

Case Study



**Industrial Automation  
CAD Provider  
SDProget Offers  
Flexible Licensing,  
Protects IP, and Adds  
Subscription Revenue  
with Thales Sentinel**

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Building a future we can all trust



Boasting over 12,000 customers worldwide, SDProget is a leading electrical CAD (computer-aided design) software provider for industrial automation. The company develops products based on an AutoCAD platform for the design, processing, and documentation of electrical schematics. Their SPAC® software suite optimizes industrial automation design along with budgeting, controlling, and monitoring all stages of the process. SPAC® is used by design firms as well as university students studying engineering, architecture, or other design fields.

Established in 1988 in Italy, by 2015 SDProget had reached the stage where their homegrown solution was not sufficient to adequately scale their licensing and software protection. As a result, they sought a commercial solution, leading them to Thales Sentinel.

## Needs

SDProget's goals were as follows:

**1. Offer flexible licensing options.** Prior to using Sentinel, SDProget issued licenses only through HASP keys. While some of their customers preferred these physical **hardware key licenses**, others wanted on-prem **software licenses**. SDProget therefore aimed to provide both for their customers.

**2. Increase revenue through product and support subscriptions.** Under their homegrown system, SDProget offered only perpetual licenses. However, to scale their business they knew they needed to add a subscription model. Once implemented, SDProget wanted a **free trial option to encourage adoption of the subscription model**, after which customers could **automatically upgrade to a paid subscription**.

**3. Improve customer experience with a self-service portal.** The company wanted a self-service portal for both hardware key and software license users to download license updates. For hardware key license customers, a self-service portal would eliminate the need to ship a new hardware key because the software update could be applied to the hardware key locally. For both hardware key and software license users, this self-service portal could empower customers to register, manage, and easily upgrade their subscriptions on their own.

“ Sentinel integrated with our ecosystem by creating custom vendor key programming and a management tool built using a C# Sentinel EMS API, connected to our ERP/CRM.”

– Davide Morando, SDProget Software Engineer

**4. Ensure copy protection and IP protection.** With over 20,000 installations, SDProget was a prime target for IP theft and reverse engineering, making safeguarding their software of utmost importance. Davide Morando, SDProget Software Engineer stated, “Our proprietary engineering formulas are extremely specific and exceptionally valuable in the industry, so we always prioritize software protection.”

**5. Integrate with their CRM.** SDProget wanted to streamline all licensing for both hardware key and software licenses to increase operational efficiency.

# Results

SDProget chose Sentinel for licensing, security, and customer satisfaction. They researched several enterprise solutions, ultimately selecting Sentinel since it was the most trusted in the industry and met all their requirements. "With Sentinel's strong presence in the market, we were the most confident about their solution," emphasized Morando.

SDProget's Sentinel use cases are as follows:

## Licensing and Protection

SDProget uses both hardware key and software licenses, with an eye toward cloud licensing in the future. In terms of protection, Sentinel safeguards their software and intellectual property, preventing piracy, misuse, and IP theft.

## Customer Satisfaction

Sentinel enabled the following advantages for SDProget customers:

- a) Free trial licenses.** Due to Sentinel flexibility, SDProget can safely and seamlessly offer trial licenses. "Free trials, with automated registration, shorten the sales cycle and allow us to easily convert leads to customers," points out Antonella Peirolo, Marketing Director.
- b) Simplified activation.** SDProget customers appreciate how easy it is to activate their products. Using Sentinel, they are able to vary the implementation of product features to suit customers' specific needs, such as attributing each feature to local or network access and assigning it to a perpetual or time-based license.
- c) Improve hardware-key license user experience.** Sentinel eliminated the need to ship new hardware key licenses for updates or renewals. Instead, they enabled the changes to be made automatically through software updates. "We send out thousands of updates annually, so being able to automatically update features saves a lot of time and resources with less disruption to our customer base," stated Morando.
- d) Self-service portal for updates.** Customers can upgrade autonomously: A customer self-service portal tool connects to the web and retrieves the proper files produced by SDProget's management tool. These files can then be distributed online or offline, making them usable for both software and hardware key license users.

# Support

Thales partners with customers for Sentinel implementation. "Support for the product is wonderful. We used the Thales technical support team during implementation, and they always answer questions promptly, identifying issues and providing accurate solutions to our development team. They integrated with our ecosystem by creating custom vendor key programming and a management tool built using a C# Sentinel EMS API, connected to our ERP/CRM," highlighted Morando.

## Thales Sentinel Monetization Layers



# Future

SDProget is expanding business abroad using Sentinel SL, and are considering Sentinel CL, cloud licensing, as well. "The quest for innovation, the intent of which is to offer our customers the best solution, has brought us to Sentinel products," noted Peirolo.

To learn more about SDProget, visit: [www.sdproget.it/EN/](http://www.sdproget.it/EN/)

# About Thales

Today's businesses and governments depend on the cloud, data and software to deliver trusted digital services. That is why the most recognized brands and organizations around the world, rely on Thales to help them protect sensitive information and software wherever it is created, stored or accessed – from the cloud and data centers to devices and across networks. As the global leader in data security, identity & access management, and software licensing, our solutions enable organizations to move to the cloud securely, achieve compliance with confidence, create more value from their software and deliver seamless digital experiences for millions of consumers every day.