SAFETY CLOUD

Health & Safety Management
Software in the Cloud

SOUTHALLS

DEFINING SAFETY EXCELLENCE.

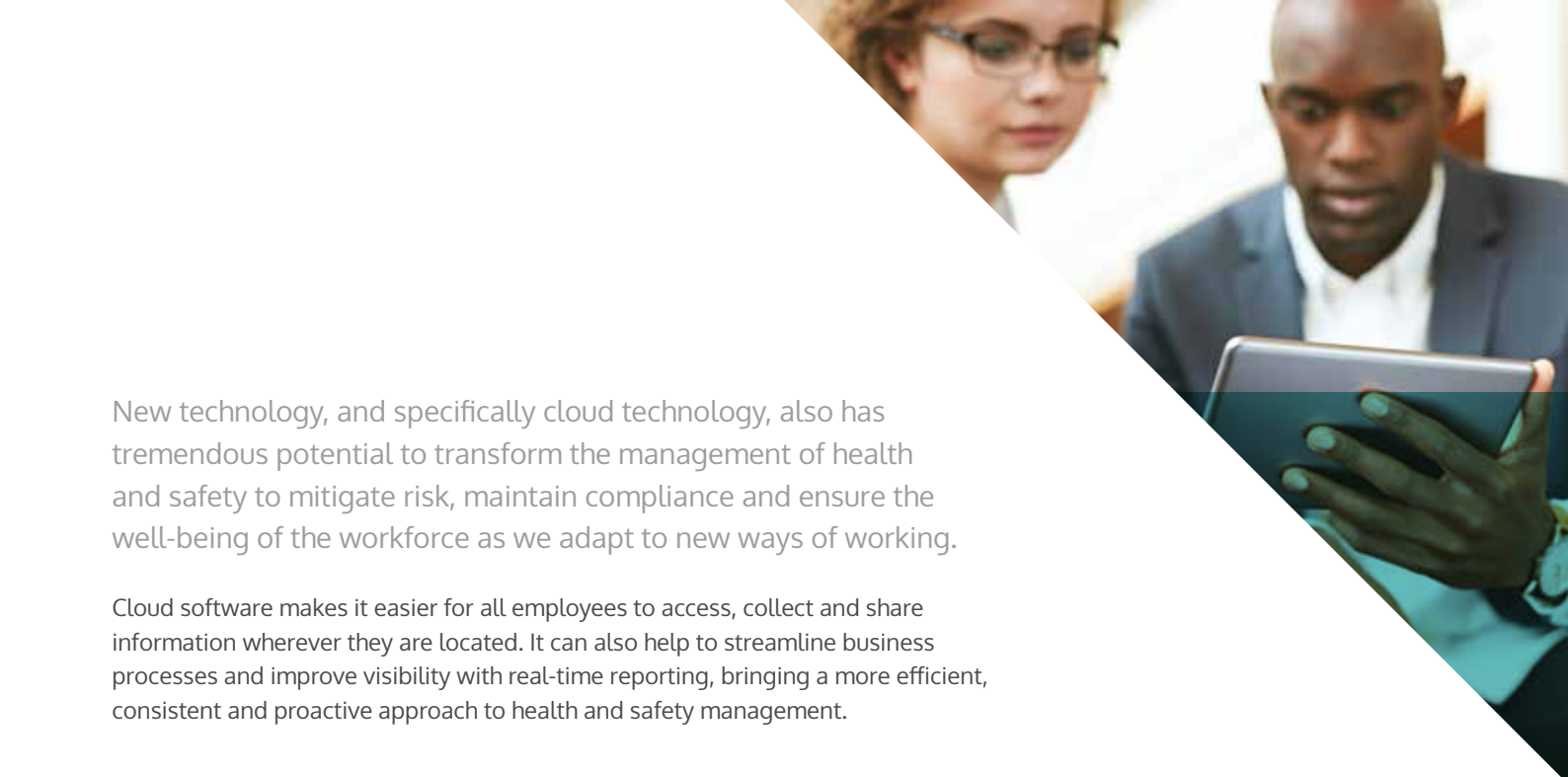# HEALTH & SAFETY MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE IN THE CLOUD

Technology is transforming how work is carried out in every business. This presents a challenge for health and safety professionals as new working practices can bring additional risks to the workplace. As the pace of change is so rapid, it's more important than ever to have robust documentation, processes and reporting in place to manage health and safety.

The good news for health and safety professionals is that cutting-edge technology is already being used to improve safety across a range of sectors, and delivering significant benefits. Here are just a few examples of how technology is enhancing health and safety today:

- During the Crossrail construction, Laing O'Rourke reduced risk by using Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, commonly known as drones, to carry out traditionally hazardous visual inspections in tunnel shafts.

- Fire engineers used virtual reality goggles to explore 3D plans for Stockholm's waterfront Slussen district. Their feedback on emergency access routes, clearance space in stairways and ceiling heights informed the final design to ensure the safety of visitors.

- Telematics in fleet vehicles has been used by Wates to make changes to driver behaviour and working practices that have reduced accidents by 11%.

"To be prepared, it would be sensible for health and safety managers to think about this fourth industrial revolution...The change of ICT related activities is expanding so quickly now that these different ways of working could be upon us in a very short space of time."

Stephen Kinghorn-Perry, Foresight Centre, HSE's Health and Safety Laboratory (Source)

New technology, and specifically cloud technology, also has tremendous potential to transform the management of health and safety to mitigate risk, maintain compliance and ensure the well-being of the workforce as we adapt to new ways of working.

Cloud software makes it easier for all employees to access, collect and share information wherever they are located. It can also help to streamline business processes and improve visibility with real-time reporting, bringing a more efficient, consistent and proactive approach to health and safety management.

WHY THE TRADITIONAL APPROACH TO HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT IS HOLDING BUSINESSES BACK

As well as the introduction of new technologies into the workplace, there are other significant drivers for businesses to take a new approach to health and safety management:

1. Unsustainable amounts of paperwork

The sheer amount of data being produced is increasing at a phenomenal rate. 90% of the world's data was created in the last two years and the trend is set to continue. This will impact health and safety which has largely relied on paper documentation and processes. Paper-based processes do not scale easily so big increases in data and documentation could result in inaccuracies, errors and data losses.

Even if documentation is stored digitally in spreadsheets, it's difficult and time-consuming to maintain growing numbers of files and manage version control. This could lead to a lack of continuity in addressing safety concerns and opportunities for corrective or preventative actions could be missed.

2. Complex and evolving regulatory environment

Trying to manage multiple regulations at the same time can lead to inefficiency and inconsistency between policies and procedures, particularly if you operate multiple sites. Health and safety regulations are updated so regularly that you need to able to adapt quickly as new legislation comes into force. It isn't yet clear what impact Brexit will have on the UK's health and safety landscape, however, the HSE business plan for 2017/2018 focuses on the need to ensure the UK's regulatory framework remains effective during our exit from the EU.

3. Increased business risk

Health and safety management is now an integral part of overall business risk management. Risks cannot be considered in isolation, their relationship and dependencies on other parts of the organisation have to be taken into account. This is because poor health and safety management not only puts employees at risk, it can ultimately jeopardise the success of the business.

Safety breaches impact reputation, business continuity and financial stability. As well as compensation and other financial penalties, businesses and their senior managers are increasingly facing criminal prosecution for failing to comply with health and safety legislation. Since the latest sentencing guidelines came into force in February 2016, the number of Directors being prosecuted by the HSE for health and safety offences has trebled in just one year.

"We unfortunately have a history of a reactive approach which often leads to failure, or success but late success. It's time to move on to a proactive approach."

Emmanuelle Brun, European Agency for Safety and Health at Work's (EU-OSHA) European Risk Observatory (Source)

HOW CAN CLOUD SOFTWARE MODERNISE YOUR HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT?

Cloud-based software brings health and safety management into the digital era. This web-based technology gives you the tools you need to reduce risk, manage compliance across your business and encourage everyone to get involved in health and safety.

Here are ten ways that using cloud-based health and management software could help your business:

1. Access information from anywhere, on any device

Cloud-based safety management software can be accessed from anywhere using a web browser, and on a range of devices including tablets and smartphones. So everyone can have immediate access to health and safety information wherever they are working. Mobile apps allow remote workers and staff visiting different sites to conduct audits, report accidents or carry out equipment checks. Even if they don't have an internet connection at that time, the data will still be captured and then uploaded when they are back online. They can even take photos on their smartphones that can be stored in the system.

2. Achieve consistency across the business

Health and safety management software helps everyone to take the same approach, every time, by ensuring the same processes are used to collect information in the same way. This will give you a consistent set of data across departments, sites and countries and result in fewer errors and gaps in compliance.

3. Improve data security

Storing your data in the cloud means that it will be secure and protected. Even if something happens at one of your sites which results in key documentation being lost or damaged, you will still be able to access all the relevant health and safety information stored in the cloud and maintain business continuity. Industry-leading encryption and advanced security measures keep your data private and safe from the risk of data loss or breaches.

4. Improve efficiency

With mobile apps and automated alerts, you can streamline processes and reduce laborious paperwork. Cloud management systems make it quicker and easier to carry out routine health and safety checks on the spot and submit the data immediately. As information is captured instantly, you avoid the risk of errors creeping into audits from handwritten notes being inputted later, or even valuable data being completely lost if paperwork is mislaid.

Health and safety management systems can also be used to deliver training more efficiently. Instead of taking staff away from their work for extended periods of time, relevant training modules can be accessed by staff on their PC, tablet or smartphone when it's convenient for them.

5. Maintain compliance

Get a single, complete view of health and safety compliance across the organisation. Trying to manage complex spreadsheets and documents in multiple places, and ensure that they are being completed and maintained accurately, is resource-intensive. A good safety management system will cover the full spectrum from accident reporting, audits, COSHH and work equipment checks, to risk and subcontractor assessments, permits to work, enforcement officer visits and workplace transport management.

As all information is recorded, managed and presented in the same way, you'll get an overall picture of compliance. This makes it easier to identify where changes need to be made when regulations are updated, or new regulations come into force. For example, software that helps you to coordinate and monitor safety equipment will help considerably when the new EU PPE Regulation (2106/425) comes into force in April 2018.

6. Keep up to date

Timely alerts and reminders sent by email or to phones will prompt action well ahead of deadlines so that everyone can keep on top of any changes that are due. At a glance, you can see what reviews and deadlines are coming up allowing you to plan ahead and ensure due diligence is followed. Make sure that facilities maintenance, audits, policies and risk assessments are up to date and that refresher training is delivered on schedule. This demonstrates an ongoing commitment to responsible health and safety management across the business, which can be critical in the event of a potential prosecution or enforcement action.

7. Develop a health and safety culture

Cloud-based health and management software encourages everyone to get involved and feel responsible for health and safety. By making it easy and intuitive to access the information they need, when they need it, employees are more likely to integrate good health and safety practice into their day-to-day working life. The ability to report incidents anonymously supports engagement and reassures employees that their concerns are taken seriously. Managers are encouraged to take accountability with regular updates, reminders and real-time dashboards and reports that give them an instant overview of what is going on across the business.

8. Monitor, track and improve performance

Dashboards allow you to proactively monitor, track and analyse data to spot trends or identify areas of concerns before they become serious issues. For example, real-time metrics on near misses and accidents can help you decide where to focus your financial investment, prevention activities and training plans, or how to support continuous improvement in specific areas. This level of visibility enables you to respond to incidents faster and take appropriate action.
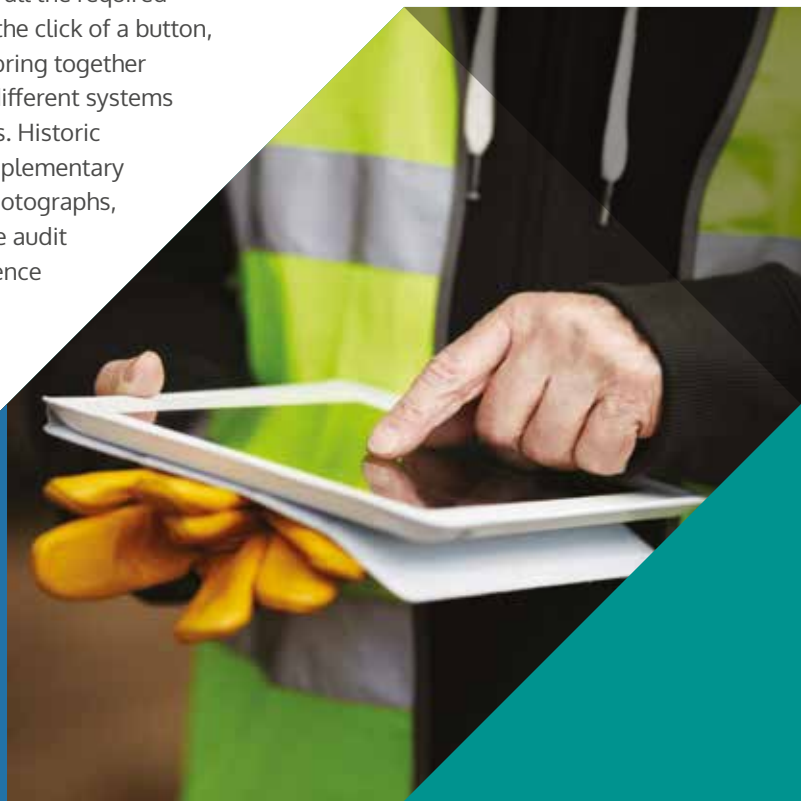
9. Report in real-time and be audit-ready

With all the information you need in one place, you can run detailed reports quickly and easily. With a range of reports available to share with key stakeholders, you'll be in a better position to make informed decisions based on real-time data and provide evidence for business cases and improvements.

Reporting features are especially useful if an enforcement officer visits as you can provide all the required documentation at the click of a button, without having to bring together information from different systems in different formats. Historic data, including supplementary information like photographs, provides a valuable audit trail or useful evidence to support a case in the event of a civil claim.

10. Invest in cost-effective and flexible technology

Unlike traditional IT systems, cloud-based software is very scalable and affordable. Your software provider manages all the hosting and maintenance of the underlying infrastructure so you can focus on getting the most out of the technology for your business. This means there are no large upfront hardware or licensing costs. Instead, you pay a subscription based on the number of users and you'll always have access to the latest version of the software. As your business grows, your cloud software can grow with you, just add more users as and when you need.

Cloud-based management software frees up businesses to adopt a modern approach to health and safety. Its built-in support for mobile technology makes it ideal for connecting and engaging today's workforce. It brings together all your health and safety documentation in one place and helps you manage it in a way that supports day-to-day operations and adds value to your business.

SEE HOW SAFETY CLOUD CAN FREE YOUR BUSINESS FROM HEALTH AND SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

Find out more about how to take a new approach to health and safety management with Safety Cloud. Book a consultation with Southalls, the UK's market leader in health and safety support and software, and get a free demonstration.

Safety Cloud is an easy-to-use, secure, web-based system, providing a modern, comprehensive approach to health and safety management. Designed by ex-health and safety inspectors, Safety Cloud has been chosen by hundreds of businesses across the UK and currently has over 50,000 users.

Request a free consultation and demo now by visiting our website **www.southalls.com**

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