

The Oracle Audit: Is your estate fully licensed?

The word 'audit', when talking about Oracle, is unlikely to fill you with joy. But what exactly do you understand about this scenario; are you fully prepared for dealing with it if your organisation should be chosen? As database experts and an Oracle Gold Partner, Xynomix have years of experience helping companies just like yours ensure that their Oracle estates are fully licensed and compliant. This paper aims to answer any questions that you may have about the 'Oracle Audit' scenario.

Audit Basics...

The chances are that if you have Oracle installed, or if you have purchased licences in the past, then you will be approached sooner or later in this respect. The team charged with ensuring that all Oracle customers are fully compliant with their licensing are known as the LMS (License Management Services). Whilst you may feel that your organisation has no need to fear such an approach, it is important to be prepared for any eventuality. Without having expert knowledge and vigilant monitoring contained in-house, it is surprisingly easy for a period of sustained growth or acquisition to lead to a licensing shortfall. Indeed, many organisations will not be aware that they have become non-compliant due to a combination of reasons; unfortunately in this scenario ignorance is no excuse!

The main goal of the LMS is to ensure that all legitimate revenue is captured, protecting Oracle's intellectual property in the process; approaches made with this in mind have become increasingly common in recent years. Management who are charged with the care of an Oracle estate should be aware that the only legal notice of a formal audit being underway will come in the form of a letter addressed from this department (LMS). It is important to understand that any other approach by Oracle, even using the word 'audit', is merely an enquiry

around your estate and not an official audit. Despite this, if there is any suspicion that an official audit may be forthcoming, or that your organisation may be under-licensed, then the situation should be taken seriously and investigated fully from this early enquiry stage. After all, un-budgeted license shortfalls are typically uncovered by Oracle sooner or later and can run into hundreds of thousands (or even millions) of pounds!

Responding to an Audit...

Formulating a response to Oracle is essential, so be sure to let them know that you are ready and available to co-operate with the audit process. Leaving it will not make the problem go-away and is only likely to reduce the opportunity to negotiate terms!

It is important to conduct your own audit on your Oracle estate before the audit begins, collecting together all appropriate SLA's and proof of purchase documentation that you have. This will allow you to assess areas where you may be under-licensed, ensure that you fully understand Oracle's ruling and enable you to protest any judgment that you have reason to believe is unfair. There are many potential causes of a licensing shortfall, some particularly likely ones include:

- 1) An increase in users caused by organic growth, merger or acquisition.
- 2) Software moving from development to production without being re-licensed.
- 3) Virtualisation of the estate.

It is likely that you may benefit from seeking expert advice from a company such as Xynomix in this situation. Part of a company with Gold Partner status, the Xynomix Licensing Team has a good relationship with Oracle and knows all of the ins and outs of their licensing terms.

How Xynomix Can Help...

The team of consultants at Xynomix have over ten years' worth of experience analysing, designing and licensing Oracle estates. If you are being audited by Oracle, or believe that you may have inadvertently become non-compliant then there are a number of services that we can offer to your organisation.

- 1) An '**independent review**' of your entire Oracle footprint, advising on the licenses that you should currently have in place. Xynomix are also keen to offer advice on streamlining your estate, in order to implement the most economically viable solution available to your organisation.

- 2) Our team are able to offer a '**sanity check**' of any proposed licensing solution from Oracle. This would confirm that this is the most cost effective solution available for your particular problem, as well as ensuring that the best possible discount has been applied.

- 3) As your licensing provider, Xynomix are able to take over the '**liaison and negotiation**' with Oracle during an audit procedure. This will enable our expert consultants to utilise our long-term relationships and key contacts with Oracle to speed up the process and ensure that the fairest (and most favourable) solution is agreed.

If you have been given notice of an official Oracle audit, have reason to suspect that you may have become non-compliant, or have any other licensing related questions then we would love to hear from you!

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