IBM ENDPOINT MANAGER FOR SOFTWARE USE ANALYSIS

SOFTWARE CATALOG OVERVIEW
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Know the fundamentals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Fingerprint the software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Scan the computers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Provide a structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Signature types</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Create custom signatures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>Go for quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Choose your way</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IBM Endpoint Manager for Software Use Analysis gathers information about software assets that are installed in your infrastructure. Then, it processes the information and combines it with the information that is stored in the software catalog to produce software inventory reports.

Knowing some fundamental concepts can help you understand how to effectively use Software Use Analysis and produce accurate and complete software inventory reports.
Today, there is no standard way to detect installed software.

*However, software installations usually leave fingerprints such as unique files or registry entries.*

The software catalog that is used by Software Use Analysis serves as a registry of those fingerprints and associates them with specific software title releases. In the software catalog terms, the fingerprints are called software signatures.
SCAN THE COMPUTERS

Software Use Analysis executes a scanner to gather evidence such as files or repository information from the endpoints. Then, the scan data is sent to the Software Use Analysis server and compared with the repository of software signatures that are stored in the software catalog. By performing this comparison, Software Use Analysis produces a report of the software that is installed on each endpoint.
Apart from providing a report of software signatures, the software catalog also provides structure and standardization within the catalog entries to ensure consistency in the software inventory reports.

Software releases are rolled up under software versions. The versions are rolled up under software products. At the top of the hierarchy, software products are rolled up under software publishers.

The structure helps to organize software titles and releases in the catalog and provides an aggregated view of your inventory in the software inventory reports.
SIGNATURE TYPES

There are many types of signatures; both simple and complex. One example of a simple signature is a file signature.

*A file signature includes the name of a file and either its size or version.*

If the file is found on an endpoint, the software release that is associated with it is added to the software inventory report for that endpoint.

Complex signatures can be based on:

- Windows uninstallation files
- Entries in the Windows registry
- Entries in the RPM package manager on Linux
- Specific text or binary data in a file or file system

What’s more, signatures can also use logical combinations of the types mentioned above.
CREATE CUSTOM SIGNATURES

The recommended way of creating signatures for Software Use Analysis is by using the Catalog Customizations panel. The built-in catalog management functionality allows you to create file signatures, package signatures, and their combinations.

To get more information about creating custom signatures, visit the Learn section of the bigfix.me website.
Some thought should be given to create signatures of high quality. In general, consider three main guiding principles.

**Principle 1**
Signatures should discover all true installations of a software product and miss no installation scenarios.

**Principle 2**
Signatures should avoid identifying partial or failed installations and other false positives.

**Principle 3**
Signatures should be as simple as possible to reduce the processing time needed to compare them with the evidence gathered from the endpoints.

Occasionally, it might not be possible to meet all three criteria and so you need to consider the balance that you want to achieve among these principles. Trading off the occasional missed installation for good performance is often an acceptable outcome if that decision is ever needed.

For more best practices, click here.
With good software signatures in the catalog you will be able to produce useful, relevant, and actionable software inventory reports that can in turn help you manage costs and make effective use of your software assets.

Every four to eight weeks, IBM provides an updated catalog that contains software titles by third parties. When a software title release is not present in the catalog, use one of four available options to solve the problem.
CHOOSE YOUR WAY

Community

Review the signature community on bigfix.me and see if someone has contributed the missing software hierarchy. If yes, download the signature and import it to Software Use Analysis if your version has that capability.

Tools

Create your own signature by using the tools that are provided with Software Use Analysis: the Catalog Customizations panel or Software Knowledge Base Toolkit. After you add the signature, consider exporting it and contributing to the software signature community on bigfix.me.

Services

Contact the IBM Service Organization or a Business Partner to help you with adding the signature.

Support

If the software title release is from IBM, Microsoft, or Adobe, ask IBM Software Support when the release is expected to be added to the catalog.

You might be asked to provide additional details or software scan samples from endpoints where the software is installed to help resolve any missing installations.
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- bigfix.me
- Signature community
- Forum
- Wiki
- Knowledge Center
- YouTube channel
- Twitter @IBMEndpoint #IEM4SUA