



WHITE PAPER

A Buyer's Guide to EHS Software

What you need to know to make the safe choice for your organization.

Two of the most challenging aspects of running an organization today are keeping your people safe and protecting the environment. The need to mitigate risks, respond to problems, and correctly document incidents, is both complex and time consuming.

It's a moving target; regulations are getting tougher, and the solutions constantly need adapting. [EHS software](#) helps solve those problems by reducing— and in some cases completely eliminating—safety and environmental risk. Choosing the right software can simplify processes, improve safety, and save you money. It's undoubtedly a big investment, so what should you be looking for when deciding which EHS software system is right for your needs?



Transforms EHS with Centralized Platform

“Now that we have this treasure trove of information from all our projects, we can process that data in real time, identify our problem areas, and pro-actively put our focus on the highest risks before incidents happen. The safety part has always played a role in winning bids. With HSI, we now have a tool that allows us to capture this data. Having this type of information will help us in the tender process around the world.”

- **Pimmie Aendenboom**, *QHSE Manager for Business Unit International*

What is an EHS Software System?

Let's start by defining EHS itself. Environmental, Health & Safety is a general term that covers the laws, regulations, programs, and processes that exist to protect the health and safety of employees, the public, and the environment, from the hazards associated with a workplace.

An EHS system offers organizations a single, centralized, integrated approach to operating every aspect of their EHS processes. It not only increases efficiency and streamlines operations, but it can also help you better analyze risk, respond faster, and reduce the chance of incidents happening at all.

Of course, an important function of an EHS software solution is to meet the requirements of government authorities and regulations. **EHS failures can be very costly. Fines and legal actions add up.** Reputational damage makes it worse.

However, it's important to remember that, at their heart, EHS policies and procedures exist to protect people; your employees, the wider public, everyone—whether that's by reducing the likelihood of incidents or reducing the consequences.

As an employer, it's important to realize that the needs of your people and their expectations are changing. It's no longer enough to just keep them physically safe; the trend is now towards whole person welfare. **So, your EHS solution must also help manage their general wellbeing and mental health.**



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Fines and legal actions add up.



Areas covered by **EHS System Management**

Asbestos	Fleet Management	Permit to Work
Asset and Vehicle Management	Food Safety	PPE
Attestations	Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Management	Projects
Audit Management	Hazard Management	Quality Management
Certification Management	Hazardous Materials	Remote Working
Chain of Responsibility (CoR)	Health Monitoring and Hygiene	Risk Management
Checklist & Inspections	Incident Management	Safety Alerts
Chemical and SDS	Inductions	Safety Meetings
Compliance Management	Infectious Disease Management	Self Insurance
Contractor Management	Injury and Claims Management	Sustainability Benchmarking
Corrective and Preventative Actions	Investigations	Vaccine Management
Control Management	JSA/JHA Management	Vendor and Supplier Management
Customer Complaints	Learning Management	Violent Incidents
Document Management	Management of Change (MOC)	Visitor Management
Drug and Alcohol	Non-Conformance (NCR)	Warden Management
Emergency Management	Obligations Management	Workers Compensation
Environmental Social Governance (ESG)	Observations	
Ergonomics	Behavior-Based Safety	

Why Many EHS Management Solutions Need Transformation

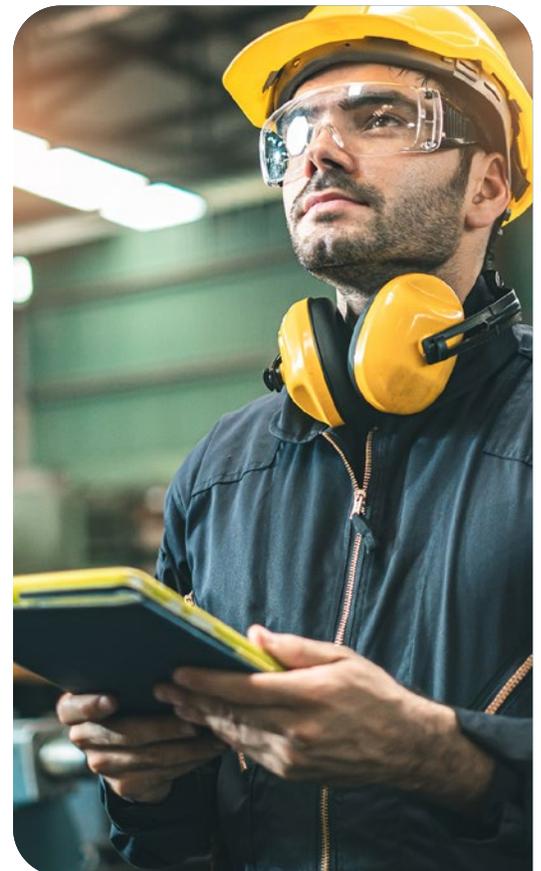
The field of EHS management continues to get more and more complex. Whether it's because of increased regulations or changes in technologies and processes, keeping your organization ahead of issues and fully compliant is more difficult than ever. Investing in the right EHS management solution makes good sense by addressing a wide range of issues that have a negative impact on an organization:

Cost Reduction

Being able to improve safety and quality reduces claims and waste, while staying fully compliant to regulations lowers the risk of fines and their legal ramifications.

Issues Addressed by EHS Management Solutions:

- Cost Reduction
- Deeper Insights
- Automation
- Better Coordination
- Promoting a Safety Culture
- Peace of Mind



Deeper Insights

Modern EHS systems make it easy for all issues and incidents to be reported quickly and comprehensively so trends can be spotted and proactively addressed. **You can configure your system to focus on the metrics that are most important to your organization, while also having access to details you may not have previously considered.** And, being cloud based, it allows you to quickly disseminate information to the people who need it.

Automation

For years, EHS had to be managed manually. Every incident required inspection, assessment, consultation of organization policies and regulatory materials, and documentation of all the information by hand. These paper records then had to be cataloged and stored in the hope that they could later be found again. **EHS software enables all this information to be easily documented and retrieved from one single location, immediately made available to all relevant parties, and easily accessible now and in the future.** What's more, the system allows for convenient access to all internal regulatory policies, programs, assessments, and procedures.

Better Coordination

An EHS software platform inherently helps to provide a more holistic view of your entire EHS system, without the obstruction caused by operational, data, and technology silos. This lets you tailor reports relevant to different stakeholders and ensure that appropriate actions are taken by quickly getting the right information to the right people.



You can configure your system to focus on the metrics that are most important to your organization, while also having access to details you may not have previously considered.

Promoting a Safety Culture

A good EHS system leads to increased employee engagement. An easy-to-use mobile interface offers real-time, two-way communications. Employees can report their concerns as soon as they occur and they can also receive relevant information from notifications. Previously, there was the chance that an incident or near miss would go unreported—perhaps because the employee had to actively find a way to report it or because they couldn't be bothered by filling out physical forms. **By giving easy access to all employees, your organization encourages everyone to be part of the solution and reduces the chance they'll see safety as someone else's responsibility.**

Peace of Mind

Reporting to regulators and conducting audits costs both time and money, not to mention the risk of missing something or filing information incorrectly. Integrated **EHS software provides organizations with a seamless paper trail** that can be accessed from anywhere, at any time, to make obtaining data for audits or regulators simple and fast.

Reasons to Believe:

For every \$1 invested, safety returns \$4 to \$6.

(Source: OSHA)

The cost of US job injuries and illnesses is estimated **at \$174 billion to \$348 billion a year.**

(Source: AFL-CIO)

Managers waste **20 hours a week** on administrative tasks.

(Source: West Monroe)

Over half of companies are planning for widespread usage of EHS software.

(Source: Verdantix)

What Are the Key Features You Should Look For?

Every organization is different and your EHS system should answer your needs precisely.

That's why it's important to choose software that can be tailored to the way your organization operates. When a platform adapts to your way of doing things, it's much more likely to be embraced quickly and help drive culture change.

The following are some key features you should expect your new EHS system to provide:

Program Management

It should offer you far greater visibility than before with up-to-the-minute data at your fingertips. It should also reveal existing issues and gaps in your EHS safety and compliance processes, allowing you to fix them before they become serious. This will improve the quality of your day-to-day decision-making and also empower your employees with more valuable information.

Look for:

- Checklists
- Behavior-based observations
- Safety meeting frameworks



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Incident Management

While an EHS system has many capabilities, one of its primary functions is to [reduce the frequency and severity of incidents](#). This is more likely if responding to and managing them is quick and easy—so, make sure the software you choose lets you capture, track, investigate, and report on every kind of incident and near miss—including injuries and illnesses, spills, property damage, and vehicle issues. **Ideally, it'll also automatically link incidents and injury management.**

Look for:

- Event capture and management
- Incident analysis
- Near miss workflows
- Claims and absences management



Risk Management

Your EHS solution should make it easy for every employee to access, enter and report on hazards, observations, and behaviors. The use of photos, voice or video to help identify risk areas simplifies the process and makes reporting more comprehensive.

The system should instantly notify relevant stakeholders for follow-up and action, [to mitigate risk](#).

Management of hazardous chemicals, related safety data sheets, and the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS) should also be part of the solution.

Look for:

- Hazard management
- User-friendly mobile reporting

Make sure the software you choose lets you capture, track, investigate, and report on every kind of incident and near miss—**including injuries and illnesses, spills, property damage, and vehicle issues.**

Business Intelligence and Analytics

A huge benefit of establishing an integrated EHS software solution is to have high-quality reporting of all activities, behaviors, risks, and mitigations. This allows you to better [analyze organizational risk](#), increase productivity and identify leading indicators before they escalate. **When the right people get trustworthy data, they can take evidence-based decisions that make real improvements.**

Look for:

- Intuitive dashboards
- Analysis tools
- Predictive analytics and forecasting

Training

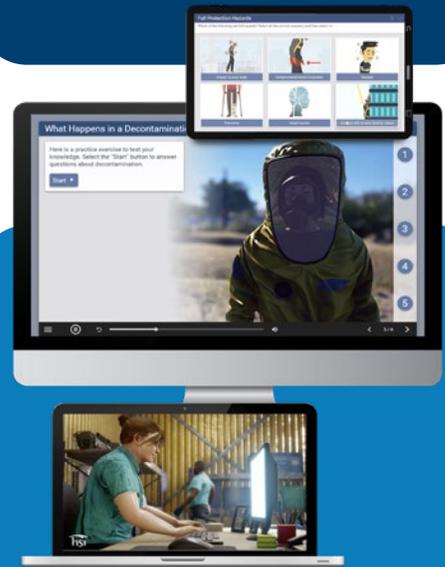
Training is an integral part of creating a safer workplace. Your EHS system supplier should be able to deliver multiple programs of comprehensive, [high-quality training](#), such as compliance training, skills training, career-path training, and more — **that engage employees and ensure they gain the knowledge they need**. Not just post how-to videos on YouTube. It should include the ability to manage records, certifications, licenses, skills-assessments, surveys, course content, and more.

Look for:

- Relevant and compelling training content
- Training tracking for compliance
- Tracking of certifications and standards



When the right people get trustworthy data, **they can take evidence-based decisions that make real improvements.**



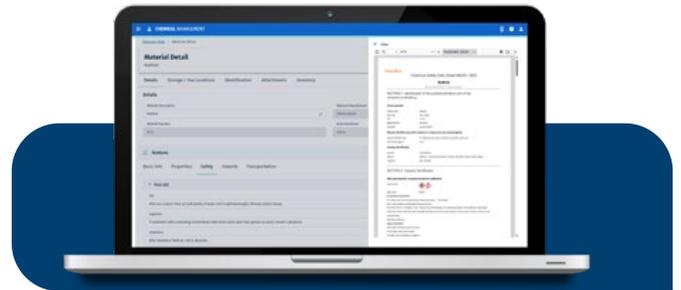
Your EHS system supplier should be able to deliver multiple programs **that engage employees and ensure they gain the knowledge they need.**

Document Management

The EHS solution you choose needs to be integrated, if it's able to properly hold and manage a knowledge base that includes your policies and procedures and more. At the same time, you should be able to configure it, so it only allows access to materials for the relevant employees. **Ideally, it should be able to trace employee acknowledgments that they've viewed specific documents or videos.**

Look for:

- Easy-to-use knowledge base
- [Document management](#)

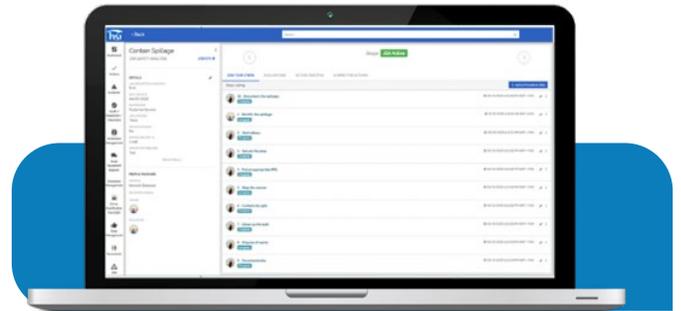


Audits and Inspections

This is where an EHS software system really comes into its own. It streamlines your [audit program](#) and documentation by collecting all relevant data and providing the tools and processes to make reporting far more efficient.

Look for:

- Audit tools
- Checklists and protocols
- Comprehensive reporting



Chemical/SDS Management

Look for an [end-to-end chemical](#) and Safety Data Sheet (SDS) Management capabilities integrated with the EHS System. This allows you to extend beyond simply complying with OSHA standards to reduce or eliminate chemical hazards and keep workers safe.

Look for:

- Cloud-based, automatically updated
- On-site inventory mobile app to maintain compliance
- Authoring services to help in-house EHS teams

Selecting your EHS System

A six step guide to choosing the right solution.

1

Begin by creating a team within your organization to make the decision. Find stakeholders at various levels who can bring their knowledge of what the EHS software needs to achieve for different areas of the organization.

2

Agree on a wishlist. What attributes of the system are essential? What additional elements would be good to have? What are your specific needs when taking into account your current processes, data, and other unique aspects of your organization?

3

Explore your options. There are many EHS software solutions out there, so take a good look at the variety on offer. Compare them against your wishlist. There'll probably be many that you can immediately discount.

4

Make a shortlist. Remember to check user reviews as well as comparing features and capabilities.

5

Contact each vendor on your shortlist and discuss your needs with them. Find out as much as you can about their platform, systems, and their after sales service. Many suppliers are happy to provide a free demonstration of their product.

6

Make your choice. Review your shortlist, select the ideal platform and partner with your chosen vendor to start implementing.

Additional Considerations

Accessibility

What devices does the software run on? Does it offer access through mobile phones? Can it be used offline in remote locations and then upload data later? Is the interface easy to use and suitable for people of all levels of technical literacy?

Security

Does the platform offer a fully secure environment with built-in encryption and access controls, so it can be used for sensitive data, such as payroll, performance management, and HR?

Configuration

Can the platform be easily adapted and customized for your needs? Does it offer configurable modules that suit your requirements without the need for additional coding? Can it be designed to match your brand's look and feel? Does it offer powerful administration capabilities?



Training

Does the vendor offer a strong support framework that covers implementation, migration, deployment, and customer success?

Scalability

Does the platform have the ability to expand as your needs grow? Will it be automatically upgraded as technology advances? Can it expand without the need for additional coding by the vendor?

Easy integration

Does the software integrate easily with your existing human resources and management information systems? Does it support single sign-on?

Reputation

Take time to investigate the platform provider to discover which organizations have worked with them. What do their current clients say about them? Do they have a reputation for innovation and a clear product roadmap?



Reduced incident rate from 4.6 to below 1.0

“When I first took over, the company was using spreadsheets, phone trees, and some email to track safety... There was very little sharing between regions so a preventable injury in one location may not get communicated to the other locations, and the same mistakes would continue to happen.”

- **Jon Liesmaki**, *Director of Environmental, Health and Safety (EHS) at Harmon, Inc.*





How to Ensure a Successful Roll-out

Choosing the right EHS software system isn't the end of the process. Now you have to ensure that it's successfully adopted by your employees and achieves the highest return on investment. That means working with the software provider to integrate the platform into your systems and dealing with any issues that may occur as it's deployed.



A key to successful implementation is training your people to use the system properly. The vendor's ability to help you deploy the software successfully should have been one of the key reasons you chose their product, so use their expertise to make sure you obtain full value from its implementation.

A key to successful implementation is **training your people to use the system properly.**

If the EHS system you choose is genuinely integrated, it has the potential to significantly reduce risk and increase productivity. It'll empower your employees to not only respond to incidents quickly, comprehensively, and efficiently, but it also reduces the likelihood of accidents occurring in the first place.



Choosing the right EHS software system for your organization is an important decision. It's certainly going to be a significant investment. **But if you select a high-quality solution from a reliable vendor, it'll pay for itself many times over.**

HSI is an all-in-one EHS, Compliance, Risk, and Training Platform.

It allows you to choose from over 30 modules to tailor a solution to your needs. The HSI Platform brings together all your EHS management needs—from the field to the boardroom—making it simple and fast to access, input, and report data in real-time.

Lives on the Cloud. Powered by People.

Easily accessible and intuitive to increase workforce utilization

30+ Modules. Limitless Customizations.

A truly configurable solution to grow with your organization

Real-time Reporting. Smarter Decisions.

Full visibility to enable swift, informed decision-making

The power of one. It's time to bring everything together.

About HSI



HSI is your single-source partner for EHS, Compliance, and Professional Development solutions. HSI provides integrated e-learning content, training solutions, and cloud-based software designed to enable your business to improve safety, operations, and employee development. Across all industries, HSI helps safety managers, and technical employees, human resources, first responders, and operational leaders train and develop their workforce, keep workers safe, and meet regulatory and operational compliance requirements. HSI's focus is on training, software, and services for safety and compliance, workforce development, industrial skills, and emergency care. HSI is a unique partner that offers a suite of cloud-based software solutions including learning management, safety management, chemical SDS management, and more, integrated with content and training so businesses can not only monitor and manage multiple workflows in one system, but train employees via one partner.

For more information, visit [hsi.com](https://www.hsi.com)