

# Snow License Optimizer for SAP - Certification Report



## Executive Summary



ITAM Review, an independent community for worldwide ITAM, SAM and Software Licensing professionals, has recertified Snow Optimizer for SAP® Software as suitable for SAP License Management. This product was first certified in 2018 and subsequently recertified to an updated standard in 2020.

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.

This certification consists of a survey completed by Snow, a demo of the product to an ITAM Review analyst, and two customer reference calls.

## Background

Optimization of SAP licensing continues to be of prime importance to enterprise-scale businesses. Typically, regardless of provider, an organization's ERP system forms a considerable percentage of the IT budget. SAP licensing is highly complex, having evolved over many decades, and as such there is a considerable management overhead in complying with license audit requirements. For these reasons, software such as Snow Optimizer for SAP is essential for organizations wishing to get best value from their license expenditure.

For IT Asset Management teams SAP licensing can often be hidden away from their standard tooling, and this has led to ITAM tools providers such as Snow developing dedicated solutions. In the case of Snow Optimizer for SAP the solution is installed, accessed, and managed as an SAP application within the SAP environment. References obtained for this certification indicate that as such the ITAM team works very closely with the SAP Admin team to identify and optimize license usage.

Since Snow Optimizer for SAP was last certified by ITAM Review in 2020 there have been several changes to SAP licensing including the RISE program and Fiori apps. Furthermore, the importance of S4/HANA migration and calculation of indirect access and engine usage has also grown.

## Survey Response

The following is Snow's response to each of the questions which form the Certification standard. Responses to the survey were then verified for accuracy during a demo call with the Snow Product Team.

- *How does your implementation help organizations identify and remove inactive SAP users?*

Inactive users are identified via an aggregated view, showing all users and the day count since their last login. Furthermore, we can leverage additional data, such as HR records, CPU time, user activities or secondary data to identify if a user is inactive and can be removed. With a few clicks, customers can view candidates for removal and push changes out to the satellite systems.

- *How does your implementation help organizations identify and remove duplicate users?*

Duplicates are identified and removed via rules and algorithms. The system can automatically aggregate users and identify both identical duplicates and close matches. An example of an identical duplicate is if there are three unique logins for Fred Bloggs. A close match is when there might be a login for FBLOGGS, BLOGGSF, FREDB and so on. Both approaches take the heavy lifting out of identifying duplicate users. Comparisons can also be made by email address or other specified criteria, such as phone number, account ID, active directory data and more.

- *How does your implementation allow organizations to assign the correct user type against active users and authorizations?*

Rules that identify user license optimization are based on customer defined conditions and by leveraging factual data from within the SAP systems. The conditions can be based upon user and usage data, role and authorization data, system data, external data and many more.

By executing the ruleset, one can visualise the recommendations for license optimization. Once recommendations are accepted, changes are pushed to the satellite systems automatically and will be reflected in any future measurements requested by SAP via LAW reports.

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- *Once an initial baseline and compliance position is reached with SAP – how does your implementation support your organization with on-going monitoring and optimization of SAP licensing?*

Snow Optimizer for SAP Software underpins a proper SAP license management practice, with automated processes, whereby users are continuously being optimised, inactive users are expired and compliance for users and engines is always visible. Alerts and notifications facilitate proactive management of SAP licensing.

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

Snow Optimizer for SAP Software provides granular detail of which interfaces are accessing SAP, the connection type and the volume of communications sent and received. Customers can differentiate between users with legitimate access and third-party automated systems with continual access. In addition, customers can see all the digital documents being generated and the user details behind it. The direct measurement using SAP Passport is also supported, with the added user details visible. The solution gives customers the data to compare old and new Indirect/Digital Access licensing models and track respective compliance.

- *How does your solution help organizations manage SAP licensing against specific business metrics / SAP packages?*

Snow Optimizer for SAP Software offers five comprehensive possibilities for the SAP product/engine compliance analysis inventory determination. The most common ones are "Self-declarations", "Flat fees" or based on the "USMM measurement results of the unit IDs". Besides these standard calculations, Snow Optimizer supports more complex situations like "Formulas", for inventory calculation of engines with multiple units based on the USMM measurement results, but also "Own inventory determinations" are supported.

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

License management for S/4HANA with Snow Optimizer for SAP Software 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, public cloud, and any kind of hosted scenario.

## Analyst Observations – Snow Optimizer for SAP® Software

Snow Optimizer for SAP® Software is available as a standalone product, or as an add-on to an existing Snow License Manager installation. In the latter case, data gathered by Snow Optimizer for SAP® Software is surfaced within Snow License Manager, providing a single dashboard view. The solution is a native SAP ABAP (their ERP programming language) application delivered as a Transport which typically customers install at the Solution Manager level of their SAP environment. This tight integration with SAP greatly simplifies data acquisition and means that the tool is entirely agentless, requiring no program code to be installed on target systems.

The product can connect to multiple SAP deployment environments including “traditional” ABAP systems, Java systems such as Business Objects, the HANA database, and S4/HANA Cloud. Additionally, the tool can connect to non-SAP systems of record such as MS Active Directory, which is useful for adding context to the data gathered from SAP. Snow Optimizer for SAP is accessed via the standard SAP GUI interface, presenting a familiar interface to SAP administrators.

Since the product was last certified, enhancements have been delivered to take account of SAP’s licensing strategy. This includes getting further detail on the authorizations within a role and likewise around indirect/digital access. Usability has been improved by the provision of detailed help information and contextual documentation directly within the application. Furthermore, the Contracts management functionality has been enhanced to take account of metric block size changes, which is necessary for accurately measuring Engine usage. As a result of recent enhancements, the tool can serve as the system of record for SAP license contracts. This improves data quality and optimization, because a direct comparison of entitlements (contracts) and license consumption is possible, as is taking account of custom license terms.

Snow Optimizer for SAP is available in two editions – Standard and Premium. Premium Edition can be deployed in a primary/secondary configuration whereby secondary level organizations have fine-grained control over the data shared with the primary. This functionality benefits typically very large SAP customers which may be conglomerates or multinationals and wish to optimize centrally but must also meet local corporate or regulatory privacy requirements at the subsidiary level.

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In the course of this certification process it has been clear that Snow continue to invest in Snow Optimizer for SAP® Software. There is a strong roadmap and new features and fixes are released frequently, will full point releases delivered annually. Snow pay close attention to licensing compliance changes from SAP and rapidly adapt the solution to meet those. An example of this are the optional add-on rulesets which Snow continuously update in order to ensure that optimization recommendations from the tool are accurate and take account of license changes. This is somewhat similar to Snow's Software Recognition Service for their License Manager product and, whilst it's a paid-for optional extra, it should certainly add certainty to your SAP optimizations.

Overall, the tool delivers against its use case and is backed up by good support and consultancy services. It is important to note that you don't need to have any other Snow products to deploy Snow Optimizer for SAP® Software, although it does also integrate with Snow License Manager if you have that deployed.

## Reference #1 – International Educational Institution

This reference using Snow Optimizer for SAP to manage approximately 35,000 users across two discrete SAP systems, this structure haven arisen from a merger. They selected the tool after an evaluation process conducted with three vendors.

Whilst they do use the tool to identify potential cost savings their primary use case is for automation of license allocation and auditing. The need to ensure compliance with SAP's license agreements was estimated at 30 days manual effort per year, and due to concerns over accuracy of this manual process they couldn't fully optimize allocations with certainty. The tool largely automates this process now and provides continuous compliance. The reference also noted that the analysis and optimizations they carry out produce repeatable results, which is important in establishing certainty regarding compliance. This repeatability and automation has delivered excellent ROI, freeing up the licensing team for other tasks.

The reference found the implementation process to be straightforward and they were happy with the support received from implementation engineers. This support has continued at a similarly high level since implementation. In terms of improvements their only request would be to have access to the business unit allocation functionality (which Snow refer to as Supermaster mode) that's available in the Premium version.

## Reference #2 – APAC Utility Company

The second end user customer reference for this certification process is a large Utility company in APAC. They selected Snow Optimizer for SAP because they needed a tool to give an accurate picture of their SAP License usage prior to the end of a UDD (Unlimited During Deployment) agreement. The tool was selected based on its status as an SAP-certified tool and as such they didn't conduct an exercise comparing other solutions.

They found implementation to be quick and easy referring to it as an “almost plug and play” experience. They note that the tool is easy to navigate and use because it runs within the SAP Solution Manager that's familiar to all SAP administrators. Implementation support was provided by a Snow consultant, notable given the location of the reference company in APAC.

Snow Optimizer for SAP is used for monthly monitoring and validation of licenses. This process is conducted with department heads and business process champions to verify that license allocation is correct and authorized.

ROI has been substantial, due to deploying the tool during the end phase of their UDD agreement. They estimate that the insights provided enabled cost avoidance of several hundred thousand US dollars by fully identifying all systems and users consuming SAP licenses prior to declaring consumption to SAP. Without the tool such consumption would not have been identified resulting in a large potential audit exposure.

## Conclusion

This is the third time ITAM Review have certified Snow License Optimizer for SAP. The product continues to evolve to meet changing SAP licensing requirements such as S4/HANA for Cloud and indirect access. Release notes indicate that there is continuous development for this product meaning that customers can expect excellent support for their use cases.

In addition to license cost savings and cost avoidance references also noted that Snow License Optimizer for SAP increases productivity and frees up considerable resource for other ITAM tasks. Implementation and post-implementation support was found to be excellent and truly globe-spanning, something which is notable given the perhaps limited availability of SAP licensing knowledge in some markets.



## About ITAM Review

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