

Considering Software-as-a-Service in the Asset Management World

Is Your Business Up In The Clouds?

The concept of providing Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) has been growing in interest within recent years, and has now reached a critical-mass of acceptance within the IT field, becoming a fully viable option for service and application provision.

Overview of SaaS

In the SaaS model, the footprint of an application within an IT organization is either minimized greatly or negated entirely through the following strategies:

- The application, data, and infrastructure is stored and maintained by the providing organization.
- Application is fully available (complete functionality and data) over a web browser.

Essentially, adopting the concept of SaaS allows the client to shift resources from application and infrastructure installation and maintenance concerns, and to instead focus critical resources on the processes to optimize the benefits of using the system in question.

SaaS also allows for the installation and configuration of the application, without a need for the client to be concerned about internal provision and setup of infrastructure. This can greatly speed the time and effort involved in the establishment and rollout of the application in the client environment.

In addition, provision of application support is greatly streamlined, due to the fact that the entire application environment, the full dataset, and the supporting infrastructure is fully available to the SaaS provider. This fullness of availability both assists the application provider with ease of access, and also reduces the time of the client personnel's engagement in support activities.

SaaS and Asset Management

It is a fact that a wide ranging endeavor such as Asset Management can require a significant amount of personnel and work hours in order to build an infrastructure for a successful implementation. Not only must the application infrastructure itself be considered, but user access and external system access to the data must be considered as well.

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The adoption of SaaS in terms of an Asset Management initiative removes infrastructure concerns from the client and instead places the planning of the supporting environment in the hands of the application provider. The application provider can manage user access, develop integrations, and create customizations, once the specifications are established, with virtually no time spent from the client after the definition of specifications for the system.

Given the fact that client time is minimal, the time to value proposition is greatly enhanced. Tasks such as Network Discovery, Software Management, and Hardware Management can be rolled out quickly and easily.

Maintenance of a SaaS Asset Management Solution

The SaaS model also makes maintenance of an Asset Management solution much more streamlined. If future customizations or additions of system integrations are required, then those can be developed and tested by the application provider, with no downtime on the system and no impact on the administrators of the system.

In addition, in the event that an application upgrade is necessary, the application provider can perform that task without involving the IT department of the client. Expenses for the provider's personnel are negated as well.

Conclusion

The SaaS model, when enacted with a trusted provider, provides the following benefits:

- Reduced client man-hours
- Reduced client infrastructure
- Reduced or negated service provider time on-site
- Shorter rollout time for implementation
- Shorter time to resolution on support issues