

ARE WE FINALLY MOVING AWAY FROM AN 'IF IT AIN'T BROKE, DON'T FIX IT' MENTALITY?

Mark Stubbs, Health and Safety Consultant, and Joe Bagdzius, Software Support Advisor, from Make UK talk about trends in EHS software adoption and usage.

What trends in EHS software adoption have you noticed over the past couple of years?

Mark: I think EHS software is moving from being a “nice to have” to a “can you afford not to have.” A few years ago, senior teams would see risk assessments being tracked in a spreadsheet and hazards being emailed and think “what’s the problem?” More and more, we’re seeing companies making a pledge to improve safety culture. Investment in software is a key part of this transition. We’ve seen a 50% increase in sales between 2020 and 2021.

Joe: Our software customers are demanding more from the technology and the technical support we provide. For example, we recently made some amends to our environment module based on customer feedback. This is fantastic as it demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement, which will only serve to improve health, safety and sustainability.

How would you explain this shift?

Mark: Increasingly organisations are seeing the benefits of making health and safety a priority, not just from a moral standpoint but from a commercial perspective as well. Safe businesses tend to be more productive and have a better reputation. With the rise of social media, reputational damage is a lot more of a risk as information spreads further and faster than ever before.

Additionally, I think the remit of the health and safety manager has expanded in recent years, frequently incorporating environmental management. So, now more than ever, people cannot afford to be slowed down by manual processes. This merging of roles has also opened up the benefits of working with consultants, to get expert advice on topics which may not be the health and safety manager’s area of expertise, such as Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) reporting and waste management.

Technology can be powerful but only if you’re maximising the features and benefits. How do you ensure full usage to maximise the benefits of adoption?

Mark: Training, along with a good communications strategy, is really important. This will give your workforce the knowledge and skills to support the adoption journey.

Joe: As part of my role, I oversee the data in a customer’s software and provide a rapid response; for example, if I see spikes in accident rates or a decline in near miss reporting.

Our customers are always eager to receive this information as it enables them to make improvements. We hold a monthly forum with our software customers to discuss updates, best practice, as well as technical tips and tricks. Additionally, Make UK consultants use data from within the software to equip themselves with the information needed to offer guidance to members during consultancy days.

Are companies you’re working with still needing to demonstrate return on investment (ROI)?

Mark: Certainly! Our customers often have to present to senior management teams to justify expenditure, particularly given the current economic climate. Fortunately, the benefits of the software usage are typically quite clear through the platform’s data reporting and insights capability. In addition to administration time saved, software adopters typically see engagement in health and safety improve demonstrated through an increase in hazard and near miss reporting. One of our customers saw a 38% decrease in accidents on site through use of the software — this is not a rare story.

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ABOUT MAKE UK HEALTH, SAFETY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Safe, healthy and sustainable organisations are good for people, good for business and good for the world. That’s why we are dedicated to improving EHS knowledge and performance in individuals and companies across the UK.

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