

Golden Software Scales Business via Digital Transformation Using Thales Sentinel Licensing

The company added a
subscription model for
recurring revenue

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Golden Software develops affordable geographics software for visualization and complex data set analysis. Founded in 1983 and based in Golden, Colorado, the company's suite of tools has applications for environmental consulting, oil and gas exploration, mining, engineering, applied science, business, education, and government. To date, Golden Software has deployed over 275,000 software licenses for their products in nearly 190 countries, including on all seven continents.

Licensing and Entitlements Platform

At first, Golden Software sold their software with a one-time perpetual fee, managing licensing in-house. Each product had a single serial number, but there was no control over the number of users nor license expirations. License management was complex and time consuming, and therefore the company explored licensing and entitlement platforms for access control and software protection to monetize at scale.

After researching the competition, Golden Software turned to Thales Sentinel to modernize their system through electronic software delivery (ESD). Using Sentinel, the company was able to move from software serial numbers to secure, software-based licensing. Customers activated the licenses themselves, while the company maintained full visibility into license activations and usage.

Golden Software chose Thales Sentinel not only for licensing, but also for revenue growth, protection, operations, customer satisfaction, and professional support. **"By migrating to Sentinel, we've been able to expand our business by over 15% active license growth, year over year,"** pointed out Sheena Skinner, **Golden Software Product Manager**. The reasons for this success with Sentinel are detailed as follows.

"With Thales, we can both validate our licensing and protect our software – a double win."

– Sheena Skinner, Golden Software Product Manager

Software Monetization

By adopting the Sentinel Entitlement Management System (EMS), Golden Software could offer flexible software subscriptions while continuing to offer their initial perpetual licensing model. The company credits Thales with helping it transition from serial number licensing to a fully online and offline software usage model, digitizing their operations and creating recurring revenue through monthly or annual pricing. Prior to using Sentinel, Golden Software had no time-based trial option—only perpetual serial numbers. With Sentinel, they could implement trial-to-paid conversions, protecting their revenue by automatically charging for the license after a free trial expired.

Software Protection

Security was a top concern that prompted Golden Software's shift to Sentinel. With Thales' machine locking and versioning controls, license access is tightly enforced. This new level of control not only protected the software, it reduced revenue leakage due to misuse or accidental overuse. "With Thales, we can both validate our licensing and protect our software – a double win," emphasized Skinner.

CRM Integration

One of the most impactful ways Golden Software used Sentinel was for integration with its CRM, NetSuite. Using a custom connector, all license registrations, creations, and activations were managed directly within NetSuite, eliminating the need for customer support reps to log into Sentinel. This integration has allowed Golden Software to move from manual, individual activations into seamless, sale-to-activation flows that fully automate purchasing and delivery processes.

Customer Satisfaction

Golden Software's customers benefited from Sentinel as well, specifically with a self-service portal, and the ability to use the software offline. The self-service portal allows customers to run the software right after registration, rather than waiting up to a few days to receive their serial number via email. The portal also allows end users to access licenses directly, rather than storing product keys in spreadsheets or reaching out for manual support.

Additionally, offline support remains an option even for software licenses. This functionality is critical for two of their main use cases: high-security settings, such as for government institutions, and unreliable internet access in remote areas like the north and south poles. Sentinel's support for offline use ensures these customers remain productive, even when internet access is behind a security wall or reception is limited.


Moreover, Sentinel provides data usage intelligence that is used by Golden Software's Sales and Customer Satisfaction teams to spot upcoming renewals and upsells, and plan roadmaps – all based on product adoption data. Moving forward, Golden Software aims to leverage their data to further understand usage patterns to reduce churn and continue to guide product development.

"Sentinel enables us to be customer centric. The subscription configurations allow us to create packaging choices that please our customers. And the usage data reports alert us about customer touchpoints for product upgrades or renewed pricing plans," emphasized Skinner.



Golden Software's geometric software

Thales Sentinel Monetization Layers

Data Insights	Drive customer success and business intelligence initiatives	
New Business Models	Find new ways to sell, access new markets and customer segments	
Flexible Packaging	Create new differentiators without product investment	
Licensing	Copy protection and revenue protection	
IP Protection	Safeguard against IP theft	

Partnership and Support

The team at Golden Software has praised the support from Thales. They describe Thales' customer service as "the best we've worked with" – citing fast response times and a willingness to help with even non-standard needs, like Sentinel upgrades or unique deployment requirements. Moreover, Thales serves as a business partner, providing guidance for Golden Software's business drivers – such as licensing modernization and recurring revenue – as the foundation for rollout and further adoption.

Summary

Sentinel's capabilities facilitate Golden Software's revenue growth goals today and into the future. Above all, Thales' coordination with Golden Software has helped the company scale globally while staying secure and agile. By replacing former licensing methods with a modern, integrated platform, Golden Software gained full control over licensing, increased revenue, and improved customer satisfaction.

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.