



PRODUCT EVALUATION GUIDE

Products Evaluated
Insight's Technology Assessment Services (TAS) team has evaluated the following products.

- Altiris® Client Management Suite™
- Centennial Discovery
- Executive Software® SiteKeeper™
- Insight:LicenseAdvisor™
- Kemma Software CI Discovery™
- LANDesk® Management Suite
- Novell® ZENworks® Asset Management
- Symantec Discovery
- Vector Networks PC-Duo

IT ASSET MANAGEMENT PART 1: EVALUATING ASSET MANAGEMENT, INVENTORY AND METERING PRODUCTS

Asset management, inventory and metering products facilitate the gathering of hardware and software asset information across the networked enterprise, giving managers the ability not only to track asset usage but also to control it. When you have current and accurate views of IT assets at every stage of their lifecycle, it's possible to make informed decisions and reduce the cost of ownership. Asset management, inventory and metering products play an important role in any IT asset management (ITAM) strategy, giving you accurate information about IT product inventory and usage:

- Make informed purchasing decisions.
- Avoid license compliance penalties.
- Track software usage.
- Avoid unnecessary software purchases.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Cost

Most manufacturers price inventory and metering solutions based on the number of desktops or nodes that are to be managed, so large-scale deployments can get expensive quickly. Senior management sponsorship and understanding of your ITAM strategy is important to ensure adequate budgeting and resources.

Scalability

Make sure you select a solution that will scale to meet your enterprise requirements. Many solutions advertise scalability, but if your organization includes tens of thousands of managed nodes, obtain references from other companies who have had success with such a large implementation.

Implementation

Implementations will vary depending on the number of nodes, applications, locations, and domains, among other things. Be sure you understand the steps involved to implement the solution within your enterprise, and request professional assistance from the vendor or a third party for larger, more complicated projects.

Hardware requirements

Hardware requirements for inventory and metering solutions vary depending on the number of managed nodes and applications, and how often those applications change. It is important to understand the hardware required to manage a large installation and the data it can generate. Before purchasing an enterprise inventory or metering solution, confirm its hardware requirements as well as compatible operating systems.



Client support

Make sure the asset management solution you choose supports all the platforms that reside in your environment. It may require some expertise to find a solution that supports Linux or Mac requirements.

Integration and back-end system requirements

It is important to understand the full scope of data required to make your asset management solution complete—and what it will take to integrate those data sources. You may find it's much more work than just an XML integration. Be sure you understand all the back-end requirements, such as the database platform, before you select your solution.

Asset discovery

Some ITAM tools allow you to locate devices only by domain searches, while others give you multiple options for device discovery. Be sure you choose a product that meets your requirements in this area.

Active Directory support

Most products today support Active Directory, or plan to with the next release. Active Directory integration makes managing your ITAM project easier.

Reporting

Some ITAM tools report only on the information they find in the header or registry, or only on the executable—with no information on the application itself. Ideally, the tool you choose should report at the application level, and not just the executable or .dll level.

CONCLUSION

Don't be overwhelmed by the number and variety of asset management, inventory and metering tools available. Insight's sales engineers can be a valuable resource helping to match your organization's requirements with the right products.

For more information, contact your account representative, or the Insight Technology Assessment Services team at tas@insight.com

Key features

- Web-based Interface
- Reporting
- Hard metering
- Soft metering
- Nonstandard applications identification
- Instant inventory
- Multiple platform support
- Integration
- License compliance management
- Contract management
- Software database
- Workflow
- Catalog management
- Support for remote systems
- Network device discovery
- Bandwidth throttling

The logo for Insight, featuring the word "Insight" in a serif font with a red triangle above the letter "i".