

BUYER'S GUIDE

**Your Guide to Selecting Health and Safety
Software That Fits**

Choose the right H&S solution to engage your team
and build a safer workplace!



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SAFETY 101: START HERE



In today's fast-paced world, safety leaders have their work cut out for them.

There's a lot of responsibility to juggle all at once: reducing risks, problem-solving on the fly, and making sure your people get back home from work safely each day.

Amidst these challenges, it's easy for the role of safety to be reduced, limited to chasing people to fill out the right forms, and trying to minimise the hazards.

We, however, believe safety is more than that, a world full of untapped potential.

With the right strategy in place, safety has the power to create nurturing environments, where people can thrive and succeed.

As you begin your journey towards transforming your safety culture, it's crucial to understand the role that investing in the right safety technology can play,

to ensure the success of your safety initiatives.

Choosing the right solution is a critical decision that has the power to influence the entire success of your organisation.

Without a doubt, it's a big investment. So, what should you watch for during your decision-making journey?

Read on, and we'll shed some light on the key factors that influence the quality and success of a health and safety software implementation, and what to look for to ensure you keep your teams engaged in the long-term, so you can reap the benefits of a safer workforce, and the healthiest of environments.





IDENTIFYING THE SCOPE OF THE CHALLENGE

How engaged is your team, really?

It's no secret that one of the biggest challenges that health and safety managers report is a poor safety culture.

We throw this phrase around a lot, but what does it actually mean?

A poor safety culture is earmarked by a lack of involvement from frontline workers, upper management — and everyone in between. Without clear expectations and tools that work, it's easy for team members to become disengaged. At safety briefings and not pitch in. If team members don't buy into their health and safety, you have an engagement problem.

Engagement equals buy-in. Employees who are engaged with their safety recognise health and safety as a fundamental cornerstone of what they do every day.

In other words? They're actively reporting incidents and near-misses, they don't drag their feet in safety briefings, and they recognise safety as a collective responsibility - willingly taking ownership of what's happening onsite, in-store, or out on the road.



SIX COMMON ‘RED FLAGS’

THAT MAY INDICATE DISENGAGEMENT WITH HEALTH AND SAFETY



Resistance to safety procedures

Do you have a handful of “old hands”? Team members who’ve always done things one way and refuse to take on board a new process?

Or perhaps you notice a reluctance to undergo critical safety measures and checks across your workforce. Getting people to proactively buy-in with their safety feels like you’re pulling teeth. This can manifest as a significant barrier to creating a proactive safety culture.

Resistance can stem from many different sources, and has enormous detrimental effects on both individual, and collective, wellbeing and safety. Does your team perceive safety as an inconvenience?



Do other business leaders see themselves outside the safety story?

Observe how the rest of your leadership reacts and approaches safety. Do they speak about health and safety as though it’s an inconvenience to operations — let’s say, a box-tick exercise — and treat the safety managerial team as the “safety police”, rather than an integral part of the business?



What’s the state of your reporting data?

Getting information from your team is a critical part of health and safety, and how you know what’s happening at any given time in your organisation.

If you find you don’t have enough reporting data to make informed decisions — suspiciously low numbers — then you may have an unengaged workforce, who simply don’t see the value of reporting, both near-misses and incidents (or you’re simply making it too hard for them).

On the other hand, you may have enough data coming through your system, but you can’t do much with it. An intuitive system makes all the difference when it comes to engagement. When your team finds it easy to report, they’re more likely to participate and provide valuable data that can drive improvements. Good quality data that includes the right information about an incident is the result of an engaged workforce.



How do your people communicate with each other?

Do you find communication gaps, where critical safety information doesn't make its way to the right people on time? From new regulations, to emergency response procedures, these gaps are often symbolic of an unengaged workforce, with no one stepping up to take ownership of their safety.



What happens to your team when a mistake is made?

It's important to foster a culture where people feel supported enough to take full accountability in the event of an incident or mistake occurring. It can be a tough conversation to have, but knowing exactly where your system went wrong, or what happened to cause an incident or near-miss, is the key to ensuring it doesn't happen again.

If you find your workforce unable to own up to a safety lapse, perhaps you're nurturing a blame and shame culture, where your people avoid discussing mistakes for the fear of being publicly shamed for making them.



Are your turnover rates elevated?

If you're experiencing higher-than-usual levels of turnover, it's another tell-tale sign that your workforce is taking issue with health and safety; including psychosocial safety.

Consider how you currently tackle psychosocial risks, as well as physical risks. If there's a chance that your workforce lacks adequate support for their psychosocial needs, your peoples' motivation might be taking a hit.

When people start to feel that their own wellbeing isn't being taken seriously enough, they'll look elsewhere, for stronger safety cultures, and more supportive environments.

In your quest for the right health and safety software, remember that engaging your team and taking care of all aspects of their health, is not just a luxury but a necessity. The software you choose should align with your goal of cultivating a workplace where safety is not only a priority but an intrinsic part of your organisational DNA.

WHAT DOES THE RIGHT SOFTWARE SOLUTION LOOK LIKE?

Software certainly is an umbrella term that encompasses many areas. The difference in quality and capabilities of different safety software systems vary greatly; and it's important to know what to look out for.

Health and safety management software offers organisations one centralised platform to help manage all facets of their process and systems. Not only can you ensure you're increasing efficiency with faster reporting, and data collection, but you also can make health and safety a better experience for all your workers.

A high-quality software system not only helps you see your organisation's safety status in real-time, but is ultimately a cost-saving investment. In the long run, the act of streamlining safety processes, increasing compliance, and reducing the number of incidents impacting your people makes way for the more value-add activities associated with proactive safety cultures.



Look for a solution that has a strong understanding of best practice in your industry.



You can't be everything, for everyone. Look for a solution that knows what you're up against in your industry specifically, and specialises in helping organisations (like yours) engage their staff.

Risk levels, types of hazards, and company scope all vary greatly between different industries, and it's important that your software vendor understands this. Be wary of vendors who claim to have the capacity to service all industries. If they're trying to service everyone, you'll notice the gaping holes in their solution.



Look for a solution that's got your back, and knows the industry inside out.

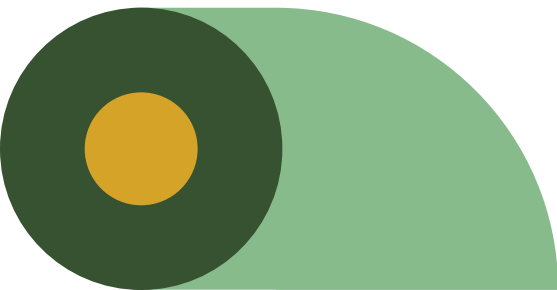
CHECKLIST

What are your workplace's specific health and safety needs?

Does the vendor have a track record of working with organisations like yours?

Does the vendor offer strong standard templates that suit your needs?

Is there a comprehensive range of modules that you can pick and choose from?



COMMON BUSINESS HURDLES TO OVERCOME ON A HEALTH AND SAFETY SOFTWARE PURCHASING JOURNEY:

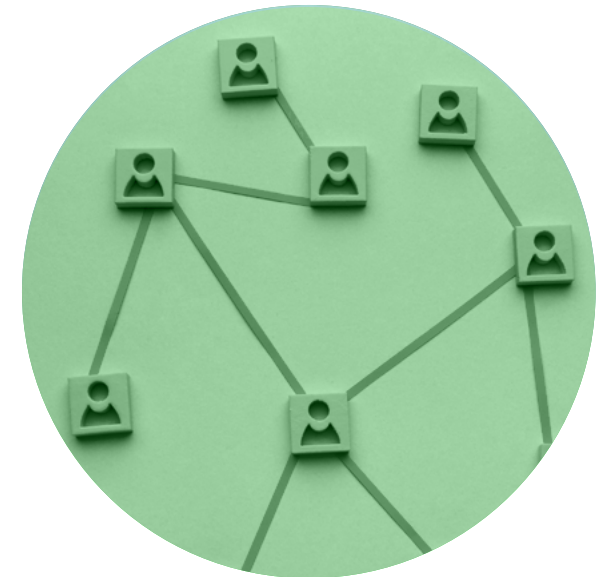
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Lack of alignment

Do you know your objective? No matter where you are on your journey towards a software solution, it's important to consider your objectives and the problems you're looking to solve.

There tends to be a spectrum of what organisations are looking to achieve when it comes to health and safety technology. On one end of the scale is the objective of basic compliance, where businesses are just aiming to tick the boxes of industry standards, such as ISO 45001, or AS/NZ 4801. At the other end are organisations embedding a positive, engaging safety culture at all levels.

Both ends of the spectrum are valid objectives, and where a business falls often depends on which stage of growth the organisation is in, as well as their industry. However, these wildly varying objectives require different software attributes that not all solutions can meet. This is, therefore, a key upfront consideration that all parties should be aligned on.



CHECKLIST

Check that your decision-makers are all aligned on what you need from a safety software before the journey begins.

Create an agreed wishlist. What elements do you need your system to have? What parts might just be a nice bonus? Can you rank your wishlist items in order of importance, to help set them apart?

Creating a system for the Health and Safety Manager



We know that safety managers have the best of intentions — but can sometimes get sidetracked. A common hurdle that we see is when a safety manager scopes, plans, and eventually helps create a system designed to meet all of their needs, but not necessarily those of the end user.

The number one critical success factor for any software project — including safety software — is end users' acceptance.

If you want not only acceptance but proactive usage, with an engaged frontline team, you need to find a solution that focuses on human-centred design.

Key elements such as a modern, clean — and most importantly, simple — interface make a system usable for everyone. You need a system that ensures the user experience is aligned specifically to each individual person's role, and only asks them for the important, key information to avoid clutter.

CHECKLIST

Is this software designed for all workers to use - in diverse ways?

Is the UX simple and easy to follow?

Is the pricing model user or module based? Is there a restriction on the number of users?

Can you let your teams trial the software before purchasing? This is a proven way to gauge usability, as well as build buy-in with key stakeholders.

3

Lack of mobility

It's no secret that we live in a mobile-first society. In fact, finding ways to disconnect from our phones is the real challenge in today's world.

Mobile phones have transformed how and where we communicate. While scrolling TikTok during work hours is typically frowned upon, we've come to expect mobile capabilities in almost everything we do.

Why should safety be any different? While we might be looking for ways to spend less time on our screens, when it comes to health and safety, phones are incredibly useful. Mobile functionality is a cornerstone of any quality safety software that's firmly entrenched in our modern world.

There are huge advantages to reporting hazards, near-misses, or incidents from a mobile phone. People can capture valuable data, tag the exact geolocation, take photos or videos, and upload them right there and then from wherever they are, and continue to get on with their job.

If people have to upload details about an incident or near-miss at the end of the day, when they get home from work, they might miss important information or forget specific details.

Even better, mobile capabilities can provide crucial offline reporting for workers in remote areas, ensuring they can report incidents if and when they occur.

CHECKLIST

Does your proposed health and safety software vendor offer a native mobile solution?

Is the mobile solution a single comprehensive app?

Does the offered mobile solution have advanced offline capabilities, making it easy to report incidents or complete entire workflows without a connection?

Does your vendor invest in its mobile solution with regular enhancements and updates?





Organisations do not exist in a vacuum. Every organisation has at least some external stakeholders — be them suppliers, contractors, or specialist services. Whenever these external parties are interacting with your organisation, you have a duty of care to ensure their safety, as well as the safety of all visitors and customers.

It's crucial that all your visitor types are catered for by your health and safety tool. Aim to find a software that allows contractor organisations to manage their own workforces, including updating their people, induction training, and licence information.

Furthermore, consider software with visitor management capabilities. As a health and safety manager, you'll want to know who's onsite at all times. With visitors, not only is their safety important, but so is their experience at your workplace. If you have a software solution that intentionally caters towards your visitors, you'll ensure they have a seamless experience. There's no worse first impression than a queue at reception.

Finally, look for a tool that will help you unlock participation in safety from the general public, so that anyone has the ability to report unsafe activities, not just registered users. These functionalities are incredibly useful and give you more eyes on the ground.

CHECKLIST

Does the software have integrated visitor management with workflows for different visitor types?

Are there automatic contractor requirements checks, so contractors can get straight to work, without compromising on safety?

Do they offer public forms that allow customers and passersby to report unsafe activity?

Do users have the ability to send and receive information in your system via email, from and to external parties?

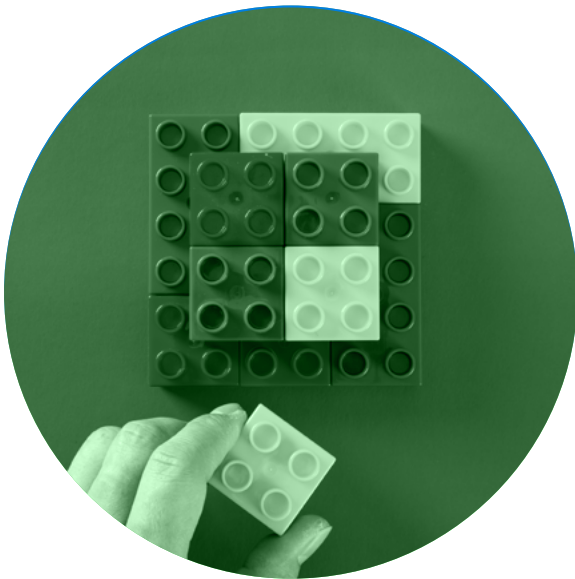
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Integration

Thoroughly research what degree of integration is embedded in different vendors' solutions. Some will offer multiple solutions where you'll find you need multiple logins to use different systems, under the guise of an "All-In-One" offering.

Look for vendors that have a single login to a fully integrated system, so that accessing your health and safety data isn't like navigating a labyrinth without a map.

Be sure to do your due diligence and get all the information you need so you can make an informed decision about your safety software.



CHECKLIST

Do you only need one login to access all your health and safety data?

Do you have to leave the app or website to access another component of the system?

Selecting a vendor based on features alone



When it comes to software selection, it's easy to get excited about features, and features alone. While the software you choose is, of course, crucial to the success of your health and safety programme, partnering with a vendor that focuses on a long-term relationship is just as important.

Organisations need to partner with a software company that not only understands best-practice hazard and risk management, but also assists with establishing a company-wide safety culture at each level. Your software partner needs to have the capability and capacity to onboard your organisation effectively, providing ongoing service and support, whilst bravely pushing the safety technology frontier further.

Systems that allow you to build functionalities yourself with no code might sound appealing, but they can be a red flag. If the person within your organisation builds a significant part of your system, without the vendor's help, you risk losing that knowledge if they leave. Worse yet, if they build the system themselves, they'll have no guidance around best practice from the vendor, risking wasted time and resources. Instead, look for a vendor who knows what best practice looks like, and is available to help you get there.

CHECKLIST

Does the vendor offer ongoing support throughout your entire journey with them, not just the implementation?

Does the vendor offer a dedicated Project Manager and Customer Services Manager?

Are there community user groups available for you to join with your vendor?

FINAL CHECKLIST

Scoping the offerings:

What modules are available for your organisation?

What are your workplace's specific health and safety needs?

Does the vendor have a track record of working with organisations like yours?

Does the vendor offer strong standardised templates that suit your needs?

Is there a comprehensive range of modules that you can pick and choose from?

Setting your objectives:

Check that your decision-makers are all aligned on what you need from a safety software before the journey begins.

Create an agreed wishlist. What elements do you need your system to have? What parts might just be a nice bonus? Can you rank your wishlist items in order of importance, to help set them apart?

Understanding the software offering:

Is this software designed for all workers to use - in diverse ways?

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Can you let your teams trial the software before purchasing? This is a proven way to gauge usability, as well as build buy-in with key stakeholders.

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Does the software have integrated visitor management with standardised workflows for different visitor types?

Are there automatic contractor requirements checks, so contractors can get straight to work, without compromising on safety?

Do they offer public forms that allow customers and passersby to report unsafe activity?

Do users have the ability to send and receive information in your system via email, from and to external parties?

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Examining the support offered:

Does the vendor offer ongoing support throughout your entire journey with them, not just the implementation?

Does the vendor offer a dedicated Project Manager and Customer Services Manager?

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At the end of the day, it's all about people.

Your people are your most important asset; keep them safe, healthy, and happy, and you'll all do marvellous things together.

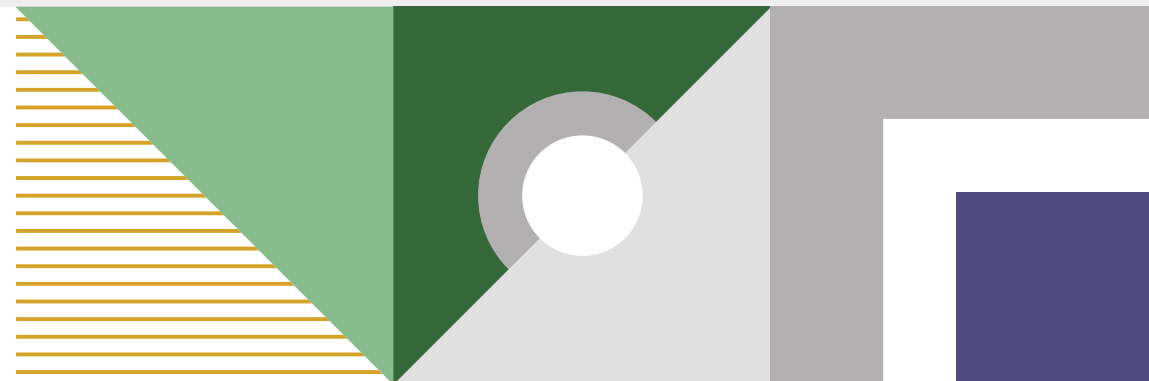
A system is only as good as its users. The single most valuable consideration in your software selection journey is choosing a platform that truly engages your people and keeps them at the centre.

From customer support that lasts far beyond the signing of the dotted line, integrating modules that balance best practice with bespoke needs, right down to software designed with the end user in mind, keep the focus on what's most important.



After all, safety is about people.

If your people enjoy what they do, and work with systems, processes, and software that adds joy to their everyday lives, they'll soar.



THANK YOU

FOR DOWNLOADING ECOPORTAL'S HEALTH AND SAFETY BUYER'S GUIDE

We're delighted that you've downloaded our comprehensive guide to improving workplace health and safety. At EcoPortal, we're dedicated to providing you with the insights, tools, and solutions you need to create a safer and more compliant work environment.

We trust the guide will help you make informed decisions and support your organisation in enhancing health and safety practices. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please don't hesitate to get in touch with our team. We're here to support you every step of the way.

Stay engaged with safety!

The  **ecoPortal Team**