SAP License Management – Certification Report

USU

Executive Summary

ITAM Review, an independent community for worldwide ITAM, SAM and Software Licensing professionals, certifies USU Optimization for SAP® Software as suitable for SAP License Management. Since we last certified this product in 2020 (as Aspera License Control for SAP), it has evolved to also manage and assist with optimizing SAP solutions such as RISE & SAP Fiori applications.

ITAM Review's SAP License Management Certification is designed to help worldwide ITAM Review readers identify tools suitable for managing SAP Licensing and provide tool providers with an independent verification of their SAP License Management features.

The certification report is based on a detailed survey, a product demo to the author, and two verified customer references.

Survey Response from USU

How does your implementation help organisations identify and remove inactive SAP users?

Inactive users are identified and transparently displayed with an aggregated view based on various criteria. Viewing different scenarios is possible with different settings for the number of days since the last logon. With a few clicks, customers can display candidates for removal, and deactivate and lock them in the target system by ending the individual account's validity. Changes will be pushed to the satellite systems as well.

How does your implementation help organisations identify and remove duplicate users?

Duplicates are identified using rules and algorithms, the system also recognizes close matches. Comparing and matching can be carried out by typical attributes such as e-mail address, login, display name, first name, last name, department, and cost centre, even prae- and suffixes – which can be combined depending on the customer's naming conventions. A global identifier is created and can be written back into the SAP accounts. Customers can also use this global identifier as the consolidating criteria within the LAW2 measurement.

An example of an identical duplicate is if there are three unique logins for Myrja Schumacher. A close match is when there might be a login for MSCHUMACHER, SCHUMACHERM, MYRJAS and so on. Both approaches take away the heavy lifting of identifying duplicate users.

How does your implementation allow organisations to assign the correct user type against active users and authorisations?

Our rulesets enable an optimization that meets SAP's standard definitions and the special conditions in the customer environment and SAP contract. The ruleset can cover each user on the SAP price list and automates the license classification for our customers. We can create rules based on general criteria, as well as usage-based and authorization-based rules. A combination of the different rule types is also possible.

If a customer needs to assign licenses based on authorizations due to contractual agreements, we use the USU authorization ruleset functionality. It performs the same classification of licenses but is based only on assigned authorizations. With just a few clicks, individual license types or license type mappings can be changed and adapted in the ruleset. By executing any recommendations, license optimization happens immediately and will be transferred into each SAP system, so the results are reflected in any future measurements requested by SAP via LAW reports. Using the integrated process manager ensures regular reconciliation and continuous compliance.

At time of publication the product is unique in having a FIORI ruleset, with that you can check an application's license category as follows:

Pure use of Line of Business (LoB)
- No use license required, LoB purely per respective metric (e.g. revenue, users, employees).

Use of LoB & LoB-related core components
- Also still no use license required

Use of LoB & use from the entire core component area

Once an initial baseline and compliance position is reached with SAP – How does your implementation support your organisation with on-going monitoring and optimisation of SAP licensing?

All steps in the solution – import and optimization of data, and determination and write-back of Named User license types – can be scheduled with our process manager.

The master ruleset, which has been optimized to meet the customer's Named User license portfolio requirements is then regularly applied. The solution works automatically, providing the company with an up-to-date compliance report. Various dashboards and monitoring functions provide an overview of possible problems in SAP systems or potential licensing risks in a pre-defined interval.

How does your implementation help organisations identify and manage indirect access / digital access to SAP products?

USU Software Asset Management can sort all technical users based on CPU time, dialog steps, and number of executed reports. For each technical interface user all created documents for Digital Access can be imported and analyzed. With a few clicks, the SAP customer then receives a priority list of the "most expensive" interface users. Those users are assessed by our SAP license experts to determine if they used SAP "friendly" or "non-friendly" traffic. The result is a complete overview of the financial risk and the detailed cost for each technical interface.

USU Software Asset Management can import Digital Access data with the new Passport Solution functionality. This is more precise than the SAP estimation notes and only imports SAP "non-friendly" documents. Those interfaces' financial license risk under the legacy model for indirect access is analyzed by importing 3rd party products and their employee list to cross check with existing SAP Named Users. Our customers can then easily compare the different license models for indirect access and decide if the legacy model or Digital Access is their best choice. Our SAP license experts support our customers to make the best decisions.

USU provides granular detail on which interfaces are accessing SAP, the connection type and the volume of communications sent and received.

How does your solution help organisations manage SAP licensing against specific business metrics / SAP packages?

The SAP measurement data of packages/engines based on the LAW2 report can be mapped to the correct contract items and to the metric engine document in the support portal. In one overview, customers can see what SAP measured with the LAW, what was licensed, and if the measurement result of SAP is reliable. More than 40% of all packages and engines are incorrectly measured by the USMM and LAW, so they need a correction with SAP notes or manual configuration. This important information is displayed in one view within USU Software Asset Management for each SAP product the customer has licensed or uses. Up to date LAW2 reports can be imported to automatically update the previously created report, giving the customer a current overview of their current licensing positions. This feature allows our SAP customers to take the right actions before they transfer the official measurement results to SAP.

USU Software Asset Management for SAP collects engine measurement results and enables the administrator to capture consumption for each engine metric. We are also able to manage the information about self-declaration engines.

How does your solution help organisations manage S/4HANA, both on-premises and in the cloud?

USU Software Asset Management uses the Named User simulation analysis to forecast potential costs in the S/4HANA world. This helps customers simulate different license scenarios under S/4HANA. For example, comparing how the allocation of Named User licenses with new S/4HANA metrics would change when migrating via contract conversion or product conversion. This reveals cost-saving potential that SAP customers can use against their S/4HANA license purchases, both on-premises and in the cloud and allows SAP customers to make the best decisions on how to migrate to S/4HANA or assign licenses when already migrated. USU Software Asset Management also simulates the move from SAP ECC Named Users to SAP S/4HANA Use Types using the USU master ruleset and automatic assignment of the most cost-effective SAP S/4HANA licenses. Even after the change to S/4HANA, USU Optimization for SAP® Software analyzes all transactions with S/4HANA for every SAP account. The new S/4HANA licensing contract is shown in the solution and the actual usage is constantly monitored with automated rightsizing of license type.

License management for S/4HANA works in the same way, and with the same level of support, as for SAP ECC. This applies to S/4HANA on premises, private cloud, and any kind of hosted scenario. S/4HANA public cloud support is on the current roadmap but not yet available.

Analyst Observations

The following items were noted by the analyst during the live demo and in conversations with USU.

- USU Optimization for SAP® Software is a very mature product with an experienced Product Management and technical team behind it. The roadmap is clear and there is a proven commitment to rapidly adjust the product to meet SAP license policy and metric changes, such as S4/HANA and Fiori.
- Deployment is flexible with options including on-premises and hosted by USU. The solution is available standalone from other USU products.
- Key to the success of the tool is the detailed and highly configurable USU license allocation ruleset. This proprietary ruleset may be thought of as being similar to the software recognition service built into general purpose SAM tools. References note that this ruleset can be modified, either by the customer or USU consultants, to take unique contract terms into account.
- SAP License Management is complex, USU recognises this, and their "Tool plus Service" approach enables organisations without teams dedicated to SAP License Management to optimise their SAP estate and derive the best value from deploying USU Optimization for SAP® Software. Services are a paid-for engagement.
- The product provides rich functionality for the measurement of digital and indirect access.

Customer References

USU provided two customer references for this certification who were interviewed independently by an ITAM Review analyst. The ITAM Review welcomes further references and reviews for USU. If you wish to contribute, please submit your review on the ITAM Review Marketplace.

Reference #1 – US Heavy Engineering Company

For this certification process, the ITAM Review interviewed a USU Optimization for SAP® Software customer in the United States, a large end user corporation with tens of thousands of employees.

This customer uses USU Optimization for SAP® Software alongside other USU products including License Management and SAM Analytics. USU solutions were selected in a competitive bid process for their flexibility, lower cost of ownership, and robust master catalogue. USU Optimization for SAP® Software has identified over-licensing which will result in multi-million-dollar support & maintenance savings at contract renewal, representing very strong ROI.

The reference notes that the ability to auto-calculate transaction-based license assignments on a continuous basis saves time and reduces licensing requirements versus manually assigning licenses based on user roles. Furthermore, having the ability to write back user licensing to SAP clients following optimization by the tool prevents the need to do this manually, saving further time and improving accuracy. Finally, as an S/4HANA user they note that the tool correctly calculates Digital Access Rights, HANA Database size, and SAP Engine analysis.

Areas for improvement noted are that the user interface doesn't match the other USU tools that they use and is need of updating. Readers should note that USU have recently delivered UI improvements to harmonise the product experience with their other SAM & ITAM tools. As a US-based company they would like to have the option to use US-based consultancy and support, as the need to contact support based in Europe can lead to delays and inefficiency. USU advises that action is being taken (as of late 2022) to onboard US partners to provide better local support.

Reference #2 – Multinational Life Sciences Company

This reference is a multinational life sciences company headquartered in Germany. They have a large, complex, and distributed SAP estate consisting of over 80 systems. In addition to USU Optimization for SAP® Software they also utilize other USU products and have been a customer since 2016.

They are in the planning phase of a move to S/4HANA and have leveraged USU Optimization for SAP® Software for this purpose. They have also used the product to gain the necessary level of transparency with regard to the on-premises estate to enable negotiation of a consolidated and streamlined contract. This has been particularly important due to the number of on-premises environments and a corporate structure which is distributed due to acquisitions and mergers.

The reference considers the tool to be excellent value for money and unbeatable at the price point. This is also reflected in the considerable and ongoing ROI received from the system, having already saved a seven-figure amount in maintenance and licensing costs.

This ROI is also reflected in the transparency provided by the tool which has enabled a fully-informed contract negotiation with SAP for future requirements. In daily use the product measures license utilization in their SAP landscape and the technical teams use it to write back optimized license allocations to the various SAP systems. The highly flexible ruleset has also enabled the reference to include special contract terms and metrics in calculating optimizations.

In keeping with the first reference, they also note that the UI is outdated and not particularly intuitive, and they feel a considerable amount of expertise is required either in house or via consultancy/managed services to get the best out of it. However, they have seen progress in this area recently and note that USU are always open to work with customers to improve the product. The reference would also like to see an API or reporting/BI integration provided, along with connectivity to other SAP products such as SuccessFactors, Concur and Qualtrics. USU confirms that this is in the roadmap for the product. Furthermore, since the reference was interviewed, the UI has been modernized and is now aligned with the other USU SAM & ITAM products.

Conclusion

USU's SAP solution continues to evolve to meet new requirements such as S4/HANA migration, RISE for SAP, and the new Fiori application environment. This puts it in a leading position in the SAP optimization tool market. A feature of USU is their tool plus services approach and this is particularly suited to this product, due to the complexity of SAP licensing. Both references note that the tool provides excellent value for money and return on investment.

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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.

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