

# 5 Ways to Fight SaaS Sprawl: SMPs and Beyond

By [Amy Wallace](#) - Published On: November 21st, 2024 -  
Categories: [IT Asset Management](#)

The rapid proliferation of SaaS tools is throwing organizations into chaos — presenting [significant challenges](#) for IT leaders, like security vulnerabilities, neglected tools and ballooning costs.

But it doesn't have to be this way.

It's time for IT leaders to [regain control](#) of their SaaS environments, and conquer sprawl once and for all. In today's article, we share 5 best practices for achieving victory.

## 1) Take control with a SaaS Management Platform (SMP)

There is growing demand for robust [SaaS management solutions](#) – Gartner's recent [Magic Quadrant for SaaS Management Platforms \(SMP\)](#) points out that, by 2027, over 50% of organizations will centralize SaaS application management using a SMP, an increase from less than 10% in 2024.

This is no blip on the radar.

[According to](#) global analytics and advisory company Astute Analytica, the global SaaS management platform market is forecast to hit US\$ 9,968.1 million by 2032, up from US\$ 3,046.3 million in 2023.

What is an SMP, and how can it solve SaaS management in your organization?

SMPs are software solutions designed to help organizations streamline the entire SaaS application life cycle from one centralized console. Key benefits include:

- Identifying and indexing which third-party SaaS applications are in use, who is using them, and how often
- Simplifying the user experience with a streamlined platform for discovering and managing IT assets across all environments
- Enhancing SaaS contract management, forecasting and renewal decisions

With an SMP, organizations gain complete visibility into their SaaS stack, enabling them to contain and reduce SaaS spending, manage shadow IT, and boost overall efficiency. For instance, a curated self-service app catalog or store can help employees find and request access to approved SaaS apps.

## **2) Set some guidance: Establish clear SaaS usage policies and governance practices**

Well-defined usage policies keep compliance in check, encourage transparency, and help control costs. Provide employees with guidelines and clearly define acceptable use policies for SaaS applications. This can include having a centralized approval process for the adoption of any new SaaS tool.

With new SaaS apps constantly emerging, it can feel overwhelming to manage. Hold regular training and awareness sessions to keep employees in the loop on the latest best practices and procedures. Remember to outline budget limits to help to keep SaaS spending under control.

What's more, as AI tools become more prevalent, setting clear policies around their usage is critical. Clear guidelines foster open communication between employees and IT teams, encouraging employees to talk about their software needs and reducing the temptation to download unauthorized tools.

According to Slack's [Fall 2024 Workforce Index](#), nearly half (48%) of global desk workers feel uncomfortable about disclosing their use of AI for common workplace tasks to their managers. One solution could be creating a dedicated channel for sharing and troubleshooting AI use cases, allowing employees to see how others are leveraging these tools.

### **3) Strengthen your security landscape**

A robust security landscape prevents SaaS sprawl from creating gaps that could expose sensitive data. Here are some tips on how to strengthen yours:

[Implement](#) Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA), and encourage employees to use multi-step login processes, such as additional verification steps. Where possible, use single sign-on (SSO) for authentication of users into SaaS apps. Defend against brute force attacks with "throttling," which restricts the number of guesses an attacker can attempt while giving users multiple opportunities to recall their password.

As sometimes only certain teams or users may need access to an application, managing user onboarding and offboarding effectively is essential (an SMP can help with this).

[Foster a strong cyber security culture](#) so that employees will be able to openly communicate about issues, including where current policy or processes are hindering their productivity. This also makes it more likely for employees to report instances of shadow IT, bringing these to light more quickly.

### **4) Take a proactive approach to optimizing SaaS Spend and license management**

Notice some applications that are seeing little to no use? It's time to remedy that. Using a platform like [Block 64](#), monitor usage metrics to spot inactive or low-usage licenses, reallocating or eliminating unnecessary subscriptions.

Negotiate with vendors, leveraging usage data to negotiate better terms or discounts. Over the next year, Gartner anticipates a rising demand for simplified contract negotiation and renewal, along with detailed usage data to fine-tune contract sizes.

## **5) Silos no more: Enhance collaboration between departments**

Collaboration is key to any team's success, and staying aligned on SaaS usage ensures smooth workflows and efficient teamwork. To keep SaaS sprawl in check, Gartner's report anticipates there to be stronger partnerships and collaboration across procurement, finance, IT security and applications, and lines of business over the next year.

Do your SaaS apps align with the overall strategy of your organization? Break down the silos by defining common objectives for SaaS management, using shared KPIs to track progress and success across departments

## **Conclusion**

With 2025 on the horizon, keep your budget in check and take charge of your IT environment. [Schedule a demo](#) today to see how Block 64 can transform your SaaS management.