



SafeGuard Easy encrypts the hard disk sector-by-sector, independent of the file system (NTFS, FAT, etc.) in use. This has the advantage that virus scanners and defragmenters still work happily in its presence. Utimaco recommends that you use it to encrypt the whole hard disk. In this way you are using the pre-boot authentication so none of the operating system is allowed to boot up; this therefore uses *SafeGuard Easy* in the most secure fashion. This approach is aimed at portable computers that are particularly vulnerable to theft.

You can partition areas of the disk and have *SafeGuard Easy* encrypt the partition rather than the entire hard disk. The partition you can encrypt can either contain the OS or not – this is your choice. If you encrypt the entire hard disk, it has the advantage that all temporary files are also encrypted. Single sign-on (SSO) is optional so that *SafeGuard Easy* logs you onto the operating system after you have authenticated yourself to the product.

For bulk data encryption, it offers a choice of AES128, AES256, IDEA, triple-DES, Stealth 40, Blowfish 8, and Blowfish 16. Neither keys nor passwords are stored

SC Magazine Best Buy
SafeGuard Easy



Version: 3.10
Price: \$150
Supplier: Utimaco Safeware Inc
Contact: (508) 799-4333
 lvaughn@utimaco.com
 www.utimaco.com



FOR A product that focuses on excelling at one thing – pre-boot authentication using entire hard disk encryption.
AGAINST No support for tokens, smartcards or biometric authentication.
VERDICT Although it lacks any bells and whistles, except for the refinements required by corporate customers for central deployment and management, Utimaco has other products to address those areas that it does not cover.

Features	★★★★☆
Ease of use	★★★★★
Performance	★★★★★
Documentation	★★★★★
Support	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★
Overall Rating	★★★★★

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on the PC's hard disk – all the information that is needed to boot the operating system and decrypt the data is derived from the username and password given by the user at pre-boot authentication. Because the boot sector is vital to the operation of *SafeGuard Easy*, there is specific protection against boot-sector viruses and unauthorized modifications of the boot sector. You can also create a rescue disk to solve any problems that may occur due to corruption of the hard disk. Supported operating systems include Windows 9x, Me, NT, 2000 and XP. Another version of the software, called *SafeGuard PDA*, is available for the Pocket PC operating system.

There are good deployment and administration tools, including the ability to enforce strong passwords and password expiry dates. There is also a secure challenge-response system to reset passwords when users forget them or are otherwise locked out – for example, when the password has been entered incorrectly a certain number of times. You can have up to 15 authorized users of each PC, and each user has his or her own profile with different rights. There's a screensaver lock that requires the user to log on again after a period of inactivity.

You can encrypt data also on removable media to facilitate the secure exchange of data between users. However, you can encrypt local drives only so data cannot be encrypted on drives shared across a network, but Utimaco has other products to meet this need. The company also offers a freeware product called *PrivateCrypto*, which provides a means of creating self-decrypting archives for distribution. Smartcards, tokens and biometric authentication are not supported for *SafeGuard Easy* but Utimaco offers other products for that market.



Contact Information:

USA / North America
Utimaco Safeware Inc.
 22 Elm Street, Suite 310
 Worcester, MA 01608
 Phone +1 (508) 799-4333
 Fax +1 (508) 791-3828
 lance.vaughn@utimaco.com

United Kingdom
Utimaco Safeware Ltd.
 Ms Jackie Groves
 Hamilton House, 111 Marlowes
 Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP1 1BB
 Phone +44 (0) 1442 23 00 30
 Fax +44 (0) 1442 23 06 63
 jackie.groves@utimaco.co.uk

Germany/Continental Europe
Utimaco Safeware AG
 Hohemarkstraße 22
 DE-61440 Oberursel near Frankfurt a. M.
 Phone +49 (61 71) 88-0
 Fax +49 (61 71) 88 10 10
 info.pds@utimaco.com