IBM BigFix Inventory

Maintain software audit readiness and mitigate security risks with software compliance and usage

Highlights

- Identify licensed and unlicensed software with drill-down granularity to pass more audits, limit security exposures and reduce annual software costs

- Reduce the time, effort and inaccuracy of manual inventory and analysis

- Manage assets on hundreds—or hundreds of thousands—of Microsoft Windows, Mac OS, UNIX and Linux endpoints
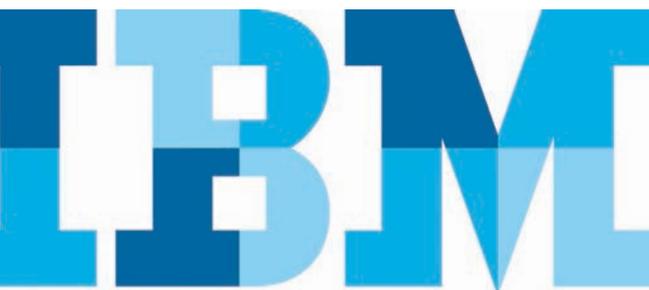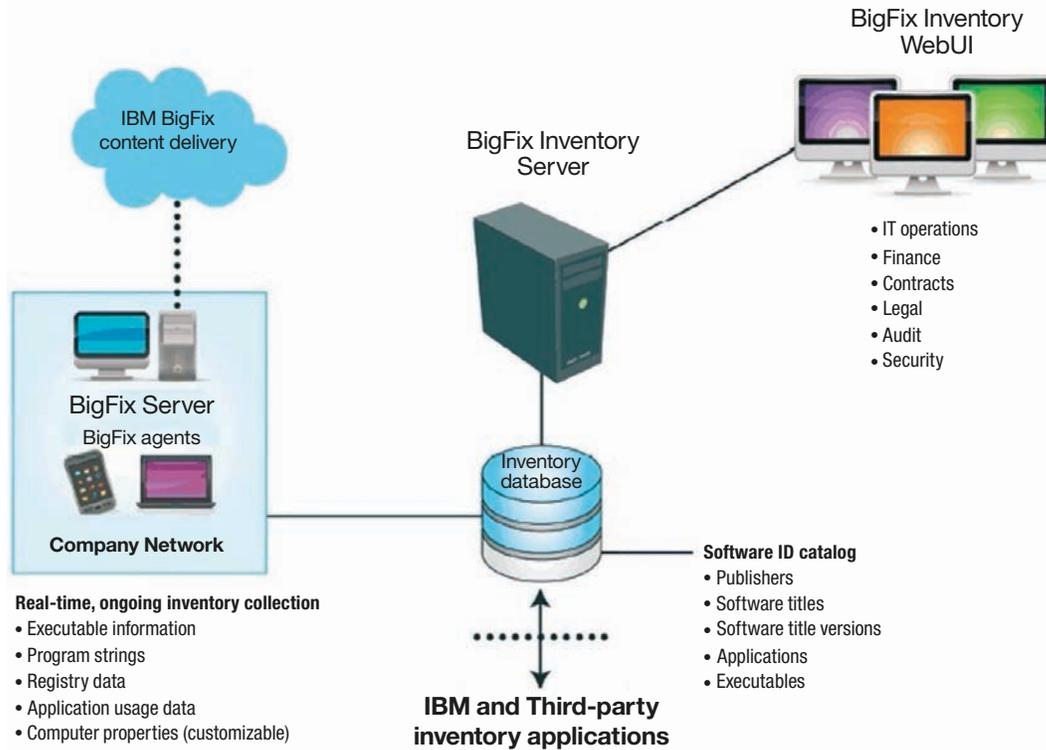
IBM® BigFix® Inventory can identify an organization's licensed and unlicensed software with drill-down granularity to track software usage patterns and trends across Windows, Mac OS, UNIX and Linux endpoints. Dramatically reducing the time required to conduct a comprehensive software asset inventory for license reconciliation or compliance purposes, the solution provides valuable insight into what the organization owns—and what it has installed but doesn't own—along with how often the software is being used in order to support better planning, budgeting and vendor license compliance while mitigating security risk.

The near-instant visibility into enterprise assets provided by BigFix Inventory can be vital to optimizing asset control and operations in the interconnected, instrumented and intelligent technology environments of today's smarter planet.

Easy to use and centrally managed from a unified console, the solution enables continuous asset assessment and reporting with low total cost of ownership and high return on investment. Not only does BigFix Inventory discover and manage applications—down to the version level—the insights it provides can translate into significant cost savings for organizations that are spending more than necessary on software licensing fees.

IBM BigFix Inventory: How it works

BigFix Inventory
WebUI

IBM BigFix
content delivery

BigFix Inventory
Server

• IT operations
• Finance
• Contracts
• Legal
• Audit
• Security

BigFix Server

BigFix agents

Inventory
database

Company Network

Software ID catalog
• Publishers
• Software titles
• Software title versions
• Applications
• Executables

Real-time, ongoing inventory collection
• Executable information
• Program strings
• Registry data
• Application usage data
• Computer properties (customizable)

**IBM and Third-party
inventory applications**

IBM BigFix Inventory leverages a comprehensive Software Identification Catalog (ISO 19770 enabled) to simplify asset identification and support reporting that organizational units can use to enhance software-related operations and management.

Knowing your assets, managing them better

When it comes to understanding and managing software assets, organizations today face common challenges. What do you have—and how can you reconcile what you've purchased with what's installed? Do you have the right applications available to the right users—and how can you redistribute software to make sure it's deployed to the best advantage? Overall, are you managing your assets in the most efficient and comprehensive way? Are you meeting standard compliance—and are you legally licensed for all the software installed on users' endpoints?

BigFix Inventory can provide answers, delivering deep asset management capabilities even in the most complex environments. Providing infrastructure views and enabling customized "slice-and-dice" reports on aggregate application counts, software usage statistics and compliance with basic license types, the solution can provide an understanding of the connections between software license management and desktop, patch and security management processes. It can give you the focus you need to better manage your endpoints, reconciling the real-time endpoint state against application licenses on Windows, Mac OS, UNIX and Linux platforms.

Benefiting from an intelligent agent-based approach

BigFix Inventory is a standalone product that provides capabilities either as an independent solution or in concert with other solutions in the IBM BigFix portfolio. The solution correlates the inventory data it gathers with its built-in Software Identification Catalog (ISO 19770 enabled) to create an inventory data warehouse. It then allows users to browse the data warehouse and generate reports.

The Software Identification Catalog simplifies the identification of specific software installations with information on 9,100 publishers, 38,000 software products and more than 105,000 application signatures out of the box. Continually updated via a cloud-based update service with information on commercial applications and publishers, the catalog is also easily configurable to include tracking of homegrown and proprietary applications—with no scripting or coding required.

The BigFix Inventory approach is a significant change from—and advantage over—conventional management solutions. Other techniques utilize endpoint agents that are entirely dependent on instructions received from a central command-and-control server and require lengthy scans to acquire inventory data. With BigFix Inventory, the endpoint itself provides the computational power necessary for assessment and reporting, considerably enhancing reporting speed. The ability to schedule inventory and reporting at times that are most

appropriate to the workloads of individual endpoints, rather than requiring a batch to execute all at once, further enhances efficiencies by avoiding bandwidth and endpoint CPU bottlenecks.

Drilling down for insight and cost savings

The IBM solution enables two key software metering functions—"always on" software inventory and analysis, and software asset and license management.

IBM BigFix Dashboard
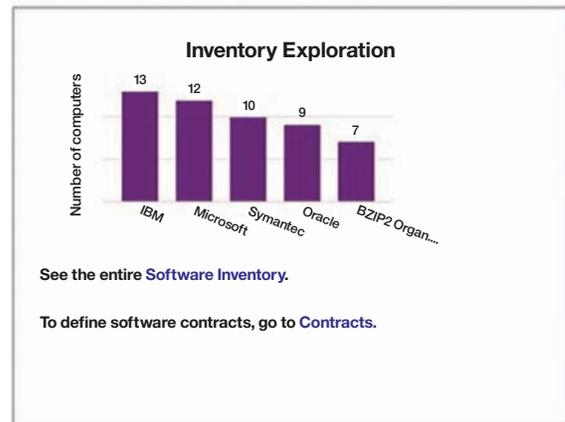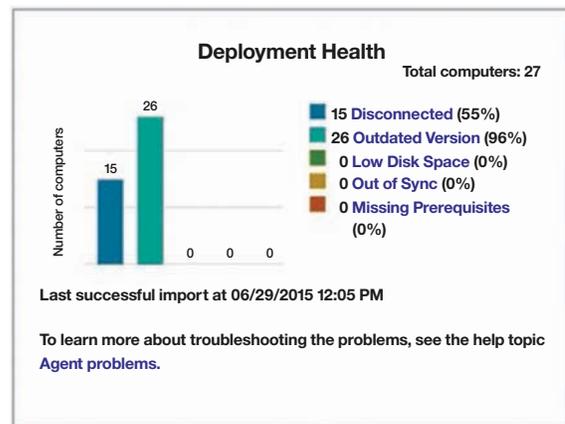
The inventory and analysis function provides a constantly updated inventory that drills down into software asset information, providing aggregated statistics and usage gathered by searching, filtering, sorting, viewing and exporting data on potentially thousands of computer properties. Automation and speed of operations enable IT organizations to radically reduce the number of hours and resources spent on inventory activities.

The software asset and license management function enables users to create and manage information about software contracts and product licenses to ensure licensing compliance. Users can browse data about software licenses and compare this information with inventory information in order to audit license compliance and determine related financial implications. The result: the organization is better positioned to actively manage just enough software, just in time, eliminating the expense of over-purchasing, non-compliance and the risk of security exposures.

These two central functions are supported by a number of key capabilities:

- **Rapid installation and implementation**—A robust platform designed for speed as well as intelligence means that installation throughout the entire enterprise takes only hours. Traditional solutions, by contrast, often can require months or even longer. Once installation is complete, "always on" inventory captures software status and changes in near real time, boosting time to value for low total cost of ownership. Existing BigFix customers can quickly add Inventory capabilities without requiring additional endpoint software and relay infrastructure.
- **Flexible, efficient design**—With the ability to handle hundreds of thousands of endpoints, the solution provides significant advantages for simplified management and reduced hardware and staff costs over traditional asset management methods requiring dozens of dedicated back-end servers.

- **Visibility into any asset**—The solution can gain visibility into any computing device across topologies in a heterogeneous environment and regardless of connection state—whether on the corporate network or connected via the Internet. Software discovery and usage monitoring enabled on all platforms supported for BigFix clients, including all UNIX operating systems. It also provides discovery for processes, file systems and hardware and usage. Common Inventory Technology scans can also be used to gather data from endpoints and to discover all signature types, including those that cannot be resolved by searching for file names. Additionally, enhanced usage data monitoring can help prevent duplication of signatures and verify software entitlements. Persistent inventory and visibility ensure that software records are up to date, accurate and complete.
- **Streamlined catalog management**—The built-in catalog feature enables users to configure software-asset content based on publishers, products and releases, as well as drill down to the package or file-data level. This built-in view, as well as the launch-in-context feature, also allows users to leverage scan and registry data reports for quick creation of signatures. The configurable catalog can then be exported into native format and uploaded into a new software use analysis installation before the initial import.
- **Ongoing analysis and reporting**—Because the solution's asset monitoring takes place continuously, administrators and financial analysts can generate the reports they need when they need them. Real-time reporting, based on the IBM BigFix Analytics platform, can deliver information on the health and compliance of software assets in minutes—regardless of the size of the environment. Reporting access, based on computer groups, is available to various roles and individuals in the enterprise, not just to operations managers, helping support line-of-business requirements.

- **Integration with other IBM solutions**—To extend management capabilities, BigFix Inventory integrates with the asset management capabilities of IBM Control Desk, which provides functions such as procurement and contract management. The combined platform delivers management across the full software lifecycle—from procurement through retirement—ultimately enabling an automated, self-service enterprise application store to help streamline control of software requests, approvals, deployment and licensing. In addition, the Software Knowledge Base Toolkit integrates with and manages the Software Identification Catalog, delivering greatly improved catalog content. The software catalog contains UNIX software from some third-party vendors as well as full coverage of IBM products on Windows, Mac OS, UNIX and Linux platforms—including increased Windows coverage. New software signatures can be defined based on raw inventory data; if users find a software item that is not matched by any signature from their existing software catalog, they can create a signature for the unmatched software item.

Generating reports for IT and business operations

Using BigFix Inventory, organizations can gain increased visibility into their software license consumption and usage while reducing the amount of time and effort required to generate reports that show compliance and overall software usage.

Leveraging the power and flexibility of BigFix technology, this solution enables significant benefits including the ability to more accurately plan software budgets based on inventory and usage trends. The solution can also help facilitate planning. For example, when organizations are migrating from Microsoft Office 2003 to Office 2010, BigFix can help administrators quickly determine which endpoints meet the prerequisites, and which endpoints need hardware upgrades such as added RAM.

IBM BigFix Inventory
Server requirements:
• Microsoft SQL Server 2008/2008 R2/2012 • Microsoft Windows Server 2008 R2/2012
Console requirements:
• Microsoft Windows XP/2003/Vista/2008/2008 R2/7
Supported platforms for the agent:
• Microsoft Windows: including XP, Vista, 2003, 2003 R2, 2008, 2008 R2, 7, 8, 2012, 2012 R2 and more. • Solaris • IBM AIX® • HP-UX • Red Hat Enterprise Linux • SUSE Linux Enterprise

Why IBM?

Organizations can consolidate tools, reduce operational costs and significantly improve security posture by extending their investment in BigFix Inventory to include other components of the platform. Because all functions operate from the same console, management server and endpoint agent, adding more services is a simple matter of a license key change.

- **IBM BigFix Lifecycle**—Reduce cost, risk and complexity of managing desktops, laptops, servers and other devices.
- **IBM BigFix Compliance**—Enforce continuous compliance of security, operational and regulatory policies.
- **IBM BigFix Patch**—Deliver real-time patch enforcement and compliance across heterogeneous environments.
- **IBM BigFix Protection**—Safeguard physical and virtual endpoints from malware and data loss.

For more information

To learn more about IBM BigFix Inventory, contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit: **ibm.com**/software/products/ibm-bigfix-inventory

For more information on system requirements, visit http://ibm.co/1NsBEWF

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