

A smiling woman with long red hair is looking at a computer monitor. The background is a bright, out-of-focus indoor setting.

USU

eBook

Quick Guide to Optimizing Your SaaS Licenses

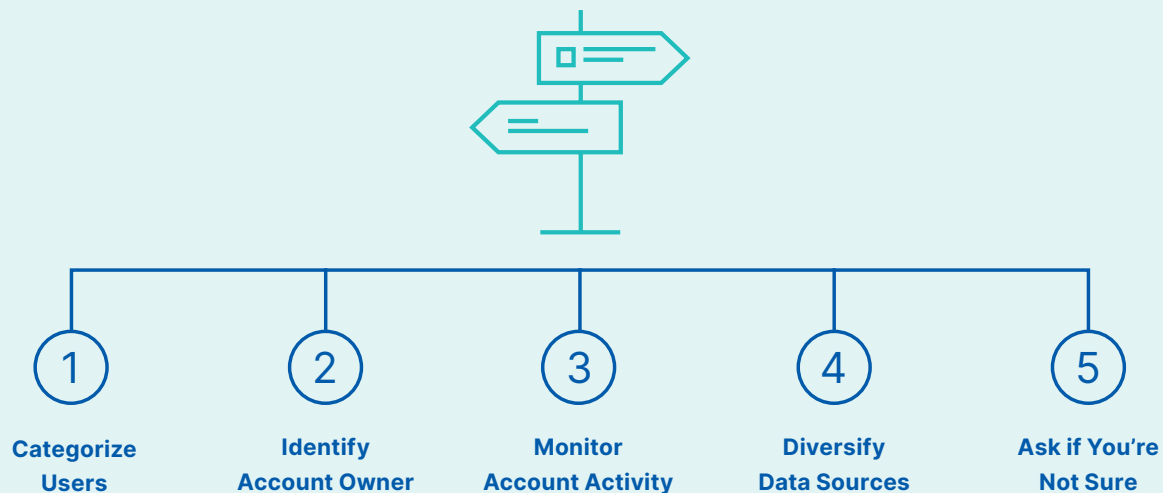
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Introduction

You don't need to move mountains to reduce your SaaS costs. Cleaning up your user population is a quick way to free up licenses and save money in the long-term. By taking advantage of a variety of information channels, you can reduce your user rolls to the bare minimum and reduce your SaaS costs.

5 Steps to Reduce SaaS Costs



Step 1: Categorize Users

The main strategy is to separate internal from external users. External users are usually hired for short-term projects. By keeping tabs on when their projects have ended, you can off-board them in a timely manner and prevent them from consuming expensive licenses and entitlements.

Quick Tip

Coordinate with HR to sort out who is currently supposed to have an access and who's not.





Step 2: Identify Account Owner

Tracking logins may not give you an accurate picture of your usage. The login credentials may be generic or shared, so they won't help you identify the real people behind them.

Linking real people with the login credentials will help you to identify people with multiple licenses. In most cases, users do not need more than one subscription for a single SaaS solution. If you're already using a license management solution, start there to find out who has been assigned which aliases.

Quick Tip

Keep an up-to-date inventory of all account owners to minimize duplicate and unnecessary licenses.



Step 3: Monitor Account Activity

You already have access to records that will help you assess account activity. Using audit logs from an Active Directory or Single-Sign-On system, you can see which accounts are being used, and which accounts you might be able to deactivate, reharvest, and reassign.

Compare these records with your list of account owners to ensure that you're not cutting access for important stakeholders, and coordinate with IT to check your list for users who may have left the company, or may be on some kind of long-term leave such as a sabbatical or parental leave.

Quick Tip

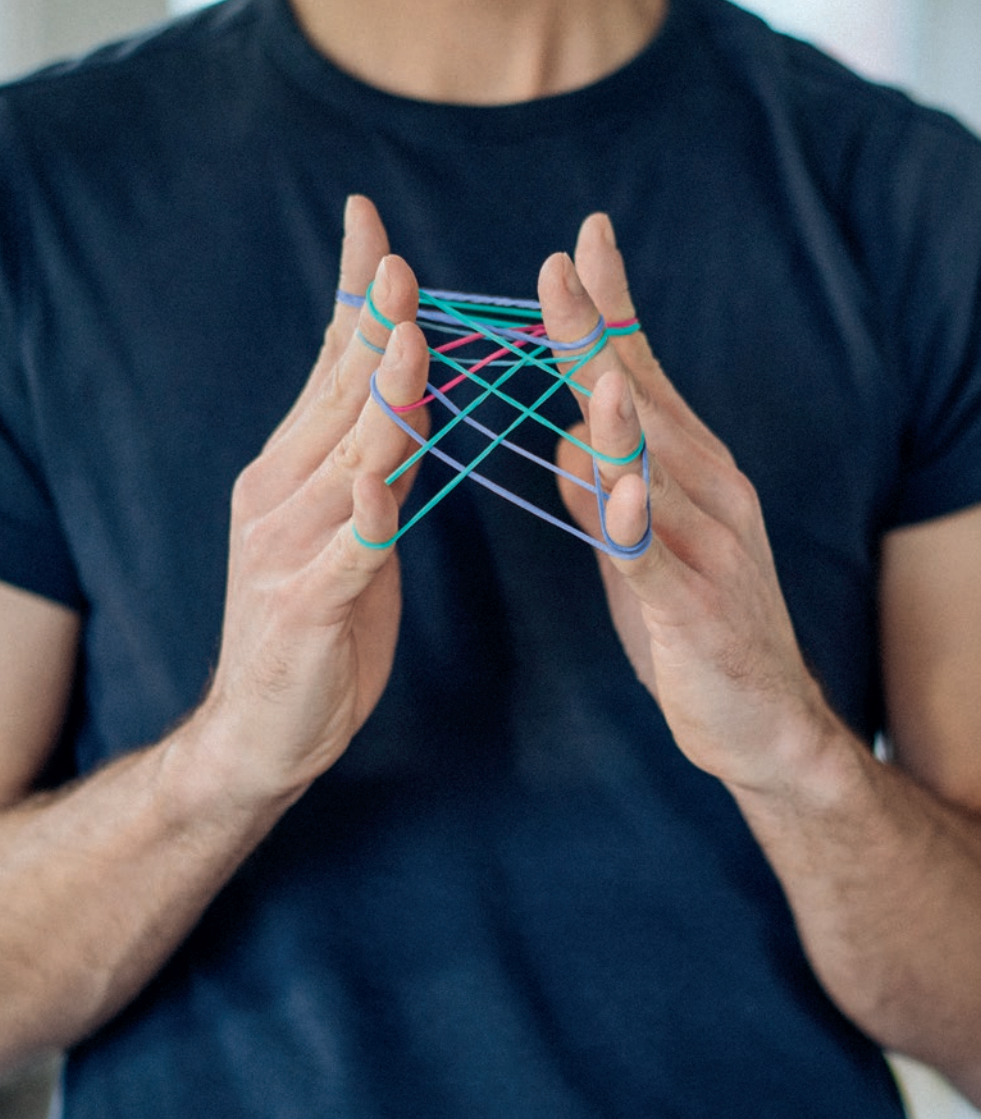
Monitor account activity to keep your license/subscription overhead low.



Get ROI on your SaaS

The USU Software Asset Management solution automatically monitors your cloud usage, so you can make cost-effective decisions about your subscriptions.

[Learn more](#)



Step 4: Diversify Data Sources

SSO and AD logs are a great start for monitoring SaaS account activity. But you should diversify your data sources to ensure there are no gaps in your data coverage.

For instance, you can use mail and chat activity to see assess whether an account is being used. Consult your Exchange/Online solutions and use email activity to determine which accounts to deactivate, reharvest, and reassign.

Some users and their usage activity may be “hidden” on an external machine or shared device. Diversifying your data sources can help you uncover hidden and unmanaged users to get the most accurate overview.

Quick Tip

Keep an eye on alternative data sources to get a complete overview of account usage.



Step 5: Ask if You're Not Sure

Data may not be enough to tell you if a user needs access. If you're not sure, then ask! People should be able to say whether their license is really being used. And involving them in the process will raise awareness for license management in an organization.

Make sure that your automatic license reharvesting tools allow email workflows and notifications, so users are actively involved in licensing decisions. If they don't respond, it's a good indication that they don't need the license.

Quick Tip

Going straight to the users or the department heads is an easy way to decide which licenses they need.



About The Author



Carlos Pereira is the Product Manager for Cloud Solutions at USU. Prior to joining USU in 2017, Carlos Pereira worked within the Office 365 team as an escalation agent for Enterprise customers, and later, as a Microsoft Licensing Specialist. He supported internal Microsoft employees from French speaking countries regarding Microsoft Volume Licensing agreement rules and product use rights.

Want a Strategy for Migration?

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