LanLicenser 4.1

Frequently Asked Questions

General FAQs

What is LanLicenser?

LanLicenser is a multi-platform integrated software audit and metering tool.

1. Scans software on individual PC's and provides an inventory of all software installed.
2. Scans hardware on individual PC's and provides an inventory of all hardware.
3. Actively meters software applications to ensure compliance with license agreements.
4. Passively monitors applications to provide timely usage information
5. Controls access to applications to help secure the network.

LanLicenser automatically distributes software licenses both within a site and between sites according to both historical and ongoing demand. This assures optimum usage of licenses and produces costs savings. It is scalable to the largest of enterprise networks and can be centrally administrated from a single parent site. All applications launched on the network from the server, client workstation hard drive, or floppy are detected. Even if an application file is renamed, LanLicenser will detect the original file name.

LanLicenser can also restrict access to applications by any combination of user, group, workstation or time of day. Expensive CAD packages may be restricted to the engineering department, game playing may be restricted to lunch time, and unauthorized applications may be stopped from ever being run on the network again.

Features include:

- Scheduled Hardware & Software inventory
- Mobile user application check out capability
- Mobile user and 'offline metering' capability
- Automatic call back
- Automatic inactivity timeout
- Access control restrictions
- Automatic load balancing within and between sites
- Active metering (i.e. enforce license limits) or Passive metering (monitor and record usage data).
- Time zone license balancing
- Automatic Suite least cost balancing
- True 32 bit n–tier architecture
- Software Version control
- Client Deployment
- Application Access Control
- Application Start-up messaging
- Auto Trend Analysis
- Whitelisting of applications
- Blacklisting of applications
- Shortcut Hiding

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What client platforms does LanLicenser support?
Windows 98, Window Me, Windows NT4 SP6a, Windows 2000 SP4, Windows XP, Windows 2003, Windows Vista and Windows 7.

What server platforms does LanLicenser support?
Windows 2000 Server SP4, Windows 2003 Server, Windows Server 2008

What license types does LanLicenser support?
Concurrent, Non-concurrent and device licenses are all supported for Active Metering.

Business FAQs

What is the difference between an audit/inventory tool and a metering tool?
An inventory tool takes a snapshot of the software installed on your desktop to provide you with a view of which applications are installed and where they are installed. The process is repeated as often as required, to capture any changes. A metering tool includes both passive monitoring of application usage and active monitoring to enforce license compliance

How will LanLicenser save me money?
LanLicenser can save you money on the software you need to purchase by providing you with a view of what software is installed within your network, as well as determining usage patterns. By tracking the number of licenses that you actually use on your network as opposed to how many you *might* use, you can ensure you only buy the licenses you need. When you upgrade, you only buy as many licenses as your usage directs (compared to the license count). Other areas of the IT management function that benefit from software metering are:

- Asset Management - Find out where a particular application is installed, how many people are using the application and how often it is actually being used.
- Helpdesk - Decide which versions of an application you need to support (based on usage) and establish which applications can be eliminated. Discover the last applications that were running on a workstation before it crashed.
- End user training - base your training needs on usage data
- Maintenance renewal - pay for maintenance on products that are being used (not those that are merely installed).
- Negotiate contracts based on usage – Make more informed decisions on which licensing contracts to choose.
- Security - Investigate what unauthorized or restricted applications are being used where and by whom.
- Hardware purchases - How much disk space is required by each supported application? How much of disk space on the network can we recoup?

Will it help ensure my company is legal?
Surveys have shown that a huge amount of software is used illegally and often the companies concerned do not even know it. Organizations such as Microsoft and anti-theft associations such as BSA, SIAA and FAST are increasingly vigilant and carry out snap audits to detect illegal software. The penalties for wrongful use of software are huge and can result in enormous fines or imprisonment for senior officers of the company (as well as the inevitable bad publicity). LanLicenser, with

its integrated inventory & Metering capability, forms the cornerstone of an effective software license compliance strategy to help ensure legality.

Can LanLicenser improve the security of my network?

As well as helping to keep you legal at low cost, LanLicenser has many security features. You can restrict access to an application by any combination of user, group, workstation and time of day. Thus you could restrict the use of games like "Solitaire" to out of office hours or limit who has access to the Internet. You can also prevent unauthorized software being run anywhere on the network.

What else can it tell me about my business?

In addition to knowing what software you have purchased or made available on your network, LanLicenser tells you what is actually being used and by whom. LanLicenser provides many reports and graphs which show who is using which applications and for how long. This can help in forecasting training needs and future software purchasing requirements.

LanLicenser will also detect applications that you don't know have been installed on your network; this will help reduce support problems as well as removing a previously unknown potential legal problem. Remember: you are responsible for all applications running on your LAN.

Why should I buy LanLicenser rather than another inventory/metering product?

There are many technical reasons and features that make it stand out against the competition - many of which are shown in the technical section below. The main reasons are that it is more secure, generates less network traffic and is considerably more scaleable than any other competing product. LanLicenser uses industry standard databases such as SQL Server to integrate more easily with your other systems.

Technical FAQs

When is inventory run?

When the client agent is first installed, an inventory scan of the computer will take place. This process will be repeated as per the schedule. Inventory can also be scheduled to run as and when required.

How long does inventory scan take?

The length of time taken by the inventory scan is determined by the PC specification e.g. Number of hard disks, processor speed, number of files etc.

What information/files are collected by the inventory?

The inventory process scans all files contained on the hard disk, and identifies those that are executable. This information is then filtered according to the current configuration options.

What configuration options are available?

The following configuration options are available which allow you to choose which files you wish to scan:
Perform File Scan, Scan OS Files, Scan Registered Apps Only, Scan Legacy Apps.

What is the average size of the output Inventory file?

This is based on the number of the files found. The first full scan is a complete detail of all the files (average of 1MB to 2MB). Subsequent 'Delta' scans record only the changes/updates and are significantly smaller.

What is the format of the scanned file?

The format of the file is an XML file which is compressed for transmission on the LAN.

What information is provided by LanLicenser software Inventory?

LanLicenser software inventory provides the following information which can be viewed directly from within the MMC or via the reporting facility

- Software Publisher
- Software file information such as name, size, date, path, version
- Whether the application is an individual application or part of a suite
- Software inventory information on both servers and workstations
- License counts for each software product
- Inventory can be run remotely within the network

What information is provided by LanLicenser hardware Inventory?

The hardware inventory component collects information about the computer being scanned including (but not limited to) the following:

- Operating System: Service Pack, Product ID and Version.
- System: Manufacturer, Model and Serial Number.
- Computer: Name, MAC and IP address.
- BIOS: Manufacturer, Name and Version,
- Physical Memory; Total and Type.
- Drives: Hard Drives, DVD/CD-ROM and Removable Disks.
- Processor: Manufacturer, Type and Speed.
- Monitors & Video Controllers.
- IEEE 1394 (Firewire) Devices.
- USB Devices.
- Keyboards & Pointing devices.
- Printers.

What is the impact of the running inventory.

The impact of running the LanLicenser inventory scan on the network is minimal. The inventory scan is designed to run silently in the background. The inventory file transferred from the client to the site server is compressed. For subsequent scans only changes from the previous software inventory are transmitted.

How do I register application licenses?

There are several ways to register application licenses.

- You can register the applications directly from the inventory view.
- You can run LanLicenser for a day or two and then interrogate the "non-licensed programs" log. This will show all the applications that have run on your network during that period. You can then select the applications you wish to register and the ones you wish to ignore from that list.
- You can register them directly via the registration screen.

Can I physically restrict the number of users?

You can choose by application whether to physically restrict usage (active metering) or just monitor usage (passive metering). If you choose the former and a user is

denied access they can elect to be called back later when a license next becomes free.

What is the newly discovered license view?

One of the most useful features of LanLicenser is that it can detect applications that are not registered, even if it has never seen the application before. Having detected these applications you can decide whether to ignore them, register them or prevent them from ever being run again (which is a very strong security capability). If you are confident that all the applications you wish to run are either registered or in the "ignore" list you can tell the system to stop any other application that someone might try to run.

What is the Ignored list?

There are many applications that you may not wish to monitor such as Notepad, Windows Calculator or in-house written utilities. LanLicenser comes with a suggested ignore list that you can modify to your own requirements. These applications do not generate any database query or network traffic, thus improving performance.

You can use wildcards to easily exclude multiple programs from metering. Wildcard functionality enables you to categorize and take action on entire groups of applications. For example, all screen savers can be excluded from being metered or monitored with a single "*.SCR" entry. You can concentrate your metering analysis on registered known applications only by using the "*.*" wildcard in the Excluded Programs List. This considerably reduces the administrative work required to operate LanLicenser, even in large and complex environments.

How does LanLicenser handle "suite" licenses such as Microsoft Office?

When you register a suite license such as Microsoft Office you register it as a "parent" and then the individual applications such as Word and Excel as "members". If you have individual licenses of Word or Excel as well as suites, LanLicenser will dynamically make sure that these are applied in the most economical way.

What happens if there are different versions of the same product?

The inventory scan will pick up all version references of a product. You can choose to monitor all versions of the product such as Word 2 and Word 6 as one product or monitor the different versions separately.

Can a user change the application file name?

Even if an application file is renamed, LanLicenser will detect the original file name and continue to monitor the correct product.

What happens if the client is switched off rather than closed down?

The licenses for the applications that were running on the client computer will initially continue to be tied up. However, LanLicenser will quickly detect that the computer is switched off and the licenses will be automatically returned to the license pool.

What if a user hogs an application without actually using it?

The administrator can configure LanLicenser to send out warning messages if applications are not active for a pre-determined period of time (e.g. 20 minutes). Additionally, if the application is still not used for a further period (e.g. 5 minutes) then LanLicenser can be configured to automatically close that application and

return the license to the pool. This will only occur if there is no danger of the user losing any data.

What is a "site" in LanLicenser terms?
A license "site" consists of at least one site server and one software metering server.

How large can a "site" be?
There is no actual limit to the size of a site in that you can add as many license servers as you wish. A site can consist of thousands of workstations. Please contact the ABC Help Line to discuss specific configurations.

How are small sites handled?
The Site Server and the Software Metering Server can be installed on the same machine and this in itself does not need to be dedicated to LanLicenser. This server could be the only server on the site.

How many workstations can I run with a single Software Metering Server?
This will depend on whether you are running LanLicenser in active or passive metering mode. In active mode each metering server can support up to 2000 clients, whereas in passive mode the number of clients supported can be up to 10,000.

What database should I run on the site and metering servers?
There are two database options for both the Site Server and the Software Metering Servers:
- Microsoft SQL Desktop Edition (MSDE), Microsoft SQL Server Express Edition
- Microsoft SQL Server

MSDE can be installed with LanLicenser and is very easy and quick to setup. We recommend using this option when evaluating LanLicenser.

For small to medium sized businesses which do not have SQL Server we recommend using MSDE at both the site and metering servers.

For very large installations (over 1000 clients) we recommend using SQL Server for the site server, as it is a robust and scalable platform that will offer optimum performance.

How do I handle multiple sites?
You can either treat them as separate sites with their own quota of licenses or you can purchase LanLicenser Enterprise Edition, which will allow you to share licenses between sites and centrally collate data from the various sites. LanLicenser Enterprise Edition is described in the next section of FAQs.

How do I distribute the ABC LanLicenser client software?
LanLicenser includes a client deployment tool that enables the network administrator to "push" the client to all workstations remotely. The automatic detection of workstations present on your network ensures a very high success rate. Alternatively, login scripts can be used for a "pull" distribution whereby any new workstation will request the client when a user first logs in. Using a combination of both methods is the best way of achieving total coverage.

How are laptops handled?

More and more networks have notebooks which are connected to the network some of the time and used offline for the rest of the time. LanLicenser has two ways of handling this complicated scenario. Ideally, a laptop user will "check out" licenses for a given amount of time, say three days, and during that time, these licenses will be permanently allocated to that user. If however the laptop user does not check out licenses, then LanLicenser will continue to monitor license usage locally on the machine all the time the notebook is not connected to the network. When that notebook next connects to the network the collated licensing data will be automatically merged with the main database thus giving an accurate representation of all license usage.

How does LanLicenser generate less traffic than other metering products?

LanLicenser has been designed from the ground up to scale to very large organizations (20,000+ workstations). A primary success factor to achieve this objective was to keep the network traffic generated by the different components of LanLicenser down to an absolute minimum. LanLicenser has been optimized throughout for this purpose:

- By the nature of LanLicenser's n-tier architecture, all communications involving workstations take place at LAN level.
- The clients have been designed to be fully self-contained and are able to perform most of their functionality without any communication with a software metering server. In active metering mode, the clients only send a network packet when an application is started or stopped. Applications from the ignore list are excluded at the client level, thus further reducing the number of packets sent. In passive metering mode, usage data is cached locally and transmitted periodically.
- Communications between software metering servers and site servers can be scheduled to run during off-peak hours, and the amount of data exchanged can also be reduced through summarization.
- For Enterprise installations, communications between sites can take place across even the slowest network links thanks to data summarization and compression and the ability to schedule data transfers to times of low network traffic.

What is the Permanently Offline client?

The "offline client" allows workstations to gather software application usage information on an offline basis and then report this information to a Software Metering Server at a pre-determined interval or scheduled basis.

This feature dramatically increases the number of clients that can be metered from a single server to 5,000 with little or no impact on network traffic. Large organizations with thousands or even tens of thousands of workstations can now deploy software license metering throughout their entire organization using a small number of servers.

What is Cost Centre Reporting?

Cost Centre Reporting is an enhancement to the reporting facilities within LanLicenser that allows separate Cost Centre (or departmental) usage reporting. This means that individual departments within a larger organization can be "billed" for software based on their usage of it.

What is the application start-up-messaging feature?

This gives network administrators the ability to create custom messages to the end user by product on launch. The message displayed can be shown in two ways:

- Show on every launch – same message is displayed every time a product is started. (e.g. "This application has now been retired. Please contact the Help Desk to be upgraded to the latest version.")
- Show on first launch only – message is shown only when the product is first run. (e.g. "Welcome to Microsoft Outlook XP. Please contact the Help Desk to book your introductory training session.")

LanLicenser Enterprise Edition FAQs

What is LanLicenser Enterprise Edition?

LanLicenser Enterprise Edition is a separately licensed component of LanLicenser with features targeted at the large enterprise with multiple sites. Its three major functions are:

- Load balancing and sharing licenses across sites and (where appropriate) time zones.
- Collating data either in summary or detail across these sites.
- Central management of licensing data

What is load balancing?

Each site will be allocated different numbers of application licenses dependent on size and usage. (If LanLicenser is allowed to run passively for a few days it will predict usage requirements for all sites using auto-trend analysis). Once active monitoring is in place, LanLicenser will automatically move licenses around from sites that have excess licenses to sites that are running short. Automatic trend forecasting ensures that licenses are distributed in the most cost-effective manner.

What do time zones have to do with licensing?

Some licenses are restricted to operate in a single time zone and others are not. Where applications may be freely used across time zones, LanLicenser will enable them to be switched from say the US to Japan during the US night time thus potentially saving huge amounts of money.

What is data collation?

Data is collected in detail at each Site Server showing each transaction of an application opening or closing at each workstation. This information can be collected to a central site on a pre-determined frequency. The data can be either collected in summary or detail form (dependent on the volume of data involved) and the central reporting requirements.

What is centralized license management?

It is an automated way of transferring information about licensing around the network to reduce the amount of work for the network administrator. When details of a new or upgraded product are entered onto one Site Server this information gets automatically replicated around the network thus removing the tedious task of doing it manually.

Compatible with Windows 7

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