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HASP SRM Eases Versioning Chores

Aladdin Knowledge Systems Inc. has uncorked a new version of its software digital rights management tool, which the Israeli company says will grant the wishes of corporate development teams and ISVs trying to protect intellectual property (IP) while turning out multiple versions of an application.

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HASP features separate toolsets for developers, product managers and operations staff, allowing the three groups to work independ-

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Avi Barir, Vice President of Software DRM, Aladdin Knowledge Systems Inc.

Aladdin says Hardware Against Software Piracy (HASP) Software Rights Management (SRM) allows development shops to mix and match different licensing arrangements with either a software-based intellectual property protection mechanism or traditional dongles to create custom versions of an app—without the need to create gold masters for each combination.

At first glance, the IP protection aspect of the HASP may seem more applicable to ISVs than corporate development shops. But Aladdin's Avi Barir notes that enterprises often embed proprietary algorithms or confidential libraries into software that runs outside of private networks, such as on the laptops of far-flung traveling employees.

“Think, for example, of a price-configuration tool, which may be used by the sales reps in the field, embedding confidential information about the pricing formulas of the company,” writes Barir, Aladdin's vice president of software DRM, in an e-mail. “The in-house developer needs to protect this IP.”

Forrester Research enterprise security analyst Paul Stamp said that while many large companies develop internal methods to safeguard sen-

sitive information, HASP likely would appeal to “smaller shops [that] don't have the time or the resources to go out and build their own methods of protecting their intellectual property.”

Aladdin's approach spares developers from getting bogged down in business decisions about licensing models, which instead can be worked out and changed much later in the product lifecycle, Barir says. The upshot for development managers is that they end up with a single gold master, from which any number of versions can be created and deployed. HASP comes with dongles or a software-based locking system that works through an activation server sold separately by Aladdin.

Barir says dongles start at around \$25 each, including the HASP software, service and maintenance. The company's software-based protection key requires the purchase of an activation server priced from “several thousands of dollars” in addition to fees charged per license activation, he says.

—Thomas Caywood

NETWORK VENDOR F5 GUNS FOR MICROSOFT DEVELOPERS