

TOOLS MANAGER



ANNUAL REVIEW | WINTER 2008

The Product Mix

APPSTREAM

AppStream's solution for software distribution, license management and usage monitoring is building a solid reputation. Enhancements since our last review boost the tool's appeal to its target markets, organizations with 5,000 or more PC seats, and the education sector.

ASPERA SmartTrack

Aspera's Web-based tools take an entitlement-centric approach to managing software licenses. Its core product, SmartTrack, suits medium-size to large companies, and we expect it to grow in popularity when it hits North American markets.

BELARC BelManage

Belarc's BelManage offers basic auto-discovery functionality and is well suited for organizations of any size seeking a reliable, reasonably priced discovery solution.

BLAZENT

Blazent 4.1 is unique in its approach to integrating data and assessing quality. The product has found a niche in large organizations, particularly IT outsourcing with multiple point tools and pressing need for complex data analysis.

BMC IT Service Management, Service Request Management and BMC Analytics

BMC is delivering on its promise of providing a well-integrated tool set. Full interoperability, along with the latest enhancements and cross-product integrations between BMC Dashboards, Analytics, Change Impact Manager, Remedy and the Atrium CMDB, are available only with 7.x versions. Recent enhancements show the company is doing what it can to accelerate the migration process.

CA CA Unicenter Asset Management, Asset Portfolio Management and Asset Intelligence

CA's Unicenter suite is geared toward medium-size and large organizations looking for best-of-breed point solutions or an integrated suite for IT service and asset management. CA enters 2008 with a strong product lineup, boasting enhancements to auto-discovery, asset portfolio management and reporting and analysis functionalities.

CENTENNIAL SOFTWARE Centennial Discovery 2007, SAM.Suite and License Manager

Centennial Software's hybrid, agent/agentless Centennial Discovery solution is popular for its flexible auto-discovery capabilities. After a year without an upgrade, the company is boosting its SAM.Suite to meet the evolving needs of its core customer base of mid-market organizations.

DELL | ASAP SOFTWARE eSMART

Although ASAP Software was recently acquired and rebranded by Dell, the company's technology, staff and roadmap remain the same. The eSMART product it markets for inventory management and license compliance is well suited for organizations with 1,000 to 10,000 PC seats.

EXPRESS METRIX Express Software Manager and Express Meter

Express Software Manager offers a balanced mix of features and functions for a combined solution set. The product is best suited for small to medium-size organizations seeking strong auto-discovery and versatile software compliance and usage-control capabilities for Windows computers.

HEWLETT-PACKARD AssetCenter

Hewlett-Packard has updated AssetCenter since our last review, adding multilingual support. Customers with whom we spoke indicated that AssetCenter meets their needs, though most said they have no plans to move from v.4 to v.5.

IBM IBM Tivoli Asset Management for IT, Tivoli Asset Compliance Center and Tivoli License Compliance Manager

Having completed the first of three steps to delivery on a fully integrated suite, IBM is now moving asset and service management functions onto the common Tivoli Process Automation Platform (formerly Maximo). When finally released, the unified tool set could move the company into a true leadership position. However, customers who want to come onboard will only be able to do so at versions 7.0 and higher.

INSIGHT Insight:License Advisor

Insight offers an entitlement-centric tool, Insight:License Advisor. Formerly known as Software Spectrum, the company targets transnational companies in need of multilingual capabilities in a strong license management product.

KACE KBOX 1000 Series

The KBOX 1000 Series for software management is designed to deploy in a day. Sweeping in function, the device encompasses hardware and software inventory, patch management, software distribution, security enforcement, help desk and software license asset management.

LICENSE TRACKER Web Tracker, Auto Tracker and License Tracker

In a mushrooming marketplace for usage management tools, License Tracker has been successful in developing applications for high-cost, concurrent-use software. The company is one of only a few offering solutions specializing in software metering.

MACROVISION FLEXnet Manager

FLEXnet Manager 11 offers a basic level of administration and reporting, and for customers running high numbers of FLEX-enabled products, the centralization of licensing and usage information, alerts and reporting all in one console is valuable. Macrovision remains a major player in the fragmented market for embedded license controls for high-ticket, concurrent-use software and consumer-software activation technology.

MANAGESOFT

Enterprise Compliance Manager

ManageSoft recently released Enterprise Compliance Manager v.7.9, enhancing usage tracking and license management functionalities. Expanding its product line, the company continues to penetrate the marketplace of medium-size and large customers, especially those with decentralized, global environments.

MICROSOFT

System Center Configuration Manager and Asset Intelligence

Microsoft's popular System Center Configuration Manager (SCCM) 2007 for auto-discovery and management of Windows applications and systems is aimed at organizations with 500 to 300,000 assets. Microsoft SMS was due for an overhaul, and the revamped SCCM offers customers a reason to migrate. Sibling product System Center Essentials targets smaller companies.

NETSUPPORT

NetSupport DNA

NetSupport offers multilingual DNA asset management tools, encompassing auto-discovery, software distribution and metering and help desk for Windows systems. The product best suits small to medium-size companies looking for basic asset management and help desk tools.

NOVELL

ZENworks 10 Asset Management

Novell's completed integration of Tally Systems has allowed for a significant upgrade in functionality, taking the form of ZENworks 10 Asset Management. The augmented suite, available under the ZENworks Configuration Management umbrella, brings a common Web interface to component applications, as well as other welcome enhancements.

OPEN IT

LicenseOptimizer and LicenseAnalyzer

Open IT's updated offering goes deeper into software-usage analysis and management functions for getting the most out of high-ticket concurrent-use applications. The company's lengthy roadmap, which kicked off with v.5.4 in February 2008, is intended to amass additional large client customers requiring such specialty software-usage management.

ORACLE

Oracle Measurement Tool and Oracle Configuration Manager

Oracle is bringing to market two free, optional products for usage and license tracking on its database and business applications: Oracle Measurement Tool (OMT) and Oracle Configuration Manager (OCM). OCM is a valuable option for those with named-user and processor-based licenses, and OMT for concurrent-use licenses. The two tools are the only ones we've found able to tap deeply into Oracle database usage tracking.

PROVANCE

Provance v. 4.1, to be released in early 2008, contains enhancements since our last review, including a much-improved Web client. The tool is well suited for medium-size and large organizations looking for a full-function IT asset management repository with built-in request management capabilities.

PS'SOFT

License Compliance Management and Asset Management

PS'Soft has added several features to v.8.6 of its license compliance and asset and service management tools. Best suited for medium-size and large organizations, particularly those implementing Microsoft auto-discovery and asset management solutions, its repackaged product line comes with a new business intelligence engine for managing dashboard objects, along with other enhancements.

SAMANAGE

SAManage just launched its agent-based hosted solution. A good fit for small and medium-size organizations looking for something easy to use, it is remarkably strong for a new product. At this point, the biggest challenge is getting the word out.

SASSAFRAS

K2 Key Auditor and Key Server

By thoroughly addressing concerns surrounding virtual machines, K2's version upgrade from 6.1 is a giant step. Introducing the concept of a "leased license," Sassafras is doing more to accommodate managers of virtual machines.

SCOTT & SCOTT

Compliance Manager

Scott & Scott LLP has upgraded its practical tool for immediate audit defense. Its Compliance Manager product, offered for short-term projects or by annual subscription, suits those businesses in need of a quick-to-deploy inventory and compliance solution.

SNOW SOFTWARE

Snow Inventory and Snow License Manager

Swedish vendor Snow Software is floating its Snow License Manager in North American markets. Offering basic depth and breadth, the tool satisfies the software asset management requirements of small and mid-size organizations.

STAFF & LINE

EasyVista

Staff & Line's EasyVista suite is popular in Europe and suits medium-size and large businesses well, especially those looking for a multilingual, intuitive and all-inclusive tool.

SYMANTEC/ALTIRIS

Altiris Service Asset Management Solution and Workflow Solution

Acquired by Symantec just over a year ago, major plans are in the works for an all-embracing Service Asset Management Solution (SAMS). Until its release later this year, expect minor enhancements to all Altiris products, specifically those that will advance the Symantec/Altiris integration process.

TCO SOLUTIONS

Global Package Management System

TCO Solutions' Global Package Management System automates installation, upgrade, configuration and de-installation of software packages. Popular with large enterprises, GPMS helps customers refine and mature their asset, change and service management programs.

USU AG

Valuemation

USU's Valuemation suite is expanding, both through acquisition and internal development. It's a big product, covering a lot of ground, and ready to compete with the likes of CA, HP, IBM and Symantec.

VENTANA GROUP

Asset Authority

Asset Authority v.3.3 digs deep in areas of inventory, procurement, contract, license and vendor management. Compliance functions are robust, and mid-market companies seeking a focused product will be impressed by the balance the tool strikes between complex functionality and ease of use.