

A graphic of a checkered racing flag, with dark teal and light teal squares, positioned in the top left corner.

The Fast Lane to Greater SaaS Visibility

WHITEPAPER

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01 Setting the Stage

In today's business world, Software as a Service (SaaS) solutions are integral to the operational success of many organizations. However, with the proliferation of SaaS applications across departments, gaining comprehensive visibility to the organization's entire SaaS estate has become increasingly complex. A SaaS management platform offers a solution, providing deeper insights into usage, expenditure, compliance, and more. This whitepaper outlines common challenges organizations face and explores how they can enhance visibility and optimize their SaaS ecosystems effectively.



02 The Challenges of Limited Visibility

Inefficiencies and Redundancies ▶▶

Without a clear view of the SaaS applications in use, organizations often face significant inefficiencies and redundancies. Multiple departments might unknowingly subscribe to similar tools, leading to unnecessary duplication of costs and efforts.

Overlapping Functionality: Departments may purchase different tools that provide similar functionalities, resulting in wasted budget and fragmented workflows.

Underutilized Licenses: Licenses may go unused or underutilized, with organizations paying for more capacity than they actually need.

Security and Compliance Risks ▶▶

Shadow IT, where employees use unsanctioned applications, can introduce significant security and compliance risks.

Data Security: Unapproved applications may not meet the organization's security standards, increasing the risk of data breaches.

Regulatory Non-Compliance: Using unsanctioned SaaS tools can lead to non-compliance with industry regulations and standards, resulting in potential fines and legal issues.

Budget Mismanagement ▶▶

A lack of visibility can lead to poor budget allocation, where funds are not strategically distributed based on actual needs and usage patterns.

Overspending: Without insight into actual usage, organizations may overspend on SaaS applications that are not delivering proportional value.

Misallocation of Resources: Funds might be directed towards less critical applications, while essential tools may be underfunded, affecting overall productivity.

Difficulty in Managing Renewals ▶▶

Without detailed usage data, managing SaaS renewals becomes challenging, often leading to suboptimal contract terms and missed opportunities for cost savings.

Renewal Blind Spots: Organizations may renew contracts without a clear understanding of current and future needs, leading to overpayment or under-commitment.

Lack of Negotiation Leverage: Without usage insights, it is difficult to negotiate better terms with SaaS vendors, potentially causing organizations to lose out on cost-saving opportunities.

03 Strategies to Illuminate & Overcome Obstacles

Leverage Diverse Data Streams ▶▶

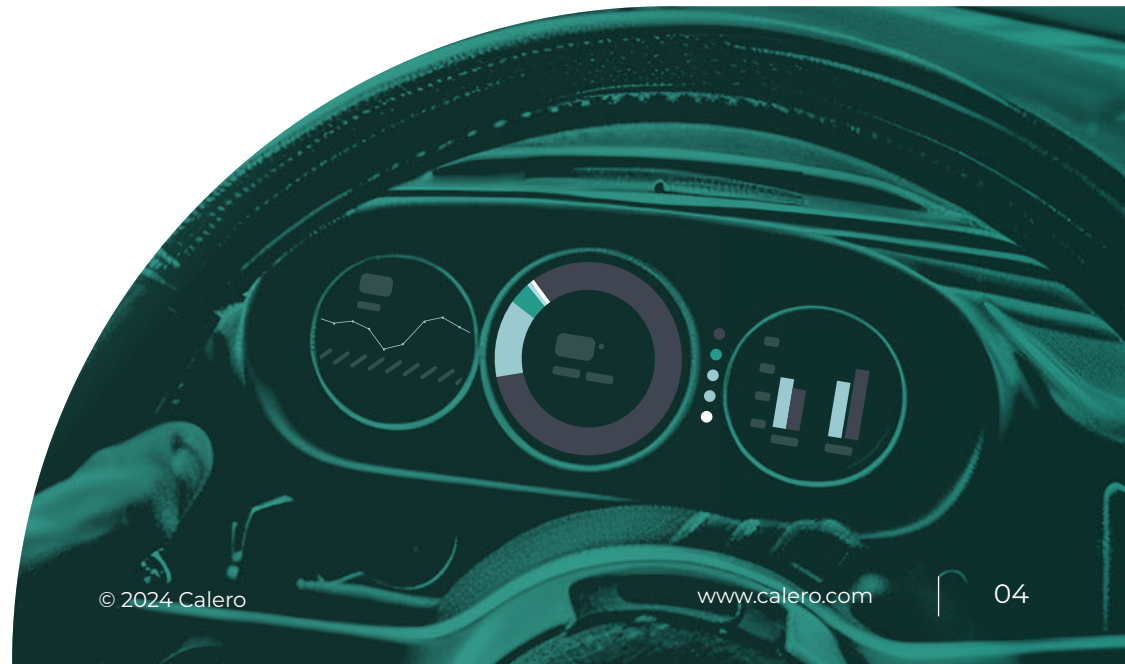
Traditional methods of SaaS management solely rely on API integrations to gather data from various applications. While APIs are a valuable source of information, they often provide a limited view confined to the data each service chooses to expose. By incorporating additional data streams, such as user activity logs, invoice data, and information directly from vendor application portals, organizations can gain a more holistic understanding of their SaaS environment.

Invoice & Expense Data: Analyzing invoice data can provide detailed insights into actual spending on SaaS applications. By examining invoices, organizations can track costs over time, identify trends, and ensure that they are not being overcharged for services. Invoice data can also help in verifying that the services billed match the services used, providing a crucial check against financial discrepancies. Additionally, invoices are often the only source of certain SaaS charges, such as separate costs for staging instances. Broader expense data can help alert administrators to new SaaS vendors and spend changes.

SSO (Single Sign-On): Leveraging SSO data helps in tracking user access and login patterns across various SaaS applications. This can reveal which applications are frequently used and by whom, aiding in license management and compliance monitoring.

Endpoint Security: Endpoint security data provides visibility into SaaS applications and user-level usage. This provides an additional layer of visibility and security by discovering potential shadow IT and enriching application utilization data at the individual level.

Browsers & Firewalls: Data from browsers and firewalls can help identify all SaaS applications being accessed, including those not officially approved by IT. This is crucial for managing shadow IT and ensuring comprehensive security monitoring.



03 Strategies to Illuminate & Overcome Obstacles

Optimize Expenditure ▶▶

One of the primary benefits of a SaaS management platform is the ability to optimize budget allocation. By gaining clear visibility into SaaS expenditure, organizations can ensure that resources are strategically allocated to maximize impact.

Centralized Cost Dashboard: A centralized dashboard that aggregates all SaaS spending across departments provides a clear picture of where money is being spent and helps identify opportunities for cost savings.

Departmental Budget Allocation: With visibility into SaaS usage and costs, finance teams can allocate budgets more accurately across departments, ensuring that high-usage teams have the resources they need while reducing waste in low-usage areas.

Cost-Benefit Analysis: Regularly conducting cost-benefit analyses of SaaS applications can help determine which tools provide the most value relative to their cost, allowing for more informed budgeting decisions.

Proactively Manage Contracts ▶▶

Renewal time is critical for ensuring that your SaaS contracts are right-sized to meet current and future needs. By gaining insights into user behavior and usage patterns, organizations can proactively address usage issues and adjust contracts accordingly.

Usage Analysis: Regularly analyze usage data to identify trends and changes in how SaaS applications are utilized. This can help in making informed decisions about whether to renew, renegotiate, or cancel contracts.

User Feedback: Gathering feedback from users about their experience with SaaS applications can provide valuable insights into which tools are essential and which may be redundant or underperforming.

Contract Benchmarks: Utilize industry benchmarks and internal usage data to negotiate better terms during renewals. Understanding how your usage compares to similar organizations can give you leverage in negotiations.

03 Strategies to Illuminate & Overcome Obstacles

Mitigate Risks & Ensure Compliance ▶▶

Shadow IT, or the use of unsanctioned applications, poses significant security and compliance risks. A SaaS management platform can mitigate these risks by providing visibility into all SaaS applications used across the organization.

Application Discovery: Implement tools that automatically discover all SaaS applications in use within the organization, including those not officially sanctioned by IT.

Risk Assessment: Conduct regular risk assessments of all discovered applications to identify potential security and compliance issues.

Policy Enforcement: Establish and enforce policies for SaaS application usage, ensuring that only approved tools are used and that they comply with security and regulatory requirements.



04 SaaS Management: The Essential Tool for Greater Visibility

A SaaS management platform is designed to address these challenges and help you implement these strategies by providing comprehensive visibility and control over your SaaS estate. Here's how it can help:

Comprehensive Visibility ▶▶

Centralized Dashboard: A SaaS management platform consolidates data from all your SaaS applications and data sources into a single dashboard, providing a holistic view of your entire SaaS ecosystem. This centralization helps identify overlapping functionalities, underutilized licenses, and unsanctioned applications.

Real-Time Monitoring: Continuous monitoring of SaaS usage and expenditure allows organizations to track real-time data, helping to quickly identify and address inefficiencies and redundancies.

Efficient Renewal Management ▶▶

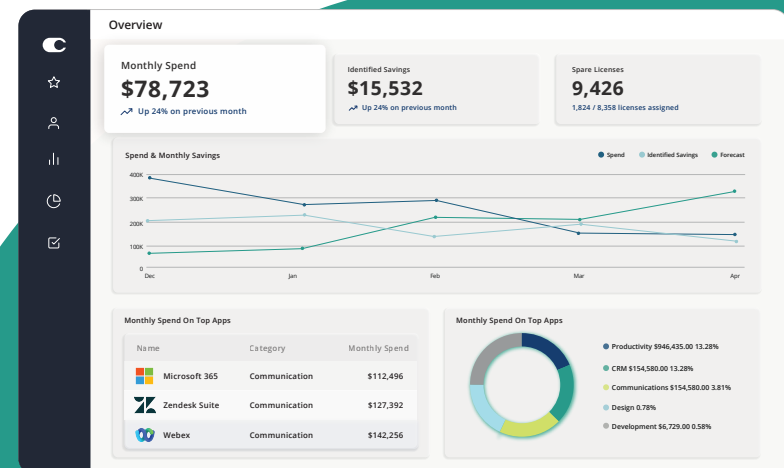
Usage and Performance Metrics: Detailed usage metrics and user feedback enable organizations to assess the value of each SaaS application accurately. This ensures that contracts are right-sized based on actual needs during renewal time.

Negotiation Support: Comprehensive data and benchmarks provide leverage during contract negotiations, helping to secure better terms and pricing from SaaS vendors.

Optimized Budget Allocation ▶▶

Detailed Cost Analysis: By analyzing invoice data, user activity, and application usage, a SaaS management platform provides detailed insights into actual spending and usage patterns. This helps in making informed decisions about budget allocation and identifying cost-saving opportunities.

Forecasting and Planning: Advanced analytics and forecasting tools help predict future SaaS needs and expenditures, enabling more accurate budget planning and allocation.



04 SaaS Management: The Essential Tool for Greater Visibility

Enhanced Security & Compliance

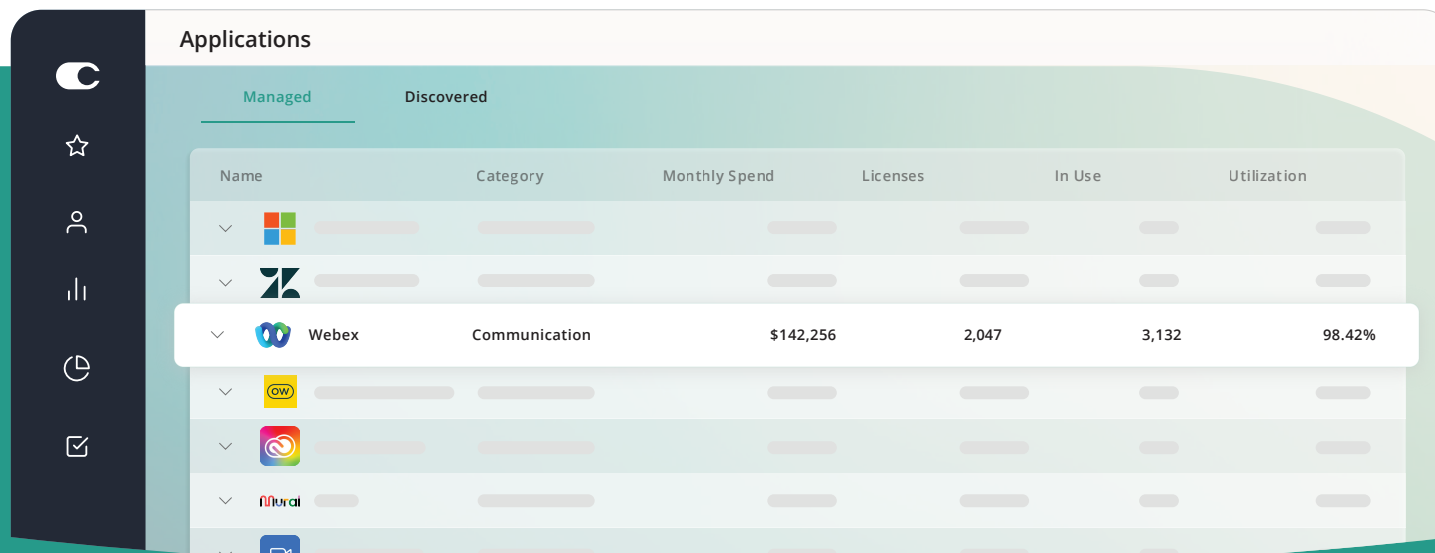
Shadow IT Detection: By monitoring network traffic and user activities, a SaaS management platform can detect unauthorized applications in use within the organization, mitigating the risks associated with shadow IT.

Compliance Monitoring: The platform can ensure that all SaaS applications comply with organizational security policies and industry regulations, reducing the risk of non-compliance and potential fines.

Improved Decision-Making

Data-Driven Insights: With comprehensive data at their fingertips, executives, IT and security professionals, procurement teams, and finance departments can make more informed decisions about their SaaS investments.

Custom Reports and Analytics: The ability to generate custom reports and analytics provides stakeholders with the specific information they need to support strategic planning and operational improvements.



Applications						
Managed		Discovered				
Name	Category	Monthly Spend	Licenses	In Use	Utilization	
Webex	Communication	\$142,256	2,047	3,132	98.42%	

05 Take a Test Drive

A SaaS management platform is essential for gaining comprehensive visibility into your SaaS estate. By consolidating application data, optimizing budget allocation, right-sizing renewals, and mitigating compliance and shadow IT risks, organizations can ensure they are making the most of their SaaS investments. For executives, IT and security professionals, procurement teams, and finance departments, a robust SaaS management strategy is crucial for driving efficiency, security, and cost-effectiveness.

By implementing the strategies outlined in this whitepaper, organizations can transform their approach to SaaS management, gaining the insights and control needed to thrive in a SaaS-driven world.



Ready to get started? ▶▶

Chat with our team of experts to learn how to implement these strategies through a single platform that gives you comprehensive visibility to your entire software estate.

Give Us a Call:
866-823-1281

Visit Our Website:
www.calero.com

