartered global organisation with more than 600 employees worldwide.

It provides a full suite of IT Management solutions, including ITSM, ITAM, FinOps, Knowledge Management, and ITOM.

Founded in 1977, USU has been active in the ITAM tools and services market since 2010.

In late 2024, the investment firm Toma Bravo acquired shares in USU's product business. USU's current management team will continue to be responsible for the new company.

USU's primary strength is in providing an integrated approach to IT Asset Management in the context of wider IT governance requirements. It recognises that enterprise customer estates are large, complex, distributed, and increasingly hybrid.

The SaaS Management capabilities of USU Software Asset Management reflect this, in being able to manage all software, whether it be on-premises, true clientless SaaS, or a hybrid solution such as Adobe Creative Cloud and Microsoft 365.

Furthermore, USU also provides a range of managed service offerings for organisations looking to at least partly outsource software license optimisation.

Analyst Review

This analyst review is based on the detailed responses provided by USU to the certification survey, customer references, and an in-depth demo provided to the report author.

The ITAM Review assesses and provides commentary on USU's adherence to the standard in the following five areas.

Discovery & Inventory

Cost Management

Optimsation

Automation & Management
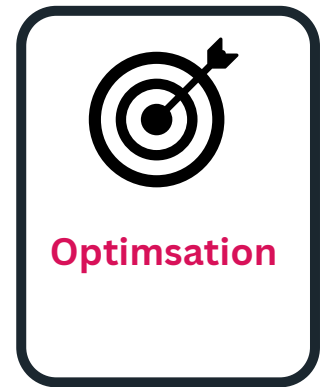
Risk Management

Discovery & Inventory
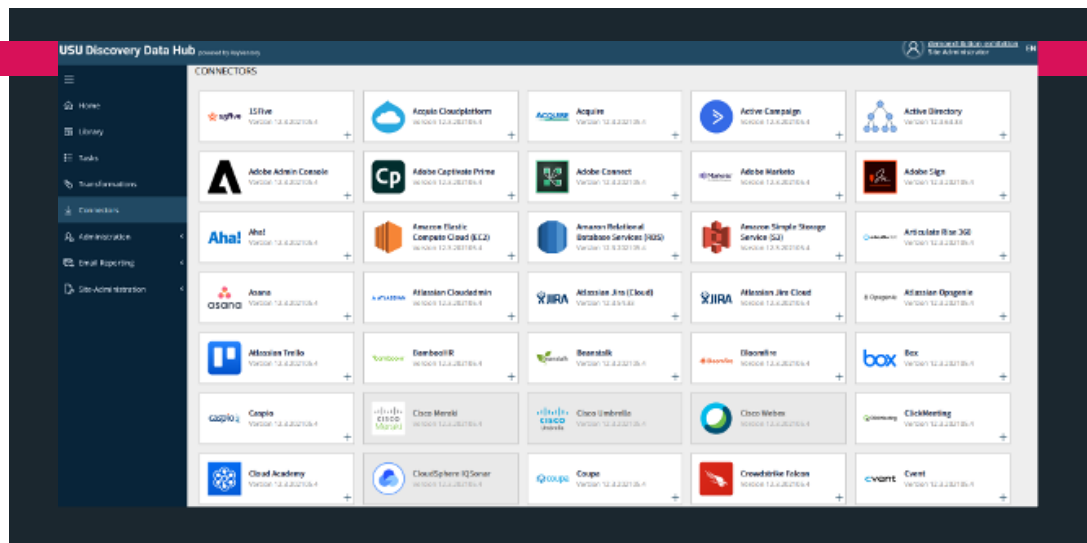
USU's SaaS Management product, USU SAM for SaaS, is available solely as a cloud-based tool. In keeping with other solutions in this market, it uses flexible discovery and inventory methodologies, focused particularly on enterprise-level applications such as Salesforce, ServiceNow, and Microsoft 365. It is particularly strong in this regard compared to other solutions, being first to market with fully-featured solutions for Salesforce & ServiceNow.

Primary discovery and inventory is performed via API connection to SaaS publisher portals, with more than 130 connectors available.Browser tracking is available, and the tool can also ingest usage metering data from on-premises devices. Data is also gathered from single sign on solutions such as Okta and integrations to Concur & Coupa for expense information is provided.

Customer references report this flexibility extends to ingesting data from existing discovery and inventory sources, important in secure and tightly controlled environments where agreement to deploy additional discovery tooling might be difficult.

USU continue to develop the product's capability in this area through the addition of new connectors based on customer demand. Furthermore, if customers need, for example, an industry-specific or niche connector created, they may engage USU's Managed Services to have it developed. Over time customers should see USU's library of connectors expand to provide comprehensive coverage.

Cost Management
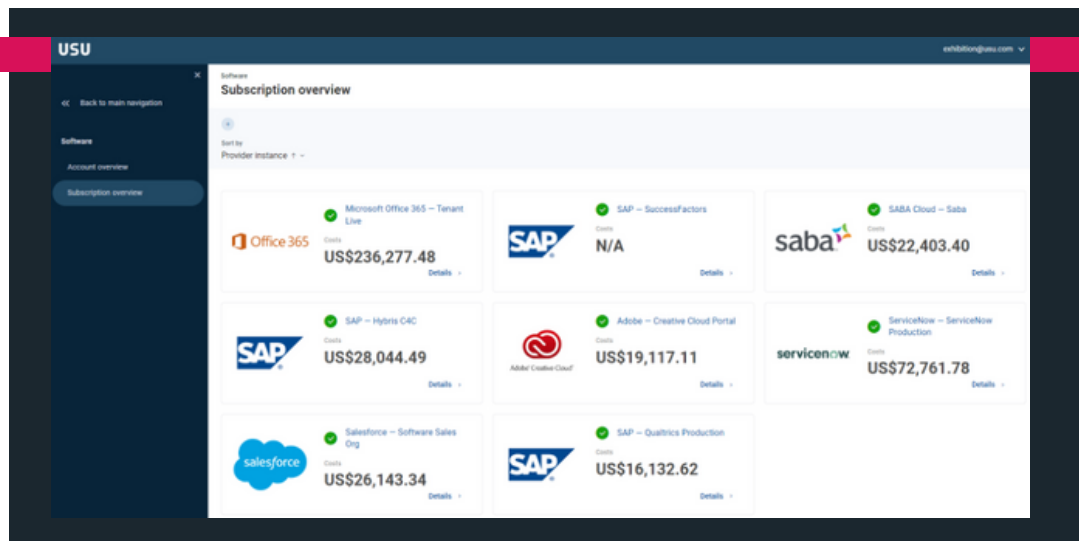
Cost Management goes hand-in-hand with optimisation and so this section should be read in conjunction with the next section to get a full picture of USU's capabilities in this area.

Cost Management opportunities for SaaS are presented regularly, due to the volume of applications and typically annual agreements. As such, a renewals calendar is a vital function of any SaaS Management tool.

Knowing the usage of an application enables each renewal to be right-sized in order to cut down waste. USU's solution provides a renewals calendar across all software.

Importantly, for larger enterprises, it is possible to allocate applications to owners, which supports departmental and division-level IT governance.

Furthermore, expenditure can be assigned to corporate entities for cross-charging and accounting purposes. This is a long-standing feature of USU's other ITAM products and is a differentiator for their SaaS Management solution.

Optimisation

USU's Software Asset Management products are based around highly configurable rulesets designed to capture both the nuance of standard software agreements and any customer-specific terms and conditions.

A large number of standard rulesets are available out of the box, and customers can develop their own. USU's Managed Services can also be engaged to configure rulesets to aid optimisation.

Optimization capabilities are largely dependent on the information available from application APIs, and this is in keeping with other solutions in this market.

Where USU goes further is in integrating data from on-premises, SaaS only, and hybrid solutions to provide a single view of an application or publisher.

Optimization rulesets are available to detect overlapping software, unused and underutilised software, and to enable consolidation of contracts and agreements.

Automation & Management
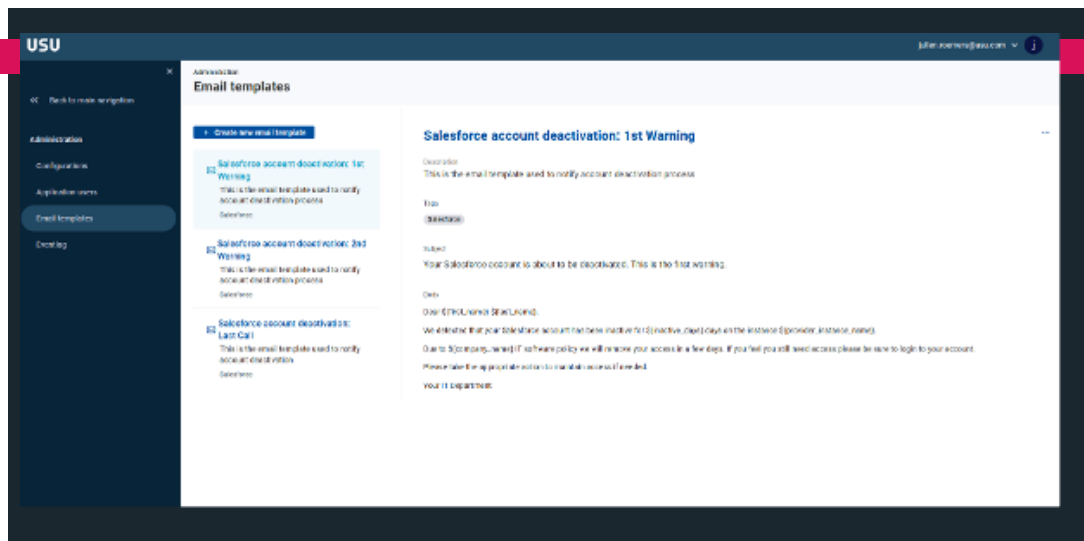
Automation capabilities that meet the standard are included in the tool, including connectivity between systems for data-sharing and a self-service employee application store.

Optimisations and other tasks can be triggered from within the tool or can be passed to external toolsets such as a ticketing system for further action.

USU has always excelled in making ITAM data available to other toolsets, and this excellence applies to the SaaS Management capabilities too.

Summary
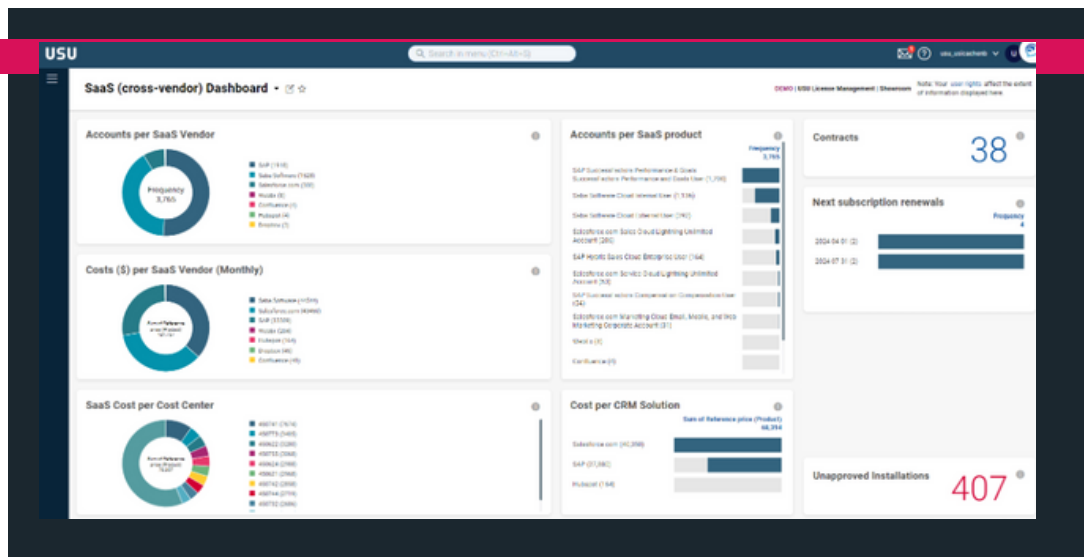
USU take an innovative approach to managing SaaS, ensuring it is always placed in the context of wider IT Governance in general, and SAM specifically.

The solution fully complies with the certification standard.

However, to get the best from the solution, either an in-house expert team or assistance from USU's managed services is required.

The tool is complex, and the UI is less modern than newer entrants in this market, although USU are working on unifying and updating the user experience across all its products.

Customer Reference

- **Exceptional customer service.**

- **Installation and commissioning was smooth and efficient.**

- **Strong return on investment within the first year.**

Media & Publishing Company - Europe

After conducting a successful proof of concept, the reference selected USU SAM for SaaS due to its ability to deliver on key requirements compared to two other vendors.

The organisation identified a critical need for a tool that could optimise software license management by accurately comparing purchased licenses with actual usage. This capability has proven invaluable in enabling better resource allocation, cost efficiency, and oversight of software utilisation across the company.

The solution, managed by the Software Asset Management team, plays a central role in maintaining operational efficiency and controlling software-related costs.

The installation and commissioning process, carried out collaboratively with the USU, was smooth and efficient, with challenges minimised through shared project management.

The tool demonstrated a strong return on investment within the first year, showcasing its immediate impact on addressing inefficiencies, though subsequent savings have plateaued due to ongoing optimisation efforts.

The vendor's customer service has been exceptional, with prompt assistance and dedicated account management, ensuring effective support.

To further improve, the vendor could enhance customisation options, provide more advanced analytics tools, and offer proactive optimisation strategies to maximise the solution's long-term value.

Customer Reference

- **Delivered measrable ROI within one-to-two months.**

- **Customer service has been highly responsive.**

- **The vendor's extensive support and collaboration ensured a successful deployment.**

Global Life Sciences Company

We selected this product because its predecessor, LC4SF (LicenseControl for Salesforce), was the simplest solution available at the time and uniquely offered automatic deactivation of subscriptions.

Building on this foundation, the newer SAM for SaaS tool introduced enhanced functionality, diverse workflows, and additional options, making it a natural and improved successor.

This evolution has solidified its role as a crucial tool for Software Asset Management, addressing the organisation's needs with greater efficiency and adaptability.

While the installation process is complex due to the integration of four distinct components, the vendor's extensive support and collaboration with internal network security teams ensured a successful deployment.

The product has delivered measurable ROI within one-to-two months, allowing the reallocation of unused licenses through deactivated accounts.

Customer service has been highly responsive, typically resolving issues within 24 hours.

To further enhance the user experience, the vendor could provide more comprehensive setup manuals and clearer instructions for interrelated application configurations.

Conclusion

USU has offered SaaS Management solutions for as long as this solution category has existed. For example, it developed one of the first, comprehensive solutions for optimising Salesforce, as noted by Reference 2.

It is naturally focused on providing bespoke optimisation solutions for the largest enterprise software vendors, and this makes its products particularly suited to enterprise customers.

It is notable that USU continually enhances its connectors in response to customer requirements and changes by publishers. This enables them to go further 'under the hood' and deliver deeper optimisations than some other providers.

The SaaS capabilities of the latest iteration of USU Software Asset Management are highly flexible and powerful; however, in keeping with other USU solutions, this does not require an expert in-house team or continuing engagement with USU's excellent SAM Managed Services to deliver optimal results.

USU's customer service is reported as excellent, and our research indicates the solutions are priced very competitively compared to other enterprise ITAM toolsets.

USU's approach to meeting SaaS Management use cases differs from other players in this market, and it should be noted that it's particularly suited to large enterprise customers. This is particularly the case if those customers are highly distributed and need to govern on-premises, pure SaaS, and hybrid software deployments.

About ITAM Review Certifications

The ITAM Review develops and maintains community-sourced certifications for ITAM-related tools and services. Each certification consists of a survey, product review and two independent customer references. We welcome additional reviews of the product or service via The ITAM Review Marketplace.

About the ITAM Review

Founded in 2008, The ITAM Review provides independent news, reviews, and analysis for the global IT Asset Management community. In 2024, the ITAM Review was acquired by the ITAM Forum, a global, not-for-profit, membership organisation for the world-wide ITAM community.