# USU Software Asset Management

## Certification Report

## Enterprise SAM

AJ Witt, ITAM Review

# Executive Summary



The ITAM Review is pleased to announce that USU Software Asset Management is certified for Enterprise SAM. ITAM Industry Analyst AJ Witt said:

"*Since we first certified this solution USU have carried out extensive work to modernize the UI and feature set. It's now fully equipped to help customers manage hybrid environments and the improved dashboarding and reporting features mean it's ready to be put in front of stakeholders responsible for monitoring decentralized IT estates.*"

Customers praised its return on investment, flexibility, powerful features, and USU's partnership approach to delivering customer success.

USU Software Asset Management was assessed against The ITAM Review's Enterprise SAM Tools certification in Summer 2023. Two customer reference calls were completed, along with a questionnaire and product demo. The certification standard assesses capabilities across 7 areas including the below. For full details of the certification criteria please see the attached survey responses.

## Visibility & Identification

The solution provides comprehensive IT estate visibility. It ensures that customers maintain accurate and up-to-date views of their IT assets through a combination of scanning processes, data imports, and efficient data normalization, all scheduled for timely updates. These processes are visually represented on user-friendly dashboards, providing transparency into the accuracy of data imports and processing. Customers can effectively monitor their estate coverage and auditing status by utilizing the "last inventory date" report, enabling scan and inventory issues to be identified and resolved.

USU offers extensive coverage across major operating systems, ensuring a wide range of compatibility, and utilizing both agentless communication and the use of a scan agent, allowing customers to choose the approach that best suits their requirements. Normalization identifies duplicate records through data consolidation and pinpoints retired machines based on the last logon or inventory date. Furthermore, customers can configure inactivity periods individually, ensuring a customized approach to managing their assets. The product also excels in tracking new devices and users, allowing customers to stay informed about any additions to their environment through data imports and visually displaying this information in convenient dashlets.

## Cost Management

For cost management, USU's Enterprise SAM solution offers a multifaceted approach to managing software usage effectively. It leverages metering data to calculate last usage dates, allowing customers to identify and remove unused software based on precise information about usage patterns. This streamlined approach reduces costs and eliminates wasteful spending. This approach extends to maintenance renewals and contract negotiations by proactively notifying customers about upcoming renewals, ensuring they get the best value from their subscriptions. The product generates cost reduction reports and simulations for potential reallocation of licenses.

Cost Management capabilities go beyond on-premises software, extending to optimize spending on public or hybrid cloud scenarios, including Bring Your Own License (BYOL) situations. It also provides optimization features for Software as a Service (SaaS), Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) and Platform as a Service (PaaS), ensuring customers maximize the value of their cloud investments.

## Risk Management

For many of USU's large customers, managing Software Portfolio Risk is crucial. The solution provides the insights required to assess compliance positions, prepare for contract negotiations, and remove risks. By facilitating transparency in compliance checks, it gives customers the insight they need to make informed decisions in these areas.

USU's products have always been designed to take account of multiple stakeholders and distributed company organizational structures. This solution does this by offering different authority levels and access to a customer's global software risk profile. Its detailed permissions engine ensures that data sharing aligns with the requirements of different stakeholders. This flexibility allows organizations to manage and navigate software risks more effectively across cost centres and business units, driving risk management.

Where non-compliance is discovered, customers can utilize scenario modelling and optimization hints to determine the degree to which risks can be mitigated without resorting to new license purchases. Furthermore, customers can track risks through configurable alert emails and dashlet visualizations, making it easier to manage potential compliance issues. The solution goes beyond identifying overconsumption, providing the intelligence to identify additional risks, such as end-of-life, end-of-support, and vulnerability information. This proactive approach ensures organizations stay ahead of potential challenges and maintain a risk-managed software portfolio.

## Stakeholder Reporting

The solution offers a robust set of features to address the growing need for effective dashboarding & business Intelligence as SAM teams increasingly move towards strategic decision-making. It accommodates department or stakeholder-level SAM reporting by providing flexible views and scheduled reports. This ensures that stakeholders across the organization can access the information most relevant to them, tailored to their specific needs. Self-service is permitted within a safe framework of permission sets ensuring that stakeholders such as department heads only have access to their own data. This balance between self-service and data security enables organizations to maintain transparency while safeguarding their data and was noted as important by both customer references.

From a technical perspective it is possible to integrate with external reporting tools by leveraging a standardized REST API. This allows users to extract SAM data and incorporate it into their preferred reporting and analysis tools, such as Microsoft Power BI or Salesforce Tableau, facilitating a comprehensive approach to data analysis.

One of the significant improvements to the product since we last certified it is dashboarding and custom reporting functionality. This enables stakeholders to build their own dashboards using dashlets and to receive custom reports on a scheduled or on-demand basis.

## Further Reading

For further details on how USU Software Asset Management meets the Enterprise SAM standard please see the attached survey response document.

# Customer References

Customer references were sourced in consultation with USU. Both references are organizations with considerable deployments and thus match the definition of an Enterprise SAM user. If you are a USU customer, we would welcome your review of USU Software Asset Management – you can provide this via our Marketplace.

# Customer Reference 1 – European Telecoms

This reference is a European-based telecoms company with approximately 30,000 employees. They chose USU for Enterprise SAM during a tender process that involved four vendors. Several factors were essential in their selection. The solution provider needed to have a local partner in their country, and technical competence was critical. Following the tender process it was determined that USU, in conjunction with a local managed services partner, offered the best overall service package and was therefore selected.

The project commenced in August 2018, and installations were completed within one month. The first outputs were seen within four months, indicating that the installation and commissioning of the product was relatively easy. The support from the partner and USU was noted as good. Challenges were primarily related to internal security processes, such as access and authorization to the relevant environments.

USU Enterprise SAM is primarily used by the reference to track license usage. The primary objectives include preventing duplicate purchases and eliminating payments for unused products. The product is used exclusively by their SAM Team, responsible for managing all software licenses in the company and providing compliance reports to teams using the products.

Significant cost savings were unlocked because of improved compliance controls enabled by the solution. More than 15 times the cost of the SAM Project, completed in 2019, has been saved to date. In the year following the project, they achieved three times the project's cost savings. The reference also mentioned compliance with regulations and early adaptation to new legal requirements with regard to data security.

The customer found USU to be responsive to requests and willing to incorporate some of their recommendations into the tool. They noted that the vendor's team was highly qualified and responded to tickets promptly. In terms of improvement they requested that a data collection tool should be fully integrated into the product. In their environment this is provided through USU's long-term partnership with Raynet Rayventory.

# Customer Reference 2 – European bank

This reference is a European bank with over 14,000 employees. They selected USU's Enterprise SAM service because it was used by established companies of similar size and offered a cost-effective solution. Additionally, USU had experienced local support available through local partners and a track record of successful references.

The product's installation and commissioning were rated positively. They found it easy to use, allowing them to monitor their license usage and configure server information in their infrastructure environment. They use the product for flexible license allocation based on end-user demand, easy integration with their other applications, and determining the method for discovering and allocating IBM licenses.

As a relatively recent implementation they did not report ROI but expect this to be positive as they process upcoming license renewals. They found the support provided by the vendor's local partner to be available and helpful. However, they did encounter issues due to inexperience since both parties were new to using the application. In this regard they also noted that the solution should be more user-friendly.

## Conclusion

USU's Enterprise SAM solution excels in key aspects of software asset management. It offers comprehensive IT estate visibility, timely updates, and user-friendly dashboards. Cost management features include identifying unused software, optimizing cloud spending, and facilitating maintenance renewals. The solution is designed to manage software portfolio risk effectively, supporting compliance checks and providing insights into additional risks. Stakeholder reporting is enhanced with flexible views, scheduled reports, and self-service capabilities. It also allows integration with external reporting tools. Customer references praised its value and USU's approach to working with local service partners to provide implementation and ongoing support, including SAM managed services. USU's solution empowers customers with extensive visibility, cost management, risk management, and stakeholder reporting features, across modern hybrid and decentralized IT estates.

## Certification Process

ITAM Review certifies tools and services against community-sourced and maintained certification standards. These comprehensive standards seek to measure real-world product capabilities by testing them against common use cases and scenarios. The certification process includes two customer reference calls, a detailed survey, and a vendor-provided analyst demo. In order to ensure certifications continue to meet current and emerging needs, products and certification standards are re-assessed every two years.

The certification standard for Enterprise SAM Tools is available here

## About ITAM Review

ITAM Review, founded in 2008, is an independent global community for ITAM, SAM, and Licensing professionals. ITAM Review organizes conferences worldwide alongside webinars, podcasts, whitepapers, news and analysis. Subsidiary ITAM Review Learning provides online and in-person training, helping to educate and develop the next generation of ITAM professionals.. ITAM Review product certifications are designed to inform ITAM teams about the suitability of ITAM tools & services.