

Licence Management Solution Review

Overview



Licence Dashboard Limited

Licence Dashboard Limited
Blenheim House
York Road
Pocklington
York
East Riding of Yorkshire
YO42 1NS



www.licencedashboard.co.uk

Software evaluated: **Licence Dashboard™ and Dashboard Discovery™**
Version: 4.2 and 1.1 respectively
(see technical evaluation report for installation requirements and details of evaluation criteria)

Summary

Licence Dashboard approaches the SAM task with a difference. It has been designed to integrate and form a reporting umbrella over other SAM products in the market. Using this approach ensures that the Licence Dashboard can be of benefit to users of other SAM products where an investment has already been made. More so; it allows large organisations, where multiple SAM products may be in use, to consolidate the reporting at a corporate level and introduce a formal approval process for additional software licences.

The Dashboard Discovery product is weaker out of the box than some of the other solutions on the market. It appears that there has been a deliberate and strategic decision to offer a simple solution here and focus on the interoperability functionality of Licence Dashboard to other SAM solutions. It does get the job done though and the agent payload is lighter than a lot of the competition.

In summary, Licence Dashboard holds a rather unique position by offering extremely powerful reporting functionality with the ability to interface to many other SAM products on the market. The company is

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working on enhancing its own discovery component with the forthcoming version and this will see more flexible deployment options as part of the upgrade. Licence Dashboard offers a true one stop shop for licence management and reporting with no equals when it comes to its 3rd party data feed capability. Larger organisations should seriously consider this capability when searching for a solution to their multi-site software management processes.

Installation Narration

The products are delivered via packaged installers. (The Licence Dashboard installer was not available for use in the review). The installers for both Licence Dashboard and Dashboard Discovery detect the presence of .NET and other components required for the installation and will install them as part of the process if needed. Both components installed easily and the machine used was an Intel Q6600 based server running Windows 2003 server.

Running the Program

The product is delivered in two parts, Licence Dashboard and Dashboard Discovery. Uniquely to Licence Dashboard, users can opt to use the Dashboard Discovery software or connect to many of the other SAM products available on the market today. More on this later and in the review summary.

Setting up the System

As with most other products on the market, if using the Dashboard Discovery software, a small client is required. This comes in the form of a lightweight MSI installer weighing in at less than 1MB including configuration files. The Discovery UI component is web browser based and simple in nature. It allows for deployment across a domain using Active Directory Group Policy software deployment, or via its own push deployment integrated with Active Directory. Alternatively users of the system can use third party deployment solutions, login or startup scripts to automate the client installation process. The Licence Dashboard interface is a software client and uses proprietary interface.

Ongoing Administration

As devices with the agent software running start to report back to the database the schema begins to populate. The Dashboard Discovery tool is simple in design when compared to other products. This is mainly due to the fact that the product is pitched slightly differently to others. The developer has made significant investment into the interoperability functionality of the Licence Dashboard so that it can easily interface to other SAM solutions such as Frontrange Discovery, Tivoli suite and many others. Using the Licence Dashboard itself is easy and intuitive and it provides a very impressive summary screen that can show how good, or bad, the current licencing situation is for a company, or sub group within a company.

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The interface has a simple navigation pane to the left of the screen that includes the summary page, licence information, software usage and reporting to name a few. Clicking on the menu item changes the right hand pane, with the information presented in a column based format for the majority of the time. Details can then be clicked on to drill down for more granular information, such as specific software package information for example.

OS/Device/Software support

The strength of the product is its ability to interface to many of the other SAM products on the market. For this reason it probably attracts the accolade of supporting the most operating systems. Its own Dashboard Discovery software will cater for the Microsoft Windows environment, and for most, that may be enough.

Auditing and Reporting

Licence Dashboard is developed around a comprehensive reporting system. The ability to compare audit runs is a feature not seen in most other products on the market. This powerful reporting mechanism allows the operator to view changes in licence usage across sub divisions or indeed the whole company. Changes across all software licences and products can be seen between any two audits that have taken place. This provides a powerful historical view on the change process for the business and any shortfalls (or indeed spare capacity) in licences that need addressing.

Support and Pricing

LICENCE DASHBOARD STANDARD EDITION

1 User £995

Additional Users add £500 per user

Support per Annum 15% of total licence RRP 2nd year onwards

Example

Customer A has 250 seats and requires 3-user access to Standard Edition. Total licence cost would be £1,995. Support costs per annum would total £299.25.

LICENCE DASHBOARD PROFESSIONAL EDITION

Base licence - 1,000 seats £12,500

1,001 - 2,000 seats £13,500

2,001 - 3,000 seats £14,500

3,001 - 4,000 seats £15,500

4,001 - 5,000 seats £16,500

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Support per Annum 15% of total licence RRP 2nd year onwards

Example

Customer B has 5,000 seats. Total licence cost would be £16,500. Support costs 2nd year onwards would total £2,475 per annum.

LICENCE DASHBOARD ENTERPRISE EDITION

Base licence - 5,000 seats £25,000

5,001 + seats £5 per seat

Support per Annum 15% 2nd year onwards

Example

Customer C has 20,000 seats. Total licence cost would be £100,000 (£5 x 20,000 seats). Support costs 2nd year onwards would total £15,000 per annum.

Customer D has 4,000 seats. Total licence cost would be £25,000 (base licence covers maximum 5,000 seats). Support costs 2nd year onwards would total £3,750 per annum.

Support includes upgrades to new releases and telephone support. Support must be taken out on total quantity of users.

LICENCE DASHBOARD SMALL BUSINESS EDITION (includes Dashboard Discovery)

Up to 300 seats £3,000 (no onsite visits included)

301 - 500 seats £5,000 (includes 1 onsite visit)

501-600 seats £6,000 (includes 1 onsite visit)

601-700 seats £7,000 (includes 2 onsite visits)

701-800 seats £8,000 (includes 2 onsite visits)

801-900 seats £9,000 (includes 3 onsite visits)

901-1,000 seats £10,000 (includes 4 onsite visits)

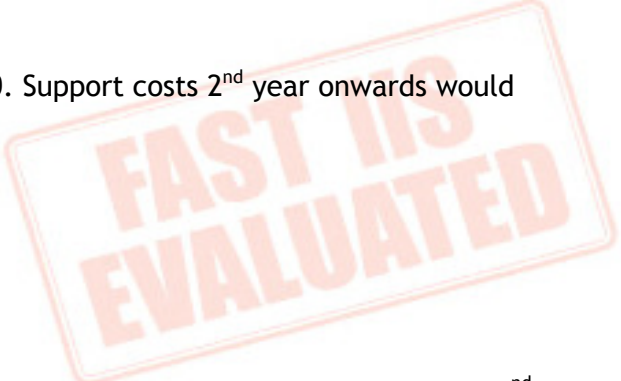
DASHBOARD DISCOVERY

Base licence - 1,000 seats £4,000

1,001 + seats £4 per seat

Support per Annum 15% of total licence RRP 2nd year onwards

Support includes upgrades to new releases, telephone support and access to online product forums. Support must be taken out on total quantity of users.



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Key Strengths - Technical

- Licence Dashboard integration with other SAM discovery components
- Simple interface to the Licence Dashboard

Key Weaknesses - Technical

- Dashboard Discovery product less flexible than some.

Key Strengths - Commercial

- Licence Dashboard provides powerful augmentation of SAM data across vendor platforms/solutions
- Licence Dashboard provides a single interface to all of an organisations licensing management requirements
- Licence Dashboard has powerful comparing and reporting functionality

Key Weaknesses - Commercial

- Licence Dashboard is pitched as a very strong augments of data and requires a separate product for discovery.

