

5 cost-saving opportunities in the IT asset life cycle

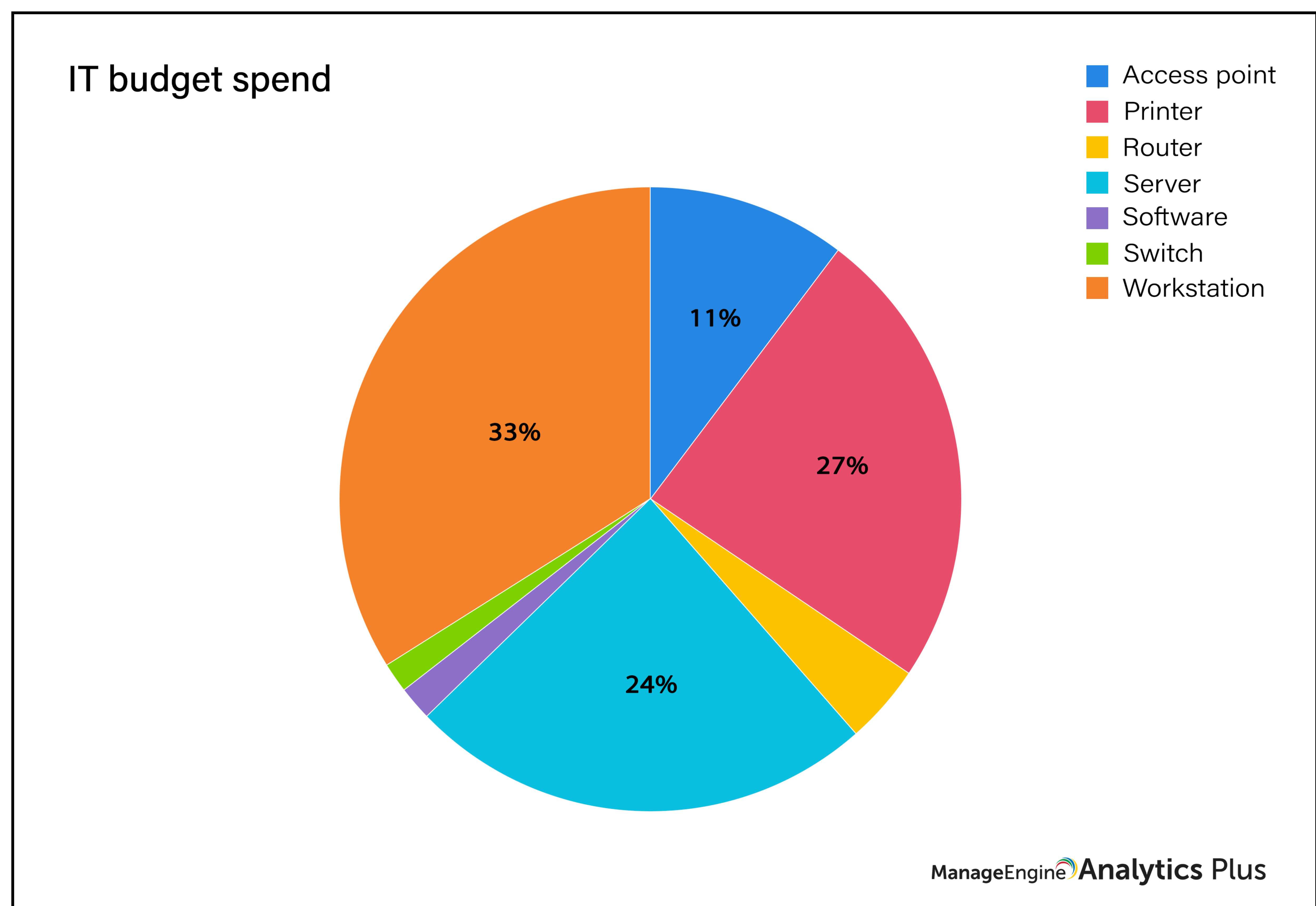


Introduction

IT asset management is an important aspect of IT service management. With several stakeholders, huge budgets, and constant pressure from management to get more value out of less, it's crucial that your asset management framework focuses on reaping the maximum benefits out of your investment. In this e-book, we'll discuss how analytics can help you save costs in each stage of the asset life cycle, namely planning, deployment, compliance, maintenance and support, and retirement/disposal.

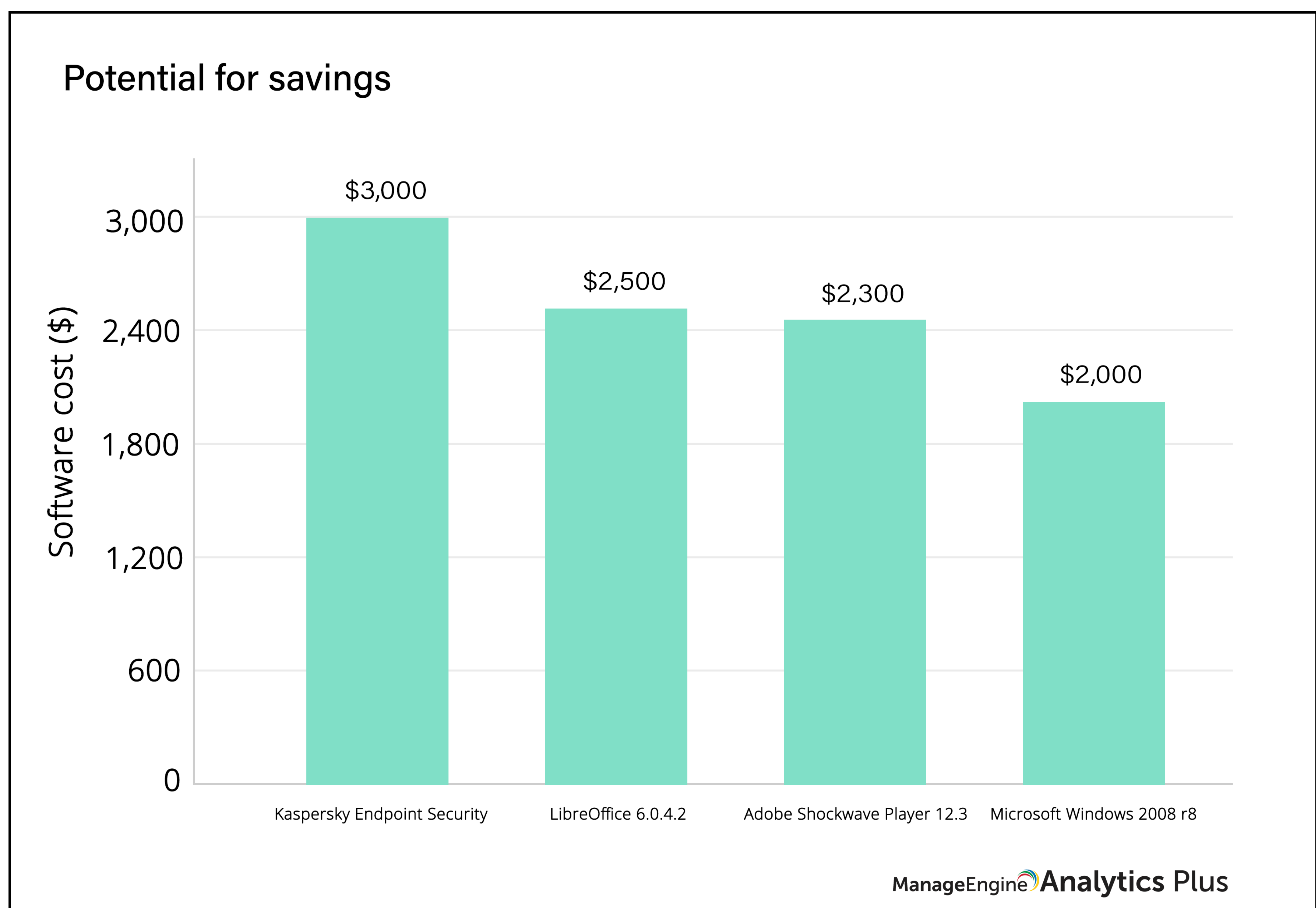
Asset planning

Planning your yearly IT budget from scratch can be a difficult exercise, which is why we recommend you analyze past IT spend objectively and use those insights to plan your budget.



This report shows that printers, workstations, and servers are the top three expenses, with printers taking up more budget than workstations. Typically printers don't take up more IT budget than workstations unless something like an organization-wide printer upgrade is taking place. In any case, this is an area you can potentially save in.

Speaking of potential savings, organizations tend to purchase software in advance, expecting an increase in employees in the future. When the planned increase doesn't happen, several software licenses go unused. The report below helps you identify and reduce excess purchases.

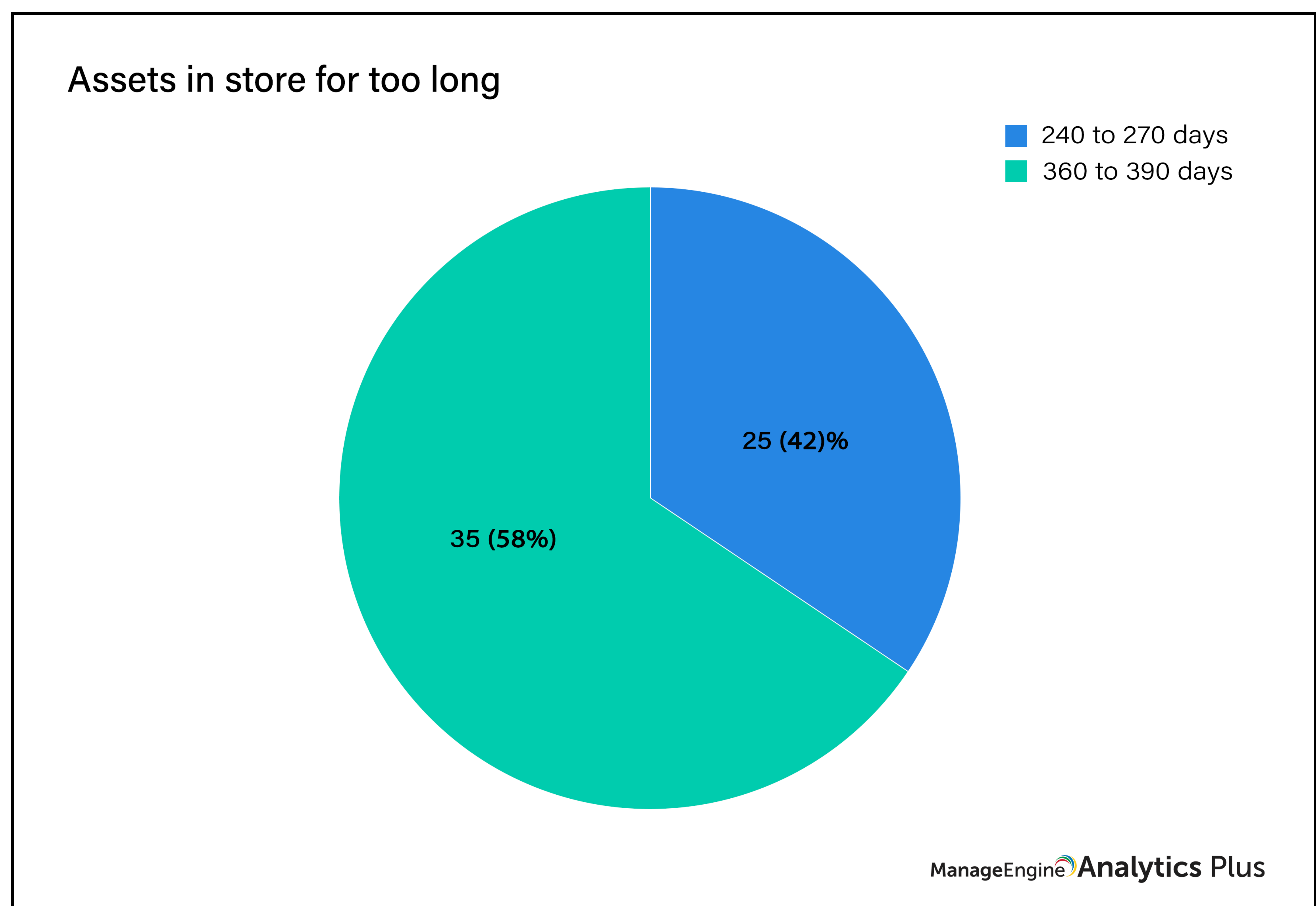


Per this report, there's potential to save on licenses for Kaspersky Endpoint Security and Microsoft Windows 2008 r8.

Asset deployment

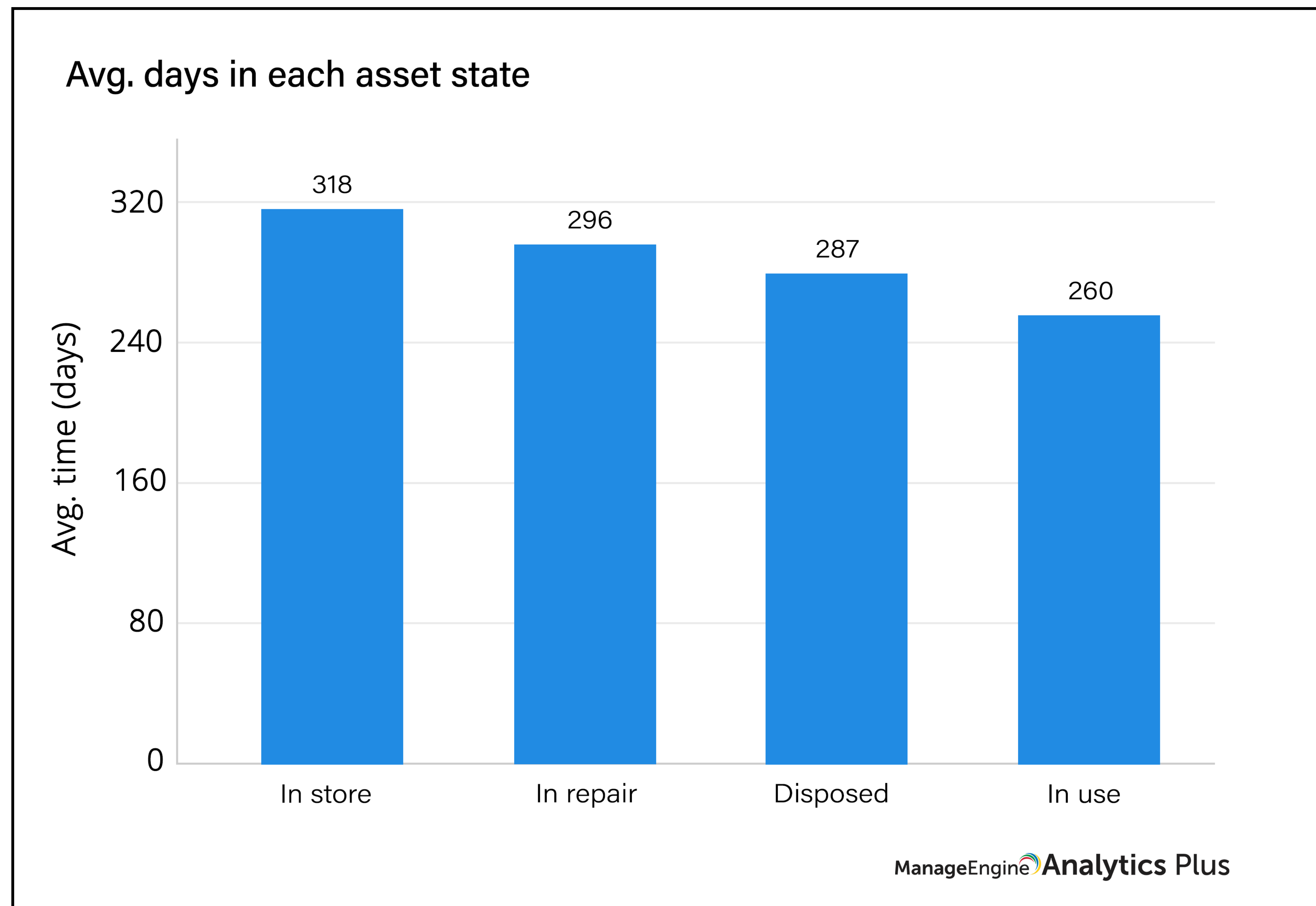
Between the time assets are purchased and deployed, they undergo a preparation phase before they're ready to be handed over to users. This preparation phase involves asset inspection, software installation, integration with network components, and provisioning user access. Poor planning can sometimes increase the time this phase takes, resulting in the asset being shelved. These notoriously named "shelfware" are a drain on the IT budget and reduce the available cash flow needed to purchase other high-priority assets.

The report below helps you identify these assets so you can reduce waste.



Per this report, there are 25 assets in store for over 240 days, and 35 assets in store for more than a year. This could be due to either over-purchasing assets, or poor planning in distributing those assets to end users. With these insights, you can plan your purchase and deployment schedules to reduce unnecessary shelf time for assets, opt for just-in-time asset purchases to avoid over-purchasing, and thoroughly evaluate your distribution process to eliminate process lags.

When you analyze asset shelf life, you should also analyze the time spent in different stages, namely in store, in use, repair, or disposed. This helps you assess the efficiency of asset usage.



Per this report, assets spend the least time in use, and the most time either in storage or in repair, indicating serious defects in asset management practices and distribution framework. The next step is to formulate a plan to ensure the efficient use of assets.

Asset compliance

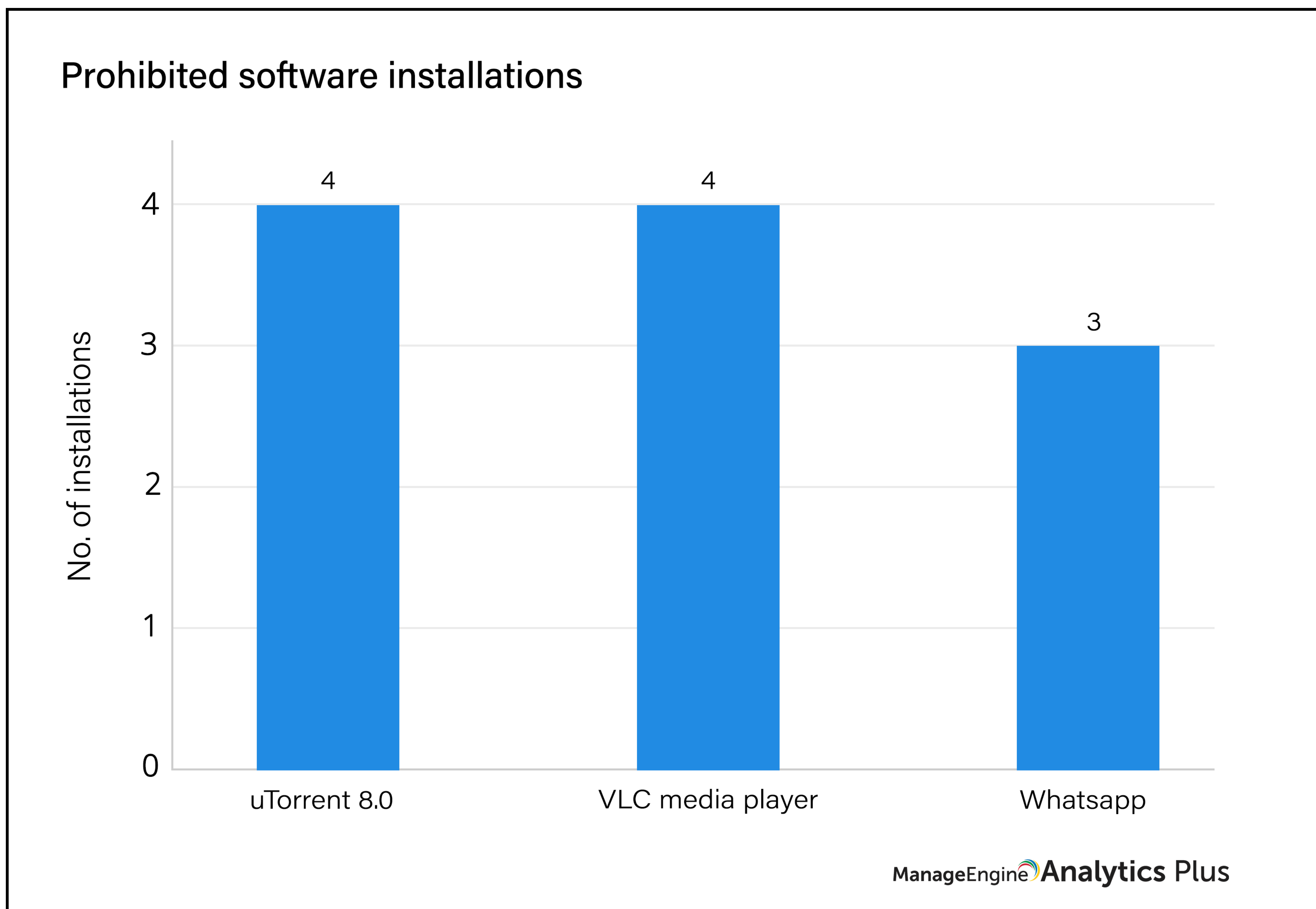
Have you ever come across users who download unlicensed versions of Microsoft Excel because they're not familiar with their system's default spreadsheet application? Or users who have signed up for a cloud collaboration app because it features more options? If you answered yes to either of these questions, then you must be aware of the Shadow IT phenomenon, which refers to the use of software not explicitly approved by the IT department. Left unchecked, organizations can incur true up penalties that are known to run into six and seven figures per application. Your best defense against Shadow IT is periodically auditing unlicensed and prohibited software, and advising users to remove that software from their computers.

The report below can help you track the number and type of unlicensed software installations currently in use, as well as the users who have installed them.

Unlicensed software installations					
	Software	Total installations	License allocated	License type	Unlicensed installations
1	Kaspersky Endpoint Security	10	0	Volume	dcip303
2					jordan13
3					nina312
4					sdp65
5					win7302
6					matt569
7					dcqa643
8					mark353
9					paul354
10					john730
11	Microsoft Windows 2008 r8	5	0	Volume	max124
12					tom678
13					smit890
14					brad456
15					angi789

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You can also create a separate report to track the use of prohibited software licenses that pose a threat to an organization's data security or privacy laws.



The above reports can be added to your regular audit scans and used to enforce software policies; this helps ensure regulatory compliance for your organization and saves you money in the long run.

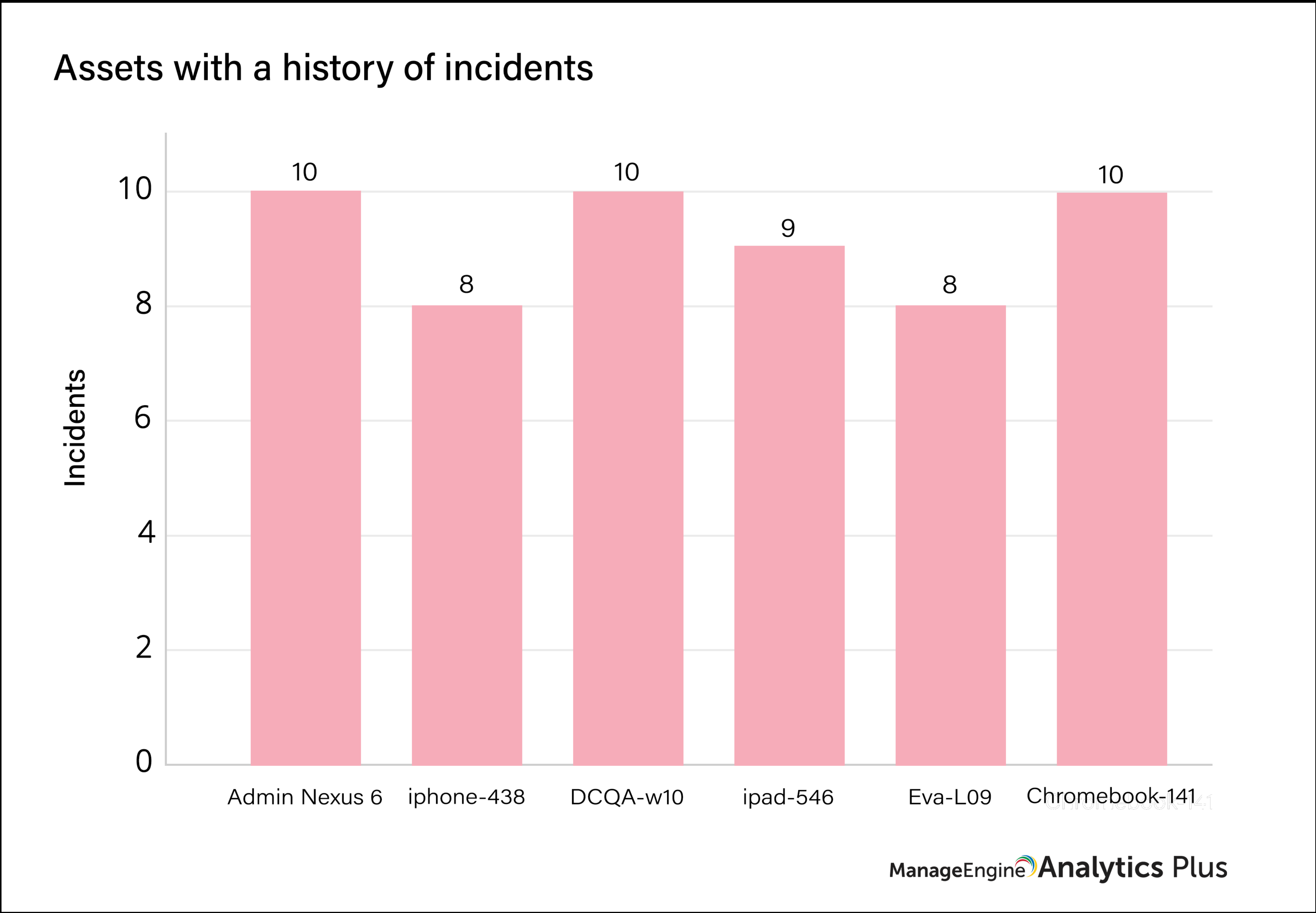
Analytics applications such as Analytics Plus enable you to create automated alerts based on thresholds so you can receive real-time alerts when users install unapproved software.

[Click here](#) for more information on data alerts.

Asset maintenance and support

The actual cost of an IT asset is a lot more than its purchase cost; it includes operational, maintenance, and support costs as well. Non-standard or poor quality assets require a substantial amount of maintenance and increase your overall IT budget; in some cases, you might even end up paying more for maintaining assets than you did for purchasing them.

One way to track such problematic assets is to investigate assets with a long history of incidents. The report below can help.



You can see assets with the most number of recorded incidents. You can now plan to replace these problematic assets strategically or explore alternatives.

It's not just hardware assets that incur high maintenance costs; software applications hosted on cloud servers tend to burn up disk space faster than anticipated, causing application crashes. These crashes create additional workload for technicians, and add to a server's maintenance costs. You can avoid these issues by periodically tracking your servers' available disk space.

Servers with less then 10% disk space

	Servers	Users	Free Space(%)
1	win-456	Osbert Waylett	6%
2	aws-346	Brockie Lancetter	7%
3	172.208.52.52	Bunnie Borge	0%
4	tower-546	Edlin Elvins	7%
5	ms-4158	Gusta Mapes	9%
6	miran-567-587		8%
7	nbs-153	Emmalyn Stokell	0%

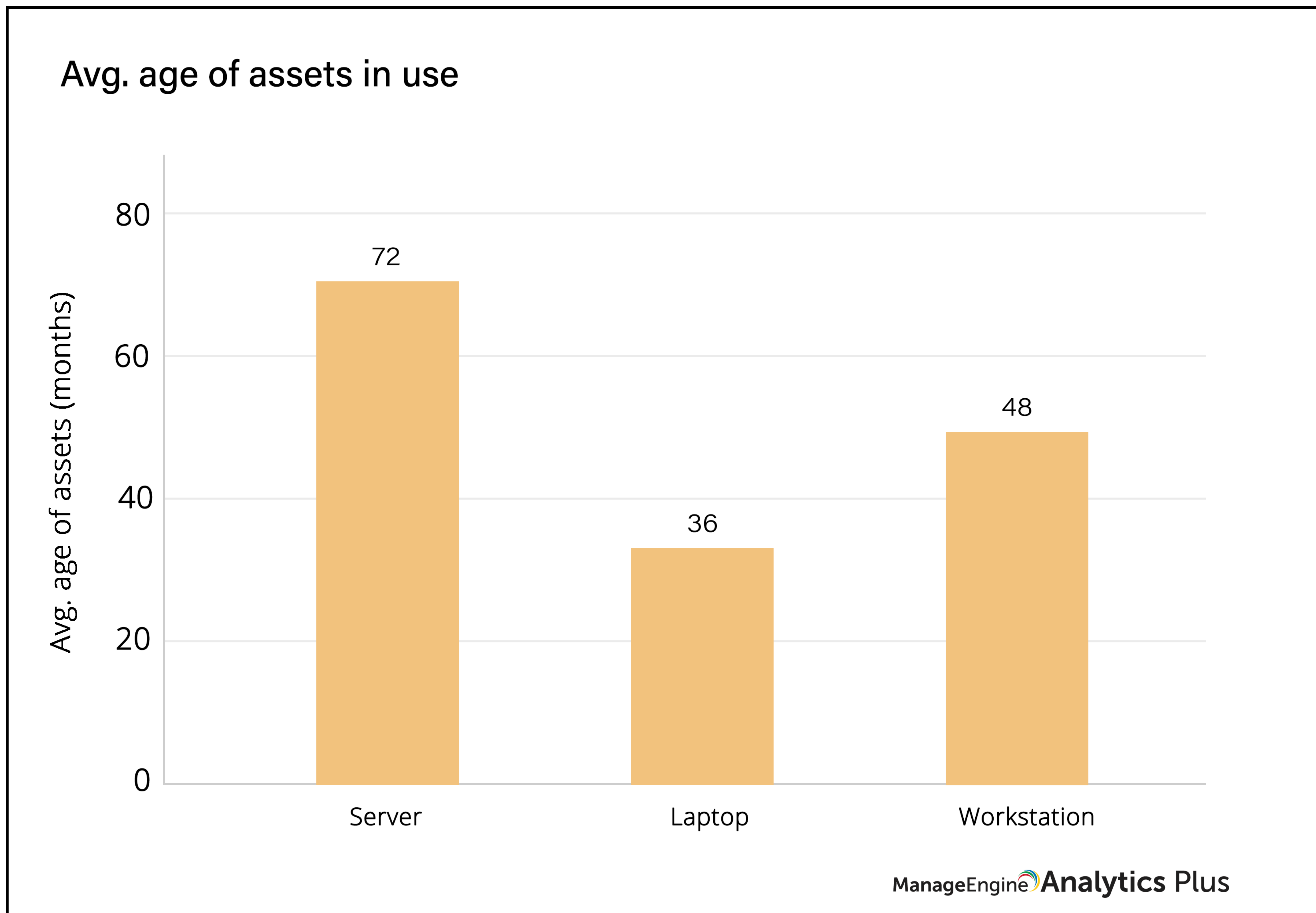
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Based on this report, a few servers have less than 10 percent disk space available; now we need to remove unused applications to free up these servers' disk space.

Asset retirement and disposal

From a savings perspective, the disposal phase of assets is important for two reasons. One, you have the responsibility of carefully determining if a certain asset is ready for retirement and disposal. Dispose these assets too soon and you lose value; wait too long and you incur service costs due to recurring problems and downtime. Two, you get useful inputs to prepare your procurement list for the following year.

The report below provides a summary of the average useful life of various asset categories since their acquisition.



Per this report, workstations have an average useful lifespan of four years; laptops, three years; and servers, about six years. With this information, you can benchmark a time frame for retirement or disposal across different asset categories.

Conclusion

In this e-book, we've covered several ways in which organizations can identify and mitigate the waste of assets in each stage of the asset management cycle. Leveraging these ideas will enable organizations to reduce waste and save big on asset management.

About Analytics Plus

ManageEngine [Analytics Plus](#) is an AI-powered IT analytics solution that enables organizations to uncover hidden insight in their IT data, empowering them to troubleshoot problems, optimize workflows, reduce expenses, and improve overall service delivery. Analytics Plus integrates with several popular IT applications such as ServiceNow, ServiceDesk Plus, SupportCenter Plus, PasswordManager Pro, Applications Manager, and more.