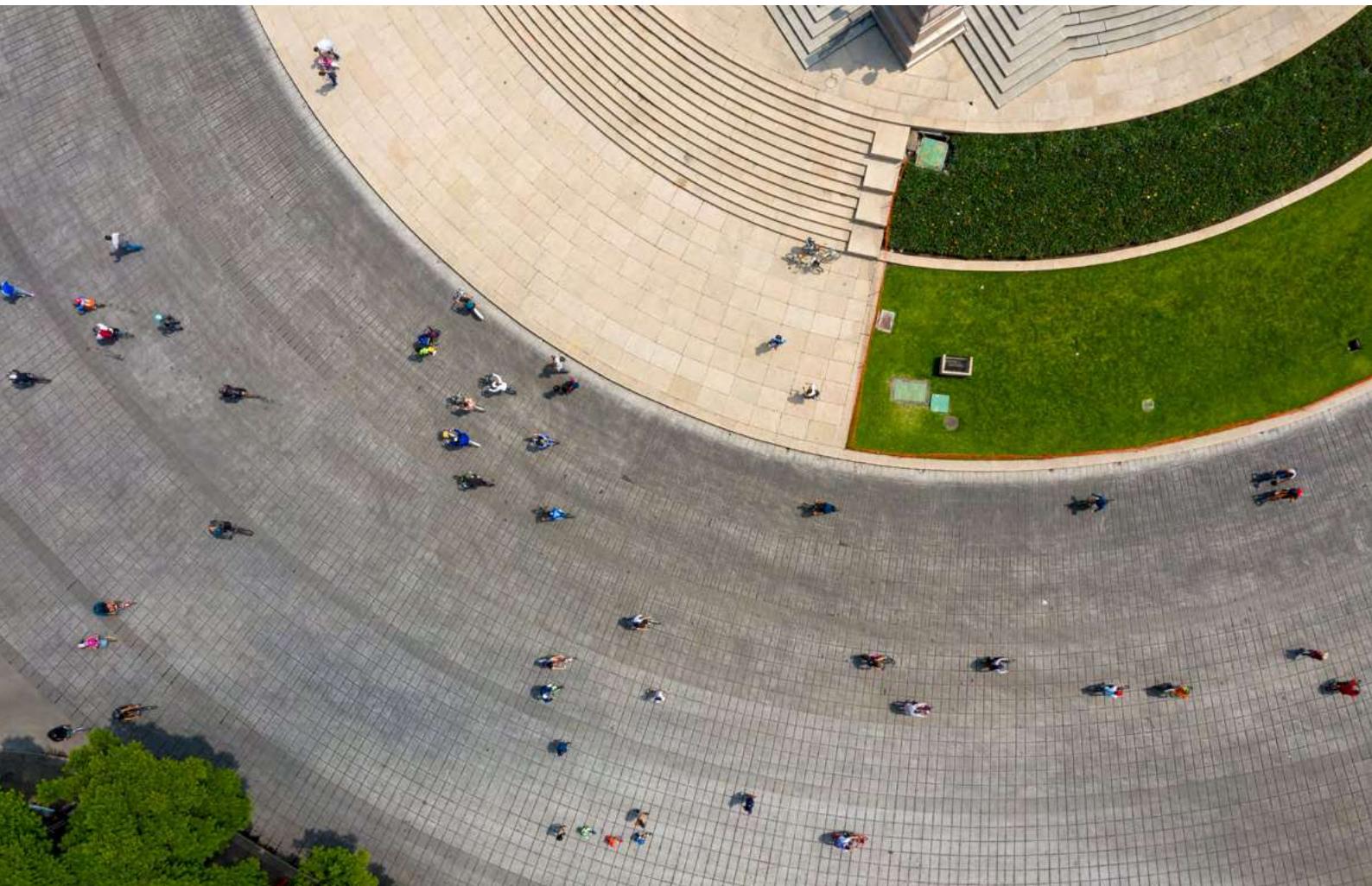


An essential guide for IT and software asset management leaders

5 Ways to Cut Spending on Microsoft

Reduce licensing costs by up to 30% with Software Asset Management



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Introduction

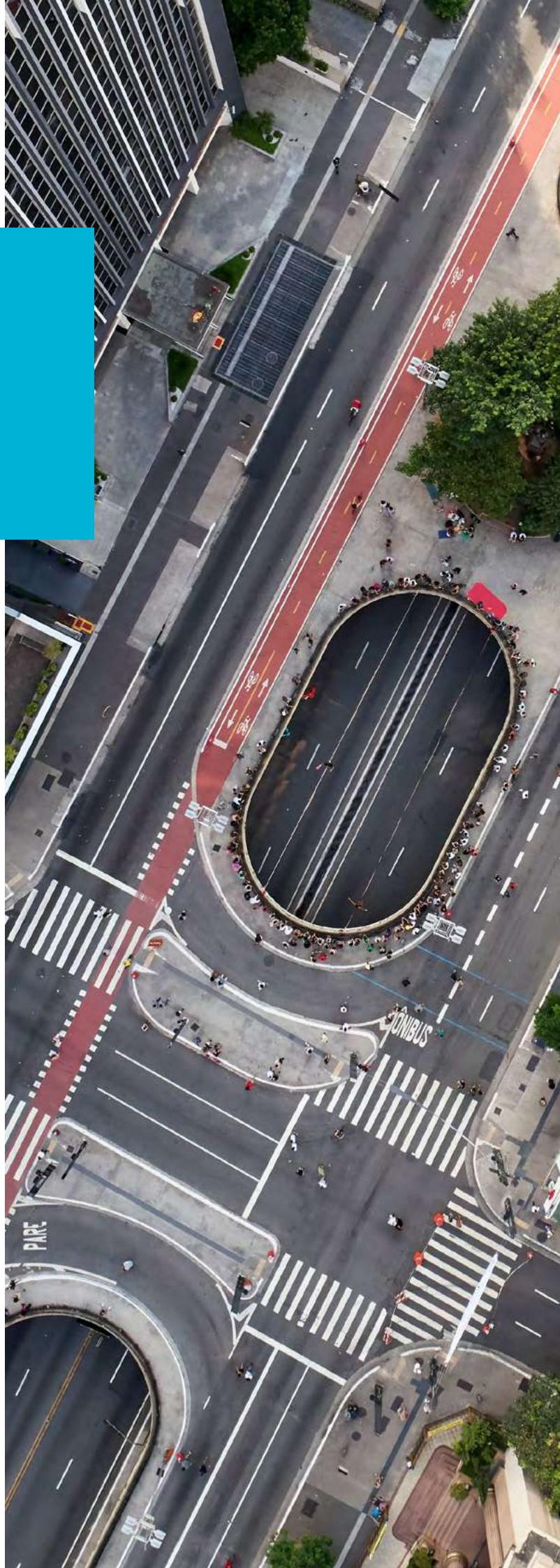
This guide covers five cost-saving initiatives for Microsoft products using Software Asset Management processes and technologies.

According to industry analysts, organizations can cut spending for software licenses by up to 30%. So, if you're just starting on a cost-cutting program and picking a shortlist of vendors to focus on, Microsoft should be considered essential.

Not only does Microsoft make up a large proportion of software spend within most organizations, that spend is across many different technologies in the IT estate. From enterprise level applications running in a virtualized datacenter to SaaS software, to a bundled suite or standalone installation on an individual device.

Although you might logically split cost-cutting initiatives up by technology, the high-level strategy should remain the same. Rightsize your Microsoft spend by ensuring that you only pay for what you use and then create a scalable process for maintaining that optimized position.

This requires a Software Asset Management (SAM) solution which provides a holistic view of the entire Microsoft estate, aggregates complex licensing metrics, shows the compliance position, recommends changes and can automate required changes.



1. Microsoft 365



Take advantage of Microsoft 365 licensing

The cost saving advantages to Microsoft 365 can be significant. In addition to no longer needing to pay for data center hardware and operations personnel, M365 offers flexible licensing that allows organizations to buy the entitlement level suited to each individual.

Many users have access to more than one device and use Office applications on the majority of those devices. That figure will only increase. If this is the case in your organization, you should consider Microsoft 365 which entitles a single user to install and run applications on up to 5 devices rather than having to license separately for each device.

Finally, with M365, you can be assured your organization is always on the current version and enjoying the latest features.

How Snow Software can help with Microsoft 365

With the data from your Snow solution, you can understand the number of devices that each user has and then verify whether per-user or per-device based licensing is the most cost-effective option.

Monitor a user's current application consumption and map this to their ideal Microsoft 365 plan. Continuously monitor usage following a move to Microsoft 365 to ensure that licenses are both optimized and compliant.

Determine need based on usage

Since Microsoft offers a wide range of plans for Microsoft 365 with very different costs, it is important to determine a user's Microsoft 365 plan requirements based on application usage, and continue to track it after purchase.

Many users will say that they require a particular product like Visio or Project but rarely or never use it. Remove it from their devices or install a cheaper option like the Project or Visio viewer. Also, consider the opportunity to rationalize the number of licenses you are entitled to if you have over-estimated plan requirements and can opt for cheaper options.

Optimize your Microsoft estate by choosing the most efficient Microsoft 365 subscriptions type based on actual user needs.

2. Azure



Manage Virtual Machines in Azure

Organizations are rapidly adopting public cloud infrastructure such as Azure to increase agility and cope with the flexible and dynamic needs of business units. Microsoft offers businesses the ability to rapidly meet these demands by spinning up virtual machines in the Azure cloud platform, often utilizing Hyper-V software.

Keeping control

The challenge is that it is very easy to lose track of the machines that have been spun-up and to continue paying for them long after their usefulness has expired. For an organization of 10,000 employees, it is quite possible to have thousands of virtual machines that are running but not being used.

Just 100 of those VMs could amount to ~\$315K/ year unnecessary expenditure. These VMs may be available to access but it's very hard to discover them and shut them down.

Importance of Understanding Hybrid Use Benefits

By utilizing their existing on-premises entitlements, organizations may be able to save up to 50% on the expense of an Azure VM

How Snow Software can help with Azure

Use your Snow solution to manage the process of requesting, provisioning and retiring VMs in Azure.

You can spin-up machines and set an automatic expiration date. If the VM is needed for longer, the user can extend the period. Snow can also schedule automatic downtime (such as at night) when a VM may not be needed. In both these scenarios, the organization isn't paying for a resource which is not required.

Snow is able to track when Hybrid Use Benefits are available and allowable, saving organizations significant expense.

Based on a list price of \$262.80/month for a standard "A3" instance from the Azure price calculator
<https://azure.microsoft.com/en-us/pricing/calculator>

\$226.80 x 100 x 12 = \$315,360/year

3. Datacenter



Align infrastructure planning with the SAM process

Microsoft offers a huge choice of products and associated licenses for the datacenter.

Due to the high license cost for these products, it is possible to create multiple configurations that achieve the same results from a technical perspective but are vastly different in price. Small changes can make big differences to compliance and financial exposure. Getting the structure optimized and maintained from a licensing perspective ensures significant cost savings.

Use a high-level view to make your decisions

When working towards an optimized license position it is important to take a “helicopter view” of the datacenter and applications contained within it before drilling down into specific configurations.

There will likely be numerous versions and editions of an application family running in the datacenter, on virtual machines or directly on physical servers.

How Snow Software can help in the datacenter

The Snow solution brings together all instances of a single software product into a single view. It simplifies the management of complex datacenter licensing by automatically calculating the compliance position. Snow also provides optimal licensing and deployment recommendations to maximize cost efficiencies for all software including Microsoft licensing metrics like processor and processor core licensed software on both virtual and physical resources.

This enables the IT infrastructure and SAM team to build different scenarios and model the optimal configuration to match the technical needs of the business with the most cost-effective license.



4. End User Applications



Make the most of unassigned licences

Often the best way to save is not to spend in the first place. When a new software install is requested, the most common response is to procure a new license.

However, you should first consider the rights and entitlements from licenses that your organization has already purchased. You should look to use existing licenses that are currently unassigned, entitlements which cover secondary use rights, and other rights which will allow the software to be used without a new license being purchased.

Build up a catalog of license entitlements so that you can see what software is currently consuming a license, and where there are gaps in compliance.

Manage usage rights and agreements easily

Microsoft has many different end user applications available in countless license configurations which change over time as new versions and editions are released. This means that manually working out use rights from existing applications is inefficient.

Adding to that complexity is the ability to introduce extended coverage such as Software Assurance, which is purchased separately from the application itself.

How Snow Software can help with end user applications

Snow empowers organizations to manage a catalog of entitlements and optimally assign those entitlements to software across the estate.

Snow's Data Intelligence Service enables automatic application detection and can match applications to the correct stock keeping unit (SKU) so you can view specific product use rights.

Software Assurance can be added very simply into Snow, automatically calculated and applied across the full scope of the agreement.

With this information, it is easy to gain visibility on effective license positioning and take steps to optimize. And in many cases, a completely new licenses will not be required.

Snow Data Intelligence Service can differentiate between Microsoft 5,785 titles and 602 bundles, as well as optimize Microsoft 365 based on usage.

5. Governance



Recycle Software and Automate removal

A vast amount of software is either under-utilized or completely unused. Analysts estimate a total of \$300 per primary device per year.

When an application is removed from a device or access is removed for a user, Microsoft generally allows the license to be reassigned, but not more than once every 90 days.

Put a process in place to automatically check for unused applications which can be removed after a set period of time.

Automatically create a pool of licenses that can be reassigned after the 90-day "quarantine" period expires

How Snow Software can help with governance

Snow Productivity Optimizer allows you to select which applications you want to optimize and set rules according to usage over time. You can create different rule sets for different applications; each is configurable on an individual level.

The configurations are set in Snow where there is a wealth of information about usage and licenses. Snow Productivity Optimizer has the capability to trigger certain processes such as recycling software based on information already available in Snow.



Summary

The opportunity to save on Microsoft licenses is widespread across all technologies from datacenter to mobile, to desktop to cloud.

A SAM platform empowers key stakeholders within your organization to make decisions to deliver technologies which meet business needs and drive optimal licensing at the same time.

The Snow SAM platform enables your teams to understand hardware and software configurations across the IT estate and combines that with specific Microsoft licensing intelligence, all from a single point of reference.

Use this visibility to optimize your software configurations and build a continuous automated process to utilize existing entitlements and recycle unused licenses.

With the Snow SAM platform you'll be on track to making significant savings on your Microsoft licenses.



Software Savings Calculator

[Calculate Savings](#)

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