

# IBM Software Central

View license usage  
and entitlements  
across hybrid  
cloud deployments  
in one place

**User Guide**

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# Version History

Version	Updates
<b>January 2022</b>	– Initial version
<b>February 2023</b>	– Updating document links

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# Overview

Without an accurate view of software utilization across various departments and projects, clients find it difficult to remain compliant with their licensing agreements and can easily find themselves over-deployed or fail to gain the full value of the software they have licensed. Lack of visibility also results in difficulties forecasting future software needs and spend.

Various IBM licensing policies and terms, such as Virtualization Capacity, require clients to deploy and configure tools to monitor software use over time. To date the outputs of these tools – the Virtualization Capacity metering reports – have mainly been used in a reactive way to respond to requests from IBM, its auditors, or as part of an IBM Authorized SAM Provider baseline.

IBM Software Central (“Software Central”) acts as a cloud dashboard, connected directly to your ILMT and IBM License Service installations. It does the hard work for you, matching found IBM software deployments to your license entitlements to give a centralized view of your compliance position and software utilization across the entire enterprise.

With Software Central, your company will have a better handle than ever before on IBM software usage, especially Cloud Paks. And all these benefits are offered at no additional cost.

This guide is intended as a general licensing knowledge resource and it is not intended to provide advice for specific client circumstances. Always consult your IBM representative should you have any questions or concerns about licensing and compliance.

# Key Terms

The following terms are used throughout this document and are fundamental to understanding its contents. This is not an exhaustive list, and some concepts may be discussed in other licensing guides or rely on assumed knowledge.

## [IBM Software Central](#)

A web application that consolidates license usage and entitlement data allowing users to gain insights into software usage and allocation across their hybrid cloud environment.

## [Virtualization Capacity](#)

## [IBM License Metric Tool \(“ILMT”\)](#)

## [IBM License Service](#)

## [Operators and Operands](#)

A product that runs within a containerized environment.

## [PA Online](#)

## [Workspace](#)

The console on Software Central where users deploy and allocate entitlements.

## [Namespace](#)

A Kubernetes namespace provides a mechanism to scope resources in a cluster.

# Getting started with IBM Software Central

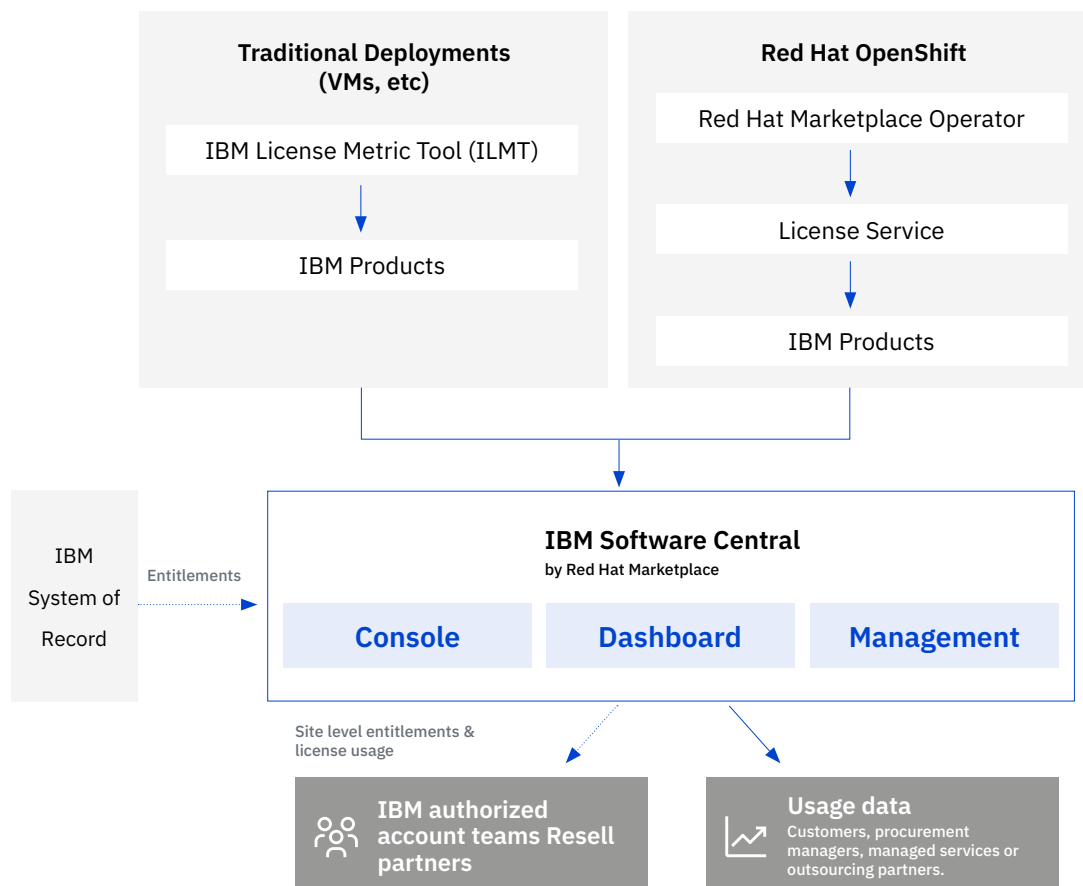
Software Central consolidates license usage and entitlements into a single application giving you powerful insights into software usage and allocation across hybrid cloud environments.

These insights help you stay aligned with current IBM license agreements and empower decision making for future software needs.

With Software Central, you gain access to the following features:

- View aggregated license usage from multiple data sources
- Allocate license usage by department
- Track multiple usage metrics
- Import license usage from disconnected environments
- Plan for future licensing needs
- Deploy entitlements to RedHat OpenShift
- View deployment details like infrastructure and OS

## How Software Central works



There are four requirements that must be met for clients to qualify for and take advantage of Sub-Capacity Software Central integrates with IBM License Service, ILMT, and IBM system of record, consolidating license usage and entitlements into a single application:

- On Workspace (console), users manage software, allocate entitlements to departments, and deploy entitlements directly to OpenShift.
- On Dashboard, users view license usage across the account as well as by product and service.

## Access Software Central through PA Online

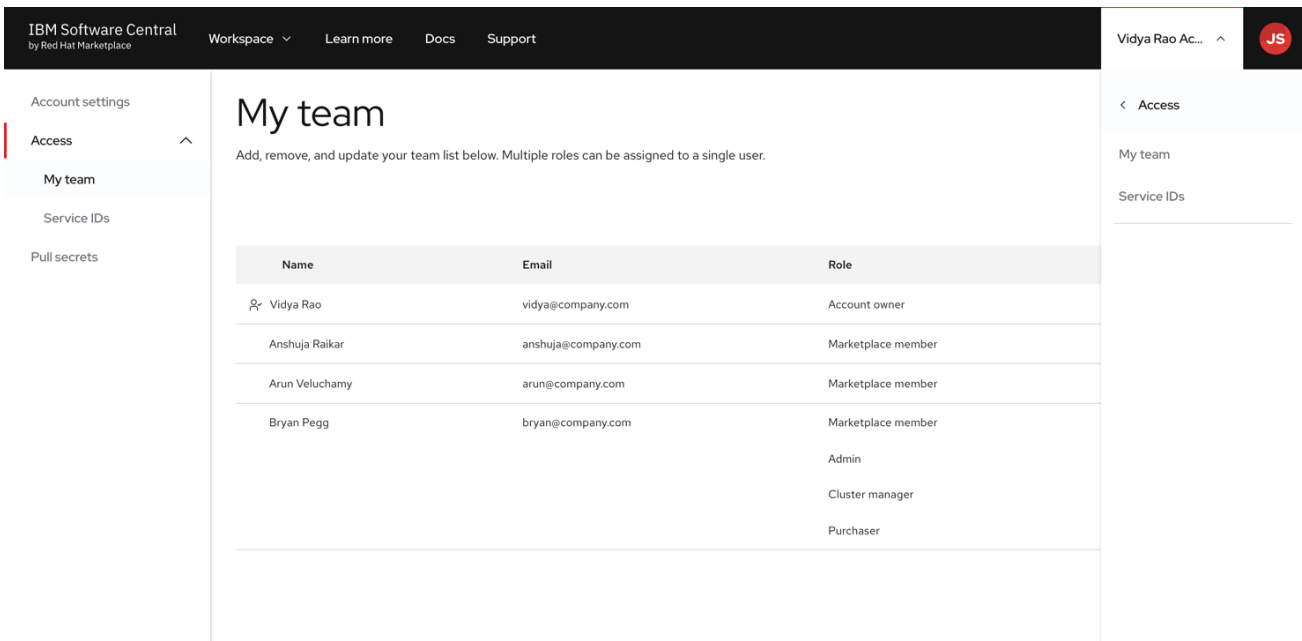
Software Central is conveniently located within the Passport Advantage Online (“PA Online”) user interface. To access, on the Software Downloads page, click “Access software usage data on IBM Software Central”, as shown in the following image.

The screenshot shows the IBM Software Downloads page. The top navigation bar includes the IBM logo and links for 'Let's Create', 'Products & Solutions', 'Consulting & Services', 'Learn & Support', and 'Explore more'. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main content area is titled 'Software downloads' and features a search bar with the placeholder text 'Search product name, product description or part number (DXXXXXX, CXXXXXX)'. Below the search bar, there is a section for 'All results' showing 7 products. The products listed are: IBM XL C/C++ for AIX, IBM SPSS Statistics Base, IBM WebSphere Hybrid Edition, IBM Spectrum Protect Plus, and IBM Spectrum Scale Data Mgmt Edition. On the left side of the page, there are several links: 'View classic version of SDMA', 'Go to Passport Advantage Online program homepage', 'Go to Fix Central homepage for fixes and updates for all your IBM products.', 'Contact eCare for questions regarding access, registration, software download, media access.', 'Visit IBM Support for product documentation and support requests.', and 'Access software usage data on IBM Software Central' (highlighted with a red box). A 'Request Media' link is also present.

After clicking the link, you redirect to Software Central where you log in, and can then view and manage license usage and entitlements.

## Manage users

The primary contact for each account is automatically given access to Software Central and can then enroll others in the organization, or revoke access, without IBM involvement. You can do this in the 'My team' page, which is located under the 'Account Management' menu. You can also set up various levels of access privileges and assign these to individuals, giving you control over what others can see and do. To learn more, refer to [Manage access](#) documentation.



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Account settings

Access

My team

Service IDs

Pull secrets

## My team

Add, remove, and update your team list below. Multiple roles can be assigned to a single user.

Name	Email	Role
Vidya Rao	vidya@company.com	Account owner
Anshuja Raikar	anshuja@company.com	Marketplace member
Arun Veluchamy	arun@company.com	Marketplace member
Bryan Pegg	bryan@company.com	Marketplace member
		Admin
		Cluster manager
		Purchaser

< Access

My team

Service IDs

## Complete prerequisites for OpenShift deployments

On Software Central, you can deploy operators and operands directly to registered clusters on OpenShift. To register clusters, on Software Central, provide a pull secret, and then Red Hat Marketplace Operator, the mechanism that connects products on your clusters to Software Central, automatically installs on your clusters. To learn more, refer to documentation on [Clusters](#) and [Red Hat Marketplace Operator](#).

# Connect Data Sources

Currently Software Central supports two data sources for license usage:

IBM License Service

ILMT

## Connect with IBM License Service

[IBM License Service](#) reports usage on operator-based products deployed to OpenShift. IBM License Service is a requirement for products, which are licensed under Virtualization Capacity using IBM's Container Licensing terms.

Starting with version 1.12.0, the integration with IBM Software Central is automatically enabled when License Service is deployed and OpenShift prerequisites have been completed. Prior versions required the *IBM Licensing* custom resource to be edited to enable automatic reporting (see [documentation on IBM Software Central](#) for information on how to do this).

## Import license usage from disconnected clusters

You can import license usage from disconnected clusters using [Data Collection CLI](#). On the Current usage page, click "Upload usage data". The Disconnected cluster page shows where you can then follow the steps to import usage.

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Usage

Software

Clusters

Red Hat Marketplace

Usage / Disconnected cluster

## Usage for disconnected cluster

Disconnected clusters are on restricted networks typically behind a firewall. In this case, usage data must be exported from the cluster and submitted.

The Red Hat Marketplace operator must first be deployed on the disconnected cluster to gather data for usage-based products. Secondly, the entitled product is then deployed to the cluster using similar steps.

After successful deployment, usage data may be exported and submitted from the disconnected cluster using the data collection CLI tool to enable illustration of actual usage and further analysis via our dashboard. [Learn more](#)

**Prerequisites**

To deploy operators from the platform on clusters with a restricted network, you need to have the following prerequisites met:

1. OpenShift major version 4 with any available supported minor version
2. [Private registry](#)
3. [Jump host](#)

**Disconnected deployment**

Use the steps to install an operator if you have a restricted network or you are not connected to the internet.

**Tools required on jump host**

1. Docker or Podman (only with Linux)
2. [OpenShift client CLI](#)
3. OpenShift [ocm](#) CLI

## Connect with ILMT

[IBM License Metric Tool \("ILMT"\)](#) reports usage on products that are deployed on traditional virtualization environments (such as virtual machines, selected Eligible Public Clouds and logical partitions) and physical machines. Usage data collected by ILMT can be imported to IBM Software Central. To set up, [get a pull secret](#), and then, [configure export settings in ILMT](#).



# View license usage on Dashboard

The “Usage dashboard” shows license usage across all entitlements on the account that are [enabled to report usage](#). It also connects to usage details on individual products, including the location of the reported usage and usage per service.

On Usage dashboard, you can access the following data:

- current usage for all products reporting usage on the account
- usage details for individual products reporting usage on the account

This information helps you gain visibility into potential usage overages, usage across product bundles, and more.

## *View current usage on the account*

The **Current usage** chart shows the high-water mark for each product reporting usage for the given time window. To view the chart, navigate to Usage dashboard.

The chart shows the following data:

- product name
- product edition
- usage metric reported
- [high-water mark](#) reported for the given [time window](#)

## *Export results*

To export results, on **Current usage**, click **Download**.

## *View usage details per product*

The **Product usage** chart shows a summary of reported usage per product and the services and location of each deployment.

The Summary section shows the following data:

- data source, either IBM License Service or IBM License Metric Tool
- reported daily usage by service
- usage metric reported
- high-water mark reported during the given time window

The Usage location section shows the following data:

- all services associated to the product
- cluster or host names where the services are installed
- usage metric reported
- high-water mark reported during the given time window

## *Export results*

To export results, on the Usage location section, click **Download**.

## *Filter usage data on Usage dashboard*

To filter data, do one of the following options:

- To view data month-to-date, quarter-to-date, or year-to-date, on **Current usage** and **Product usage** pages, from the time selector list, select an option.
- To filter data by tag, click **Filter**, and then select available options.

# Allocate entitlements with tags

On Software Central you can create tags for departments, projects, and custom tags. You can then apply these tags to products to better organize and categorize your data in the way that best suits you and your organization. For example, you can allocate entitlements by department, and then filter usage data by each department tag.

## Create a tag

To create a tag, follow these steps:

- 
- 1 On IBM Software Central, click your account name, then click **Tag management**, and finally click **Create tag**.

- 
- 2 On the **Tag type** list, select an option:
    - **department**
    - **project**
    - **location**
    - **environment**
    - **custom**

- 
- 3 If you select the “custom” tag type, enter a name for this tag type in the **Tag name** box. For example, if you wish to tag products by employee level, you may create a tag type of “Seniority”. **Note: Read-only values show for all other tag types.**

- 
- 4 On the **Tag value** box, enter a value. For example, to make a tag for the engineering department, enter Engineering to describe a **Department** tag type. Using the example in the preceding step, you may want to create Seniority tags with values of ‘Manager’, ‘Supervisor’, or ‘Developer’.

- 
- 5 To add an additional description, on the **Tag description** box, enter a description.

- 
- 6 To create a tag, click **Create tag**.
- 

## Apply tags to products

To apply tags to products, follow the steps below:

- 
- 1 On IBM Software Central, click **Workspace**, click **Software**, and then click the product tile.
- 
- 2 On the **Overview** tab, on the **Product tags** box, click **Add tag** (plus icon) and select a tag from the list.
- 

You can also create and apply tags to namespaces through the RedHat OpenShift Container Platform. On Software Central, simply create a department or project tag with the same label to apply the same delineations within Software Central.

## Allocate entitlements to departments

To allocate entitlements to departments, follow these steps:

- 
- 1 On IBM Software Central, click **Workspace**, click **Software**, and then click the product tile.
- 
- 2 On the **Overview** tab, on the **Product tags** box, click **Add tag** (plus icon) and select a tag from the list.
- 
- 3 To allocate entitlements to departments, in the **Allocations** section, click **Edit allocations**, and then make adjustments as needed.
- 
- 4 Click **Save**.
-

# FAQs

## What software can be metered?

Both containerized IBM software and traditionally deployed IBM software (that is, on traditional virtualization environments or on physical machines) can be metered. Containerized IBM products report usage through IBM License Service, available through Common Services. Traditionally deployed IBM products report usage through ILMT. Data collected by either deployment option shows on Software Central dashboard.

## Can metering be used on new deployments, existing deployments, or both?

Both. License usage can be collected from existing software deployments and new deployments.

## How do I register my containerized software on Software Central?

To start metering containerized software, users must register their RedHat OpenShift clusters with IBM Software Central. To register, users provide a pull secret to identify the account, and then install RedHat Marketplace Operator on to their clusters.

## Can I view license and usage data on software deployed to a disconnected environment?

Yes. Users can export usage reports from disconnected clusters and import into IBM Software Central. Usage views will look the same for both connected and disconnected deployments.

## Does IBM share license and usage data with IBM customer account management teams?

Yes. IBM shares data with authorized IBM customer account management teams.

## Does IBM License Service log and display the original operator installation date and its associated assemblies and services?

Yes. Usage data from IBM License Service includes a breakdown of capabilities when the IBM software is bundled with other products. It reports data, such as measured value, converted value after applying a ratio per sub-capability, and reporting period. This data shows on Software Central dashboard.

## As soon as I install Red Hat Marketplace Operator and configure IBM License Service on my clusters, will license usage start flowing to Software Central?

Yes. Data from customer clusters shows on Software Central once configuration is complete. To configure, customers must register clusters with IBM Software Central, install Red Hat Marketplace Operator, and enable usage reporting through IBM License Service. For disconnected environments, usage data needs to be imported. Data from traditionally deployed software shows on IBM Software Central once ILMT is configured.

## Does IBM License Service log and display the original operator installation date and its associated assemblies and services?

Yes. Usage data from IBM License Service includes a breakdown of capabilities when the IBM software is bundled with other products. It reports data, such as measured value, converted value after applying a ratio per sub-capability, and reporting period. This data shows on Software Central dashboard.

## How does tagging work for tracking usage by department or project, for example VPC allocation?

Customers can assign tags to deployments by clusters. This will be limited release initially, for Red Hat Marketplace Select customers only.

## Is there a way to associate a deployment with its entitlement?

Yes. This functionality will be available soon where usage and entitlements are linked. Currently, when there are multiple entitlements for a products, all entitlements show the same usage. Tagging enables the ability to associate deployments for easier filtering and display.

## What does Shared Data include?

Shared Data is limited to usage information only. Data your company generates, imports, or manipulates with IBM software will not be shared with IBM as part of Shared Data.

# Further Reading

## **IBM Software Central**

Access and learn more about Software Central

<https://marketplace.redhat.com/en-us/software-central/learn-more>

## **IBM Software Central: Manage users**

Documentation explaining how to navigate and interpret the Software Central dashboards which set out the product usage data.

<https://marketplace.redhat.com/en-us/documentation/software-central/user-management>

## **IBM Software Central: Enable Usage Reporting**

Documentation explaining how to enable usage reporting from IBM License Service and ILMT.

<https://marketplace.redhat.com/en-us/documentation/software-central/enable-usage-reporting>

## **IBM Software Central: Register clusters**

Documentation explaining how to register OpenShift clusters with Software Central.

<https://marketplace.redhat.com/en-us/documentation/software-central/clusters>

## **IBM Software Central: Red Hat Marketplace Operator**

Documentation explaining Red Hat Marketplace Operator.

<https://marketplace.redhat.com/en-us/documentation/software-central/red-hat-marketplace-operator>

## **IBM Software Central: Tag Management**

Software Central documentation explaining how to manage tags

<https://marketplace.redhat.com/en-us/documentation/software-central/tag-products>

## **IBM Software Central: View Product Usage Data**

Documentation explaining how to navigate and interpret the Software Central dashboards which set out the product usage data.

<https://marketplace.redhat.com/en-us/documentation/software-central/view-product-usage-data>

## **Data Collection CLI (datactl)**

A GitHub repository containing the Data Collection CLI tool which can be used to import usage data from disconnected clusters.

<https://github.com/redhat-marketplace/datactl>

## **IBM License Service**

IBM License Service documentation (included as part of IBM Cloud Pak foundational services)

<https://www.ibm.com/docs/en/cpfs?topic=license-service&ga=2.149589744.750774618.1645193803-1303184179.1636478353>

## **IBM License Metric Tool (“ILMT”) Documentation**

Documentation relating to the latest release of ILMT.

<https://www.ibm.com/docs/en/license-metric-tool>

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