



Enterprise SaaS Management Certification Report – Zylo

THE
ITAM
REVIEW

AJ Witt, The ITAM Review

Executive Summary

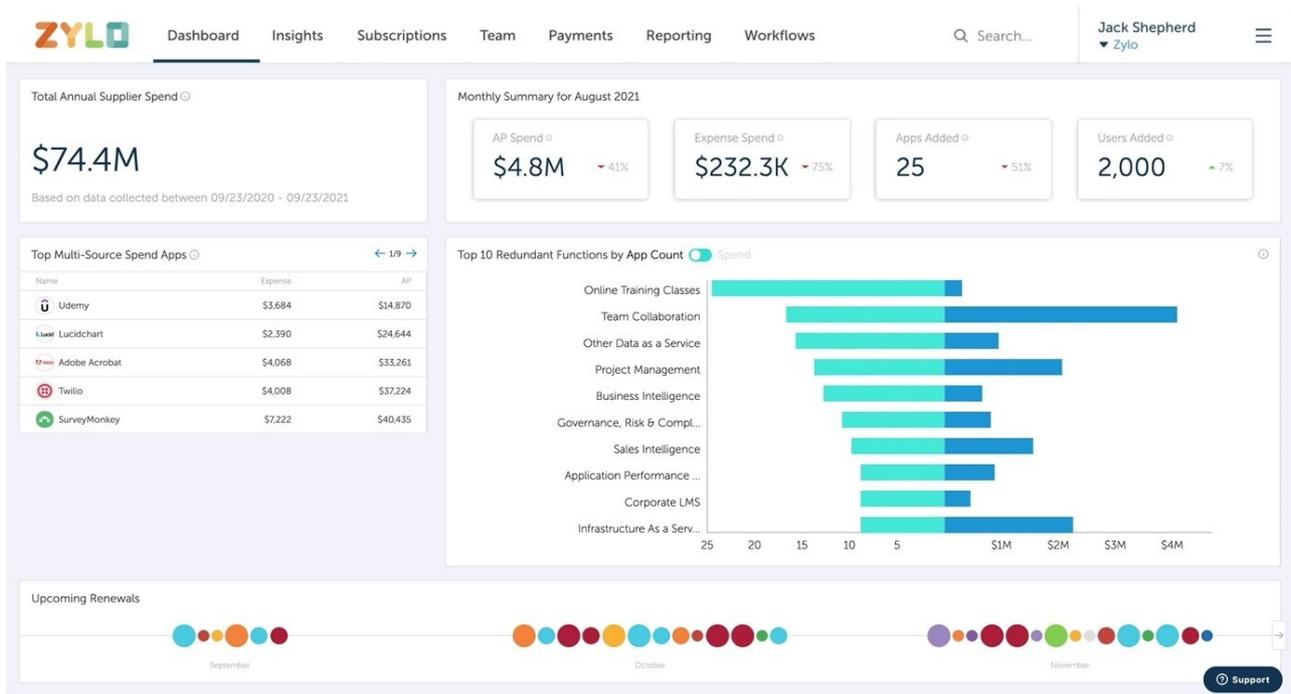
The [ITAM Review](#) certifies [Zylo](#) as having met the requirements for Enterprise SaaS Management certification in accordance with our public community-sourced [open standard](#).



Zylo benefits from category leadership and strong enterprise penetration, particularly in North America. The product is well-placed to continue to drive the category forwards as new use cases and requirements emerge. Zylo focuses strongly on discovery, cost management and automation for shadow IT, departmental or democratised technology management, and traditional centralised IT.

Customer references consistently report Zylo's focus on customer success as a key differentiator. Since we started tracking Zylo in 2018 the tool has evolved considerably to meet new customer requirements and serve new use cases.

Discussions with the Zylo management team consistently highlight how product development is customer-led.



Background

Zylo Inc. was founded in 2016 by an experienced team led by Eric Christopher, Ben Pippenger, & Cory Wheeler who all remain with the company. Privately held and based in Indianapolis USA they are well-funded, completing Series B funding in 2019. This funding has been invested in both the product and the leadership and operational teams, equipping Zylo Inc for growth. Zylo delivers management of SaaS discovery & cost management at enterprise scale.

Analyst Review

This review is based on a [detailed survey](#) and interviews between the Zylo team and the author. Zylo focuses on four key use cases for SaaS Management:

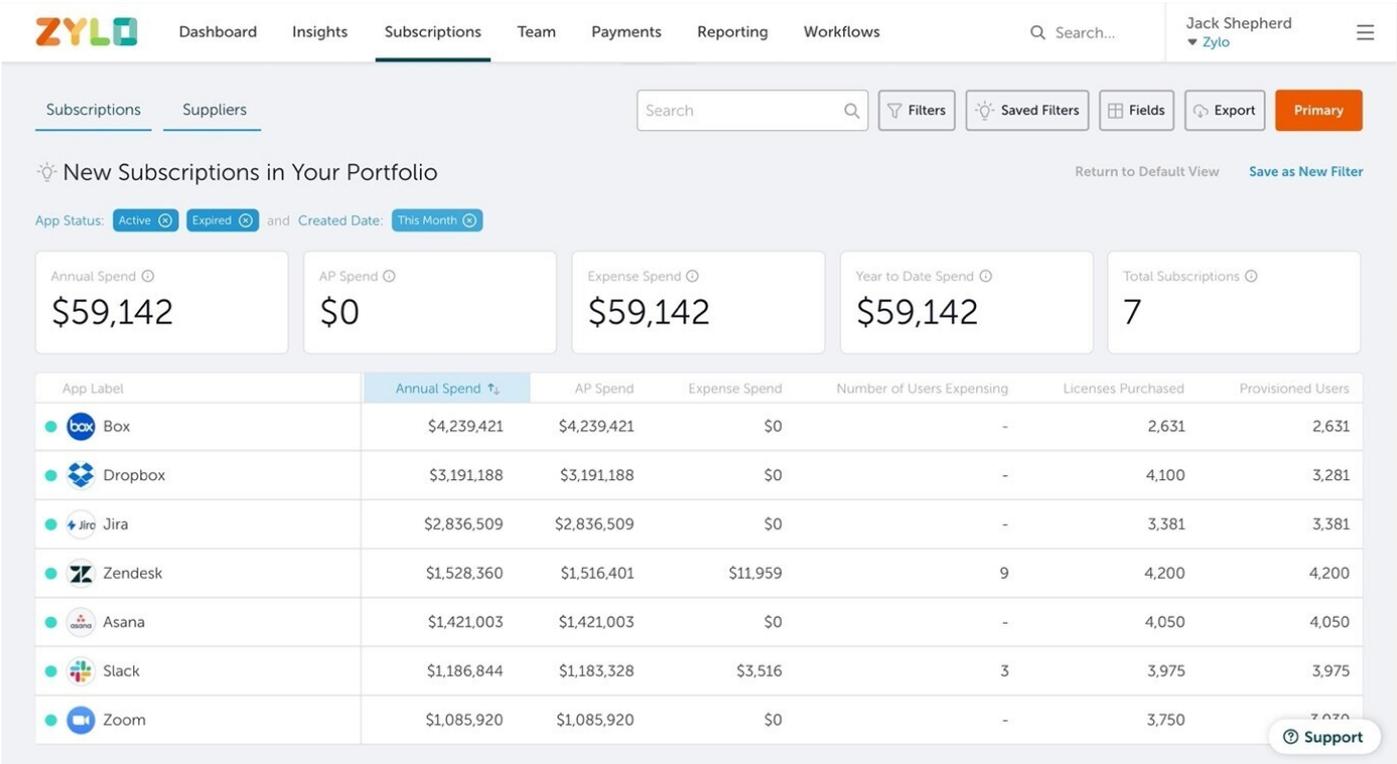
- Discovery
- Cost Management
- Optimisation
- Automation

Additionally, the tool also provides Risk Management capabilities although in this latter category it does not fully meet the certification criteria. In enterprises it is often the case that risk is managed by a dedicated team – Governance, Risk, and Compliance (GRC) and so for many customers this use case may be delivered by another toolset.

Discovery & Inventory

Discovery and Inventory is provided via connectors to systems of record. Zylo does not provide a dedicated agent which results in a low installation footprint and rapid deployment of the tool. It's as simple as getting the necessary account and API access to services you wish to manage using Zylo. The ITAM Review sees API connectivity to systems of record as [the gold standard](#) for SaaS discovery, and Zylo provides over 35 out of the box. There is also an API enabling customers and partners to develop custom connectors to meet specific customer needs.

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Alongside the API connectivity direct into applications Zylo integrates with indirect sources of data such as Single Sign On (SSO) systems. Integration with Google Workspace (formerly G Suite) provides visibility into free applications which leverage Google accounts for login and permission setting. Connections to accounting and expense systems (Concur, Expensify and others) discover software entitlements acquired via payment cards, expenses and departmental budgets. For organisations without compatible finance applications there is the option to automate entitlement import via flat files. This provides effective discovery for "shadow IT". Finally, Zylo also connects to sources of user information such as HRIS systems, enabling reconciliation of data between IT user directories and personnel systems, important for onboarding and offboarding users.

The raw data gathered via APIs and other connectors is normalised by Zylo's proprietary AI engine. A key benefit of Zylo being a SaaS application itself is that the system has "seen" millions of software transactions and billing records, totalling almost \$1Tn in spend, which enables it to spot whether, for example, that line item on the Adobe invoice is for Creative Cloud or Document Cloud. This data is used to train what Zylo refers to as their "Zybrary", a proprietary application library that powers discovery and organisation of nearly 20,000 SaaS applications.

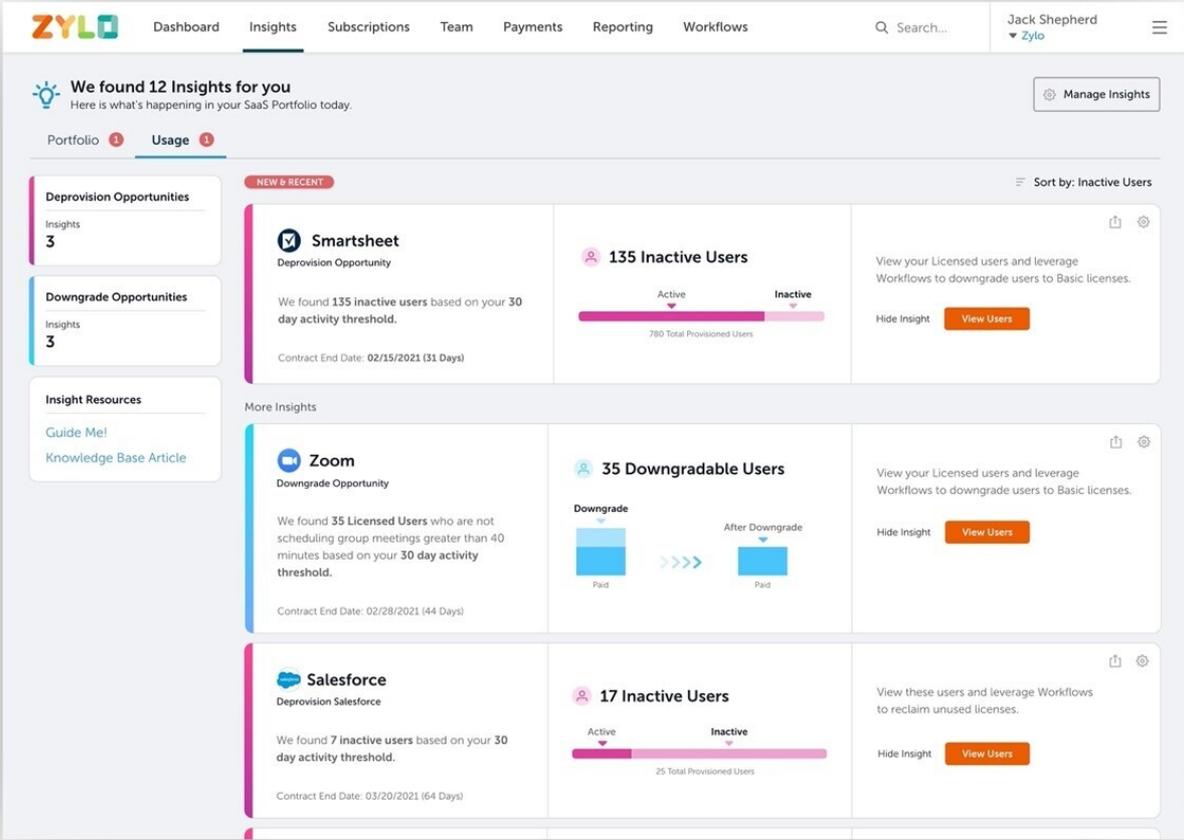
Rounding out the Discovery and Inventory use case is Zylo's contract concierge service. This service provides customers with the option to send contracts to Zylo's team for review and onboarding. This experienced team distils the key terms in the contract and onboards it into Zylo, setting up entitlement levels, renewal dates, and so on.

Cost Management

With normalised data available, the first use case for Zylo customers is often cost management. The key driver here is the rich renewals management functionality, combined with usage data obtained from multiple discovery sources. Zylo presents upcoming renewals visually, enabling prioritisation of effort on this key work stream for a SaaS Management team. Usage data is combined with billing data to provide procurement with the ability to negotiate from a position of informed power.

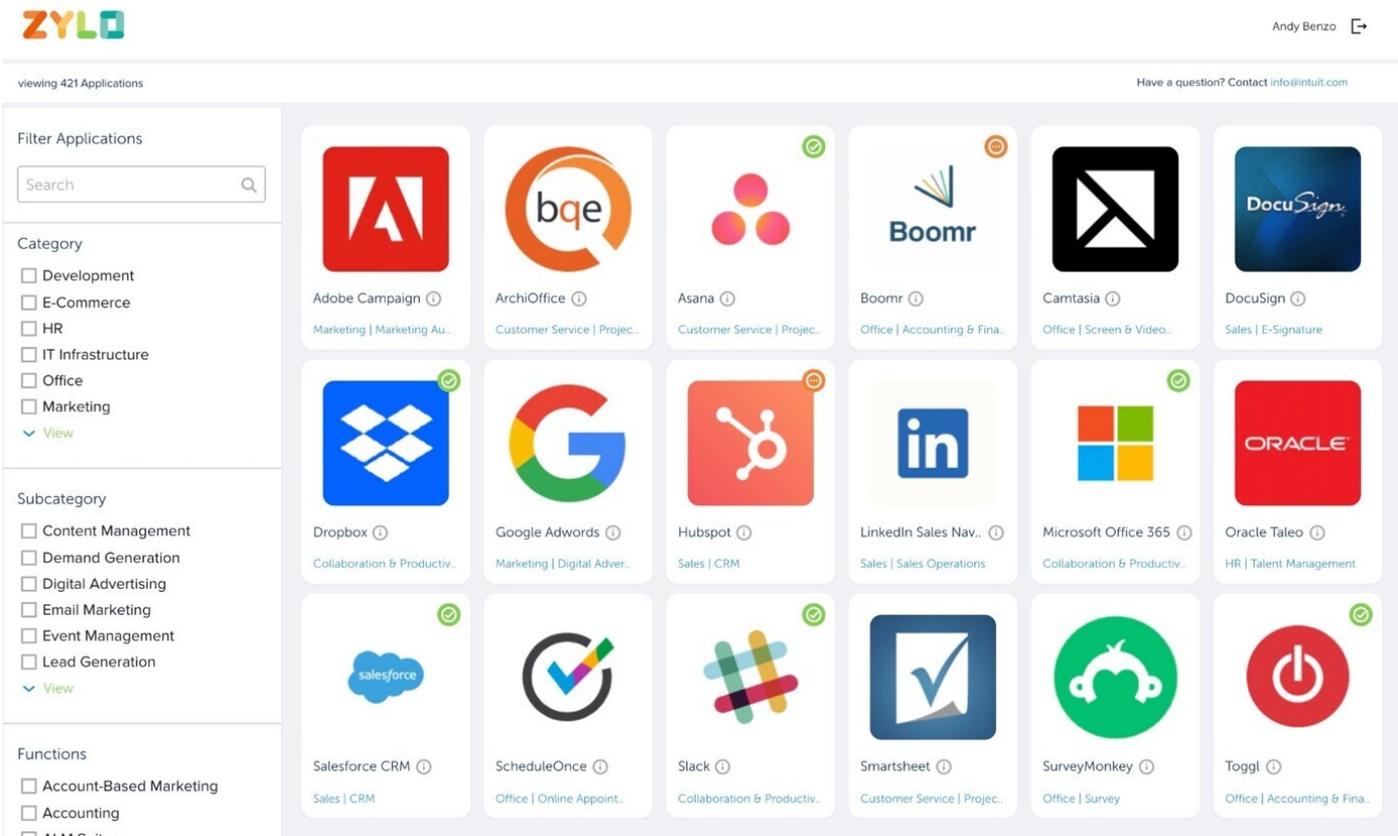
Optimisation

The optimisation use case grows from Discovery & Cost Management and enables SaaS Management teams to reduce costs, complexity, and risk. Zylo does this by identifying overlapping products and underutilised applications. Automated workflows and guided playbooks enable SaaS Management teams to act on insights provided by the tool, building in the necessary authorisation steps to confidently remove redundant or overlapping tools. This also contributes to risk management by enabling teams to identify unpopular or unused tools and begin a programme to standardise on fewer solutions.



Automation

Automation is key for many enterprises, and Zylo provides dynamic workflows along with an enterprise application store. Taken together these capabilities make it easier for an organisation to deliver a “consumer” employee technology journey. Employees select applications from an app catalog, and requests for applications are integrated into their company’s IT process. Administrators have a single control centre to both publish applications to their app catalog and monitor usage, track adoption, and run workflows to keep their SaaS portfolio optimised, such as deprovisioning or downgrading licenses that were once requested but going underused. This ensures employees have the right tools to do their jobs, are immediately effective on hire, and ongoing. Across all automation capabilities, Zylo maintains an audit trail of activity along with the ability to fully automate or provide a step-by-step guided workflow.



Risk Management

Zylo does not fully meet the certification for the Risk Management use case. Specifically, it does not report the compliance status of an application or track vulnerabilities. These are emerging use cases for SaaS Management and will not be relevant to all prospective users, but the non-compliance is noted here should this be important in shaping your buying decision.

Delivery

Zylo is delivered as a SaaS application. Zylo also have an extensive partner programme for value-added resellers and managed service providers. Each Zylo customer receives onboarding and implementation support along with a one-year roadmap designed to ensure their SaaS Management programme is successful. Alongside this Zylo provides optional paid-for Managed Services including renewal negotiation support. The managed services approach will be of particular interest to enterprise customers who may not wish to build an in-house SaaS Management team.

Review Summary

Pros

- Good for organisations with extensive P-Card and expensed SaaS spending
- Good for managing shadow and departmental IT
- Machine-learning enhanced normalisation has processed nearly \$1Tn in spend
- Strong platform approach provides opportunity for innovation
- Category Leadership and strong management team
- Enterprise-ready
- Contract on-boarding concierge service included

Cons

- Additional discovery steps required for customers not using compatible finance and expenses applications
- Does not discover all free SaaS apps
- Unable to create user profiles for automating role-based deployment & risk management

Customer References

Zylo provided two customer references for this certification. These were interviewed independently by an ITAM Review analyst. The ITAM Review welcomes further references and reviews for Zylo. If you wish to contribute, please submit your review on [The ITAM Review Marketplace](#).

Customer Reference 1: Global Media Company

This US-based organisation is a global media company with over 20,000 employees. They selected Zylo for SaaS Management in 2019 because it was the only tool which they felt addressed enterprise-scale SaaS Management requirements. Zylo was recommended to them by another enterprise customer who felt that the combination of tool capabilities and service set them apart in the market.

The organisation found Zylo easy to install and to connect to their systems of record for both entitlement and usage. Rapid onboarding meant they could very quickly build a picture of their SaaS estate and identify opportunities for cost optimisation and consolidation. The organisation's SaaS purchasing is largely decentralised to the department level and Zylo provides evidence of cost and usage when working with stakeholders in that devolved structure.

They make extensive use of Zylo's API connectors into SaaS applications and also to finance and HR apps. This integrated approach means they can determine the end-to-end status of a SaaS application including:

- Who is using it and their employment status
- Departmental-level insights – e.g. usage of apps in a particular category on a per-department basis
- How much it costs
- How many licenses are unallocated/underutilised
- Overlapping capabilities and contracts
- Enrichment of data supplied by SaaS providers – they cited Adobe as an example. Adobe's user portal provides limited information, making it difficult to manage, whereas Zylo's connectors greatly improve that ability

Within a year of deploying Zylo the reference was able to reduce app sprawl and cost by looking at per-category contracts and usage and then standardising on a single app. The data provided by Zylo was vital in pushing that initiative forward, resulting in significant cost savings. They received extensive, high quality onboarding support, and that support continued through the implementation and delivery phase.

Customer Reference 2: Global Pharmaceutical Company

This US-based organisation is a global pharmaceutical company with almost 50,000 employees. They have a mature ITAM practice and selected Zylo for SaaS Management in 2019 following a comprehensive POC process. Zylo was chosen because its capabilities far surpassed those of the incumbent ITAM toolset, which continues to be used for non-SaaS software asset management.

Their primary driver for selecting a SaaS Management toolset was to gain visibility and perform cost optimisation. A secondary requirement was to ensure that industry-specific regulatory compliance requirements were met.

Prior to the growth of SaaS, the ITAM team had tight control over software spending with central contracts in place for most large applications. SaaS led to a growth in P-card expenditure and departmental spending which eroded this control. In keeping with many other organisations facing an explosion in SaaS consumption, this organisation now uses SaaS Management tools and policies to manage departmental software purchasing. They also use Zylo to provide an application renewal service for departmental stakeholders and benefit greatly from the data-driven insights the tool provides. Further data-driven insights include highlighting areas of problematic P-card usage, which enable action to be taken to encourage departments to make use of established processes for SaaS onboarding and consumption.

The organisation states that onboarding and ongoing support from Zylo is outstanding. In the onboarding phase weekly meetings were held and this resulted in rapid ROI. Zylo's customer-driven approach to developing new features and functions was noted by the reference and this is something we've seen reported consistently over the last three years.

In conclusion, the reference states that Zylo provides the great data and actionable insights necessary to enable their team to remain relevant as their organisation migrates application spend to SaaS.

Conclusion

Zylo is an enterprise-ready SaaS Management tool and service from a market-leading and well-established organisation. The roadmap for Zylo is strong and they have an impressive list of enterprise customers, primarily in the US. This US focus does mean that they focus discovery around solving shadow IT, and particularly SaaS paid for via expenses and P-cards. To get full value a prospective customer must therefore ensure that Zylo is compatible with their accounting and expense systems.

Zylo excels at Renewals Management and Cost Optimisation, backing this up with automation and workflows focused on improving employee experience. Whilst Zylo does not fully meet the standard's requirements for Risk Management it is noted that these capabilities in large enterprises are often covered by different toolsets and stakeholders. This was also borne out in comments from the reference customers. It is clear that Zylo's customer-led approach to development likely means those functions will be developed if their customers require them.

As the SaaS Management tools market matures and standardises on core use cases Zylo is well placed to deliver on customer expectations. The platform is extensible, adaptable, and under continuous development.

Platform developments in the last 18 months include data-driven Insights, helping users focus on what needs doing next. In early 2022 Zylo also launched Benchmarks, an innovative approach designed to help decision makers and operational teams optimise their SaaS estate across the "three P's" - Portfolio, Popularity, and Price. Benchmarks uses anonymized data from all Zylo customers to enable organisations to benchmark their SaaS estate against companies of similar size and determine whether they have the right application portfolio mix at the right price.

The core leadership team is strong and has smoothly transitioned from startup/founder mode to leading a much larger organisation. Customer service & success is consistently reported as being excellent, and this will be a key differentiator for Zylo as, over time, capabilities start to become standardised and generic across tools.

About ITAM Review Certifications

The ITAM Review develops and maintains community-sourced certifications for ITAM-related tools and services. Each certification consists of a survey, product review and two independent customer references. We welcome additional reviews of the product or service via [The ITAM Review Marketplace](#).

About The ITAM Review



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