



The Goldilocks Conundrum
SAM and Its Complexities

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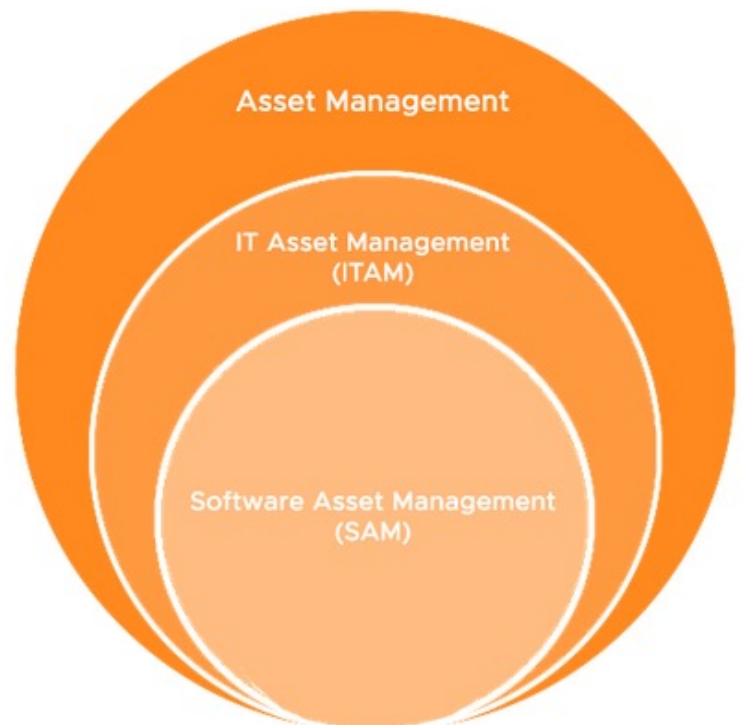
Introduction

If you've outgrown in-house license management, you may be casting around for the next step—a way to manage assets that's more sophisticated than what you cobbled together in-house.

The landscape is intense, and there's more to it than you ever dreamed. You've gone down the SAM rabbit hole. ITIL? ITAM? ITSM? What level do I need, and what if I am not able to commit to a large undertaking?

This short guide will define what these acronyms are and how these all relate to each other. We will also introduce you to a different solution, CUBES license management software. We are not so big that you'll need a whole IT team to onboard us, nor are we so small that you're left bereft of features. We are the just-the-right-size solution.

The figure on this page, from the ITIL 4 ITAM Practice Guide shows the relationship between Asset Management, ITAM, and Software Asset Management (SAM).



What is ITIL?

Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) is a catalog of best practices. It covers all the processes, tasks and checklists that an organization can use to develop a strategy for reaching compliance. There are 5 stages:

- Strategy
- Design
- Transition
- Operation
- Continual Improvement.

ISO/IEC 20000 is another thing you may come across in the SAM rabbit hole. ISO 20000 is a set of best practices established through the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). This is a series of strict requirements that must be met to achieve the standard. Becoming compliant is a big effort — there are companies out there that will help you achieve this if that's the choice for you.

What is ITAM?

ITAM stands for IT Asset Management. ITAM is about the content of the environment. It helps with understanding assets and tools so that you make good purchasing decisions at the enterprise level. Some of the processes that comprise ITAM are asset identification, disposal management, legislation, and policy management and acquisition management. A complete list is maintained on the [Association of Information Technology Asset Managers website](#).

One core component of ITAM is the asset register. This collects details about IT assets — ownership, costs, licenses in use, and more. When you start out with ITAM, this is the spreadsheet that you hope everyone is filling in. ITAM focuses on the entire lifecycle, from planning the acquisition all the way up to disposal.



What is ITSM?

Another term you'll probably see on your SAM journey is IT Service Management—ITSM. These teams oversee all kinds of workplace tech—laptops, servers and critical software applications. It's more than just basic IT support, although how IT teams manage the end-to-end customer service is a part of it. ITSM and ITAM interact at a high level. It's not really related to SAM, so don't get confused.

SAM and the SAM Umbrella:

Software Asset Management (SAM) is a subset of ITAM. It's a continuous process business practice, and its main goals are maximizing the value of business software assets. It is a part of a company's ITAM profile. SAM has lots of moving parts to achieve this goal and usually focus on the following components:

- Planning and Implementation
- Inventory Discovery and Control
- Verification and Compliance
- Lifecycle Management

Having someone in the role of Software Asset Manager to maintain the SAM tool set is important. Some organizations have asset managers for each vendor to manage all the complexities of the software and maintain relationships with vendors. Having someone in this role to create the roadmap and ease the ramp-up gives organizations a better chance of a successful roll out.



What is SLM?

Software License Management (SLM) is often thought of as a component of SAM, and most software treat SLM as a feature of a larger suite of services. Nearly all software has some sort of license attached — simple monthly SaaS all the way up to the expensive enterprise licenses suites. SLM keeps your company assets organized at the most granular level. It will organize how many installs you have, when licenses expire, how much you are paying, and how much each department is spending.

So Those Are the Big Players

ITIL and other standards create the path in the broad sense. ITAM is the on the ground ‘single source of truth’ and it helps guide decisions. SAM is a component of ITAM and works to maximize the value of software assets. SLM is how your company keep your software licenses organized.

There’s software available to help at all these levels. They provide important solutions for complex environments. But if you are just starting on this path, you don’t yet need all that. And often you can’t afford it. SAM is not built for small to mid-size companies. Gartner research crunched the data on over 1,500 reviews of SAM tools and broke the results down by company size. Most users are in the government sector and enterprise level companies. Less than 10% of the results pertain to companies with less than \$50M valuation.

There’s a reason for that. SAM requires a lot of resources — onboarding requires IT department assets to be tied up for weeks. Then there’s the training, and the dedicated resources to maintain it



The Goldilocks Conundrum

What are the options at the mid-size level? You've outgrown the in-house ad hoc ways to manage software assets – it's getting messy. You want to track more, see more, get pinged with alerts and have better insights. But there's not really any tools that fit your needs without going overboard. You just need to track your licenses, to manage them in on place with just enough automation that things stop falling through the cracks.

With CUBES, you will get text as well as email alerts for expiration dates. You can upload and make use of your data the same day, with no IT department involvement. Run reports, view analytics and maintain alerts all from an application that was designed around the needs of small to mid-size businesses. See your term durations laid out and defined. Get the 'more' you've been looking for, without all the pain and bloat of the enterprise systems.

Resources

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