



## TFS Compared to Silect Management Pack Store

Silect Store is a database used by Silect to store management packs (MPs), test results, preferences, and other information used by MP Studio. Team Foundation Server (TFS) is a source control repository from Microsoft which is used to store source code and other files. Some customers have wondered about the relative merits of using TFS to store MPs compared to Silect Store. There are some things in common between the two solutions (storing multiple versions of files in a hierarchical structure), but this report will concentrate on the differences.

Feature	Silect MP Store database	Microsoft TFS
<b>Audit History</b>	As each version of each MP is checked into the Silect Store it is compared with the previous versions and audit history records are created. Within each audit history record, there is a change-by-change record, indicating who made the change and when and allowing a note (work order, reason, etc.) on a per-change basis. See Comparison and Reporting below for more information.	TFS allows one or more files to be checked in, with a single check-in comment for the entire check in.
<b>Attachments</b>	Silect Store allows files to be attached to any folder, MP, or MP version in the Store. This allows substantial flexibility when keeping track of the associated information about MPs. For instance, an MP Requirements Specification might be attached at the MP level, while each version might have attached Change Request documents and test results.	TFS does not allow attachments, so these files would need to be stored in TFS using folders to organize them.
<b>Comparison</b>	Silect Store is primarily concerned with the storage of MPs, either in their unsealed XML form, their sealed MP form, or even in Management Pack Bundles (MPBs). Because of this focus on the MP, the comparison engine can compare MPs of any form at a semantic level. For instance, this means that you can compare an unsealed XML MP file to a sealed MP file, and the comparison engine will correctly show the differences at a high level, without being confused by unimportant syntactic changes.	TFS stores files and knows very little about the content. When comparing text files, it can only compare at a syntactic level, meaning trivial changes to XML like leading spaces versus tabs or different line endings will appear as changes. But most significantly, TFS can not do any comparison of sealed MPs. These are simply treated as binary files and the most TFS will say about them is that they compare equal or not equal.

Feature	Silect MP Store database	Microsoft TFS
<b>Backups</b>	The Silect Store is tightly integrated into MP Studio and supports several automated tasks and reports. One of these tasks is to perform on-demand or periodic backups of unsealed MPs from your management groups to the Silect Store. Each MP is examined, and any updated MPs will be backed up to your Silect Store.	TFS offers no ability to perform these sorts of backups.
<b>Integration</b>	Silect Store is integrated into MP Studio and is used as a source of reference MPs when authoring MPs. By allowing multiple versions of reference MPs to be stored, when authoring an MP, the correct version of the reference MPs will be used. When MPs are saved, they are automatically saved into Silect Store, along with the audit records showing who, when and what was changed.	TFS is not integrated into MP Studio. Users would need to manually maintain their files.
<b>Integrity</b>	Silect Store ensures that the correct versions of referenced MPs must be installed in the Store before an unsealed MP can be created/imported into the Store. This ensures that all operations on that MP are going to be sure to use the correct versions of the reference MPs. This guarantees that once an MP is finished and deployed, it will be correct.	TFS is not involved in getting the correct reference MPs (other than perhaps storing them). When not using MP Studio, you must manually keep track of reference MPs.
<b>Reporting</b>	As mentioned above, the Silect Store is tightly integrated into MP Studio and supports several automated tasks and reports. These reports can be generated on-demand or scheduled for periodic execution, with the results saved to a typically shared folder, and/or emailed to various recipients. The reports include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit History Report</li> <li>• Documenting MPs</li> <li>• Management Group Comparison</li> <li>• All Management Groups Comparison</li> <li>• Comparison Sets</li> </ul>	TFS does not provide any of these detailed reports.