Case Study

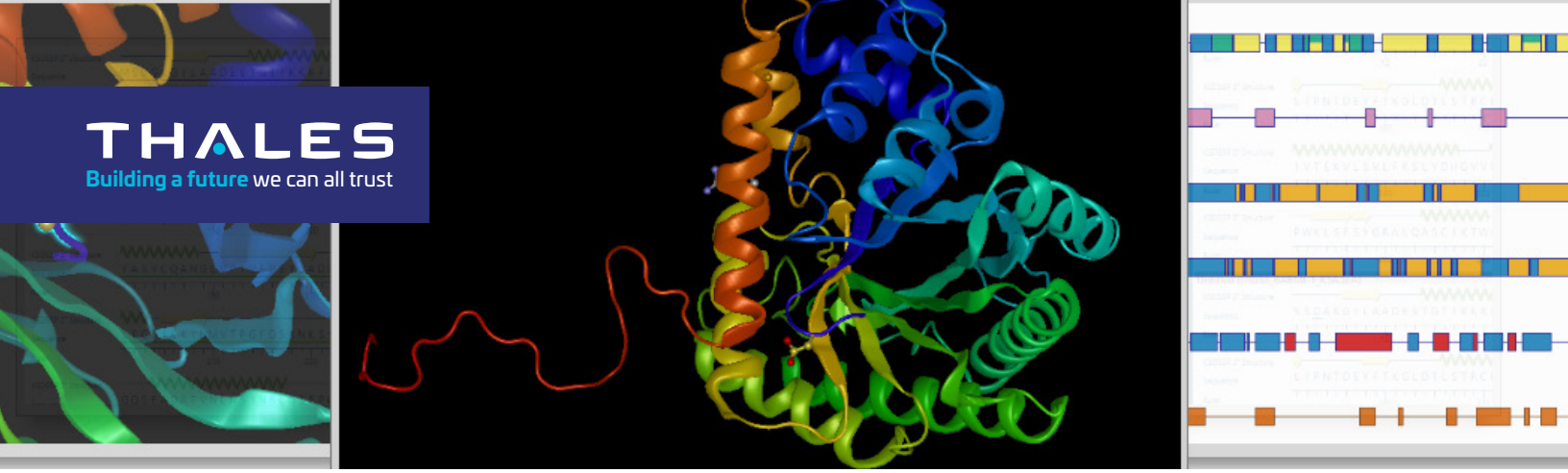


DNASTAR Modernizes Software Licensing for its Scientific Research Market

The company offers perpetual and term licenses and is future proofed for cloud-based automated renewals

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DNASTAR has been a pioneer in DNA sequencing and molecular biology software since its founding in 1984 by University of Wisconsin professor Dr. Frederick Blattner. Today, this privately held company offers a comprehensive software portfolio for molecular biology, genomics, and protein modeling, which supports approximately 80,000 scientists in academic, government, biotechnology, pharmaceutical, and other research institutions worldwide

For software licensing, DNASTAR has relied on Sentinel since 2004. Initially using Sentinel to simplify software licensing delivery, DNASTAR recently expanded into a broader business transformation, providing on-prem, time-based licenses (also known as term licenses) while preparing the ground for cloud licensing with automatic renewals.

The Foundation for Software Business Growth

As DNASTAR evolved, the company needed a licensing platform that could accommodate a large global customer base while allowing their engineers to remain focused on advancing their scientific software and delivering new bioinformatics innovations. They sought to incorporate licensing alongside their existing ecosystem, without any "rip and replace" to their existing systems.

Sentinel provided the stability and agility DNASTAR needed. Integrated with the company's internally developed licensing manager, customer portal, entitlement systems, and Salesforce, Sentinel enabled DNASTAR to simplify license generation and delivery, supporting users ranging from individual desktops to organizations with complex licensing requirements.

> " Sentinel allowed DNASTAR to modernize licensing with low operational risk and limited involvement from our engineers."
>
> – **Katie Maxfield, DNASTAR Marketing Technology Manager**

Portfolio Monetization: Transitioning to Term-Based Licensing

Over the past several years, DNASTAR has been transforming not only how it licenses software but also how it brings products to market. Historically, the software was offered as a one-time initial purchase, and recurring revenue came primarily from annual maintenance agreements and software updates. Beginning in 2020, based on customer demand, DNASTAR began a strategic transition toward time-based licenses while continuing to support its established base of perpetual license holders. Using Thales Sentinel, DNASTAR shifted to a full portfolio monetization strategy with a unified offering that combines time-based licensing, software access, support, and ongoing updates. The added value of a unified offering has boosted customer interest in term licenses, increasing DNASTAR's revenue.

Protecting Scientific Innovation

Software protection remains a key priority as DNASTAR modernizes its licensing approach. DNASTAR's software is built on decades of scientific innovation, making intellectual property protection critical to the company's success. Sentinel helps safeguard their IP while supporting DNASTAR's evolving business model, enabling the company to offer more flexible software access without sacrificing security.

Preparing for Cloud Licensing

As software access becomes increasingly cloud-based, DNASTAR sees opportunities that extend beyond activation and protection. The company's product portfolio ranges from foundational molecular biology applications—software that helped establish DNASTAR as the standard platform in universities around the world—to sophisticated genomics and protein modeling solutions used by commercial researchers. Expanding access to these advanced capabilities across DNASTAR's existing customer base has become an important strategic priority.

DNASTAR

Key Benefits for DNASTAR:

- Simplified license generation and delivery
- Reliable software protection and licensing management for approximately 80,000 users worldwide
- Flexible pricing, allowing perpetual, term, or subscription licensing
- Scalable licensing enabling DNASTAR's transition to cloud licensing with future SaaS delivery

"We offer different product packages and want to make it easy for customers to expand into additional capabilities as their needs evolve," emphasized Maxfield.

Building on its successful transition to term licensing, DNASTAR is now focused on modernizing how customers access and manage its software. While DNASTAR continues to provide desktop software with on-prem licenses, it increasingly views cloud licensing as the next major step in improving both customer experience and operational efficiency. Rather than requiring laboratories to install and manage local license servers, the company wants to allow users to authenticate online and immediately gain access to the licensed software with a product key provided by their IT team.

When examining a cloud licensing migration, DNASTAR turned only to Sentinel, as Maxfield points out: "For over two decades, Sentinel has been reliable for our customers, and straightforward for us to manage. Plus, we can rely on Thales for any support we need. The bottom line is that **Thales Sentinel, and its team, work well for us and we therefore chose to continue with Thales for our digital transformation**."

Sentinel enables pricing flexibility by allowing licensing terms to be easily configured and adjusted, helping DNASTAR deliver customer-centric purchasing options while maintaining a consistent licensing framework. "For the end user, this step is about allowing a lower barrier to entry. Cloud licensing is also expected to streamline upgrades by reducing the manual effort involved in changing customer entitlements while creating a smoother purchasing experience. For example, customers could purchase DNASTAR's basic Molecular Biology package and gain access to an additional Genomics package without having to enter a new product key. Moreover, for customers that may not require DNASTAR's current year-long term license, the company is considering offering shorter licensing times, such as monthly, quarterly, or half-yearly. **With Cloud Licensing, DNASTAR will offer subscriptions purchasable online, with the option of automatic renewal**, rather than their current one-time term licenses.

Cloud licensing will also simplify how DNASTAR's customers adopt additional products and services. Today, modifying product entitlements or upgrading customers to new software packages often requires manual intervention. In a cloud-based licensing environment, customers can access newly purchased capabilities directly online.

Summary

For DNASTAR, the Sentinel platform is more than licensing and protection — it is an infrastructure for business transformation. The company will continue to expand term license adoption, reduce support overhead for customers and internal teams, and prepare for simplifying software purchasing and management through cloud licensing. Using Thales Sentinel in the years to come, DNASTAR can continue offering their renowned scientific software with diverse, customer-centric licensing options.

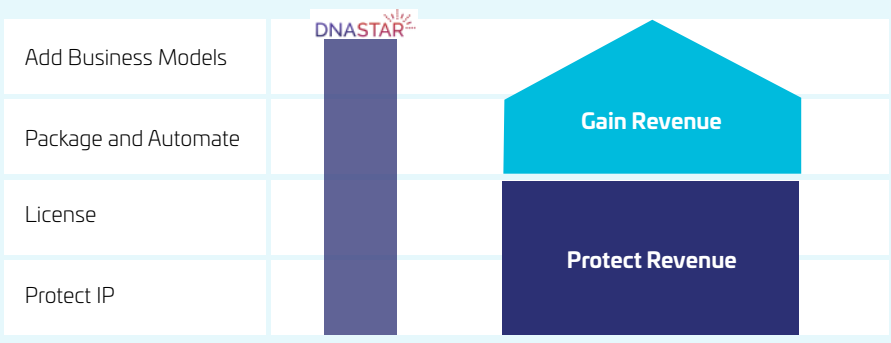
About Thales Sentinel

Sentinel Thales Sentinel is the leading platform for software licensing, protection, and monetization. Our solutions enable software providers to generate new revenue streams, improve operational efficiency, increase customer satisfaction, and gain valuable business insights. Based on award-winning technology, Sentinel has a strong global customer base with thousands of customers in 100+ countries spanning 30+ industries.

About Thales

Thales is a global leader in cybersecurity, helping the most trusted organizations protect critical applications, data, identities, and software anywhere, at scale. Through Thales' integrated platforms, customers achieve better visibility of risks, defend against cyber threats, close compliance gaps, and deliver trusted digital experiences for billions of consumers every day.

Thales Sentinel Monetization Layers Used by DNASTAR



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