



ERM

Modernize
your legacy
EHS
management
systems

Sustainability is our business

Introduction

If your EHS management systems feel like they're holding you back, you're not alone. Across industries, leaders are finding that the tools they rely on are no longer keeping up with the pace of business. Aging or homegrown tools that once worked, often anchored in spreadsheets and patchwork solutions, now make it harder to see risk clearly, coordinate across sites, and respond quickly when regulations or operating conditions change.

Moreover, these demands are moving at a speed that most legacy systems were never designed to handle. Data flows 24/7, regulators are moving faster, and stakeholder expectations continue to rise.

The bar for what "good" looks like has fundamentally changed. Information needs to move seamlessly across functions and AI-enabled tools are making quick, smarter decision-making the expectation. In this context, modernization isn't just about replacing one system with another. It's about building a fit-for-purpose ecosystem - one that can evolve over time, connect across the wider enterprise, and support both business performance and compliance.

To navigate these pressures, effective decisions about where to invest start with these guiding principles:



Begin with the business problem.

Begin with the business problem. Your tech should serve the business and its users – not the other way around. Understand the business issue you need to solve and then match the right tech with your people and processes.



Avoid changes that simply shift costs.

Think through the value you will gain from your technology– does it drive better governance, reliability, and efficiency? If so, this will yield more meaningful benefits than focusing solely on costs.



Enhance before you replace.

Use APIs, modular tools, and AI to extend existing systems where it makes sense.



Favor progress over perfection.

Do not wait for perfect data to modernize or move forward with AI pilots.



Invest in people.

Your employees determine tech success – change management, training, and engagement are critical to get the most out of your solutions.



Build incrementally.

Build system architecture and data governance in phases, with a roadmap that supports ongoing evolution rather than a one-off transformation.

These principles underpin the five questions we most commonly hear from organizations looking to modernize.

QUESTION 1:

Our current systems are slowing us down, but we can't afford major disruption. How do we modernize without breaking day-to-day operations?

Modernization does not need to mean a disorderly “big-bang” replacement. The most effective approaches allow organizations to keep day-to-day operations running while introducing change in controlled, manageable phases.

Legacy EHS systems often struggle to keep up with evolving requirements, leading to workarounds and fragmented insights. New platforms can address these gaps - but without a clear sense of what the business needs, it risks simply becoming a costly technology swap.



Recommendations

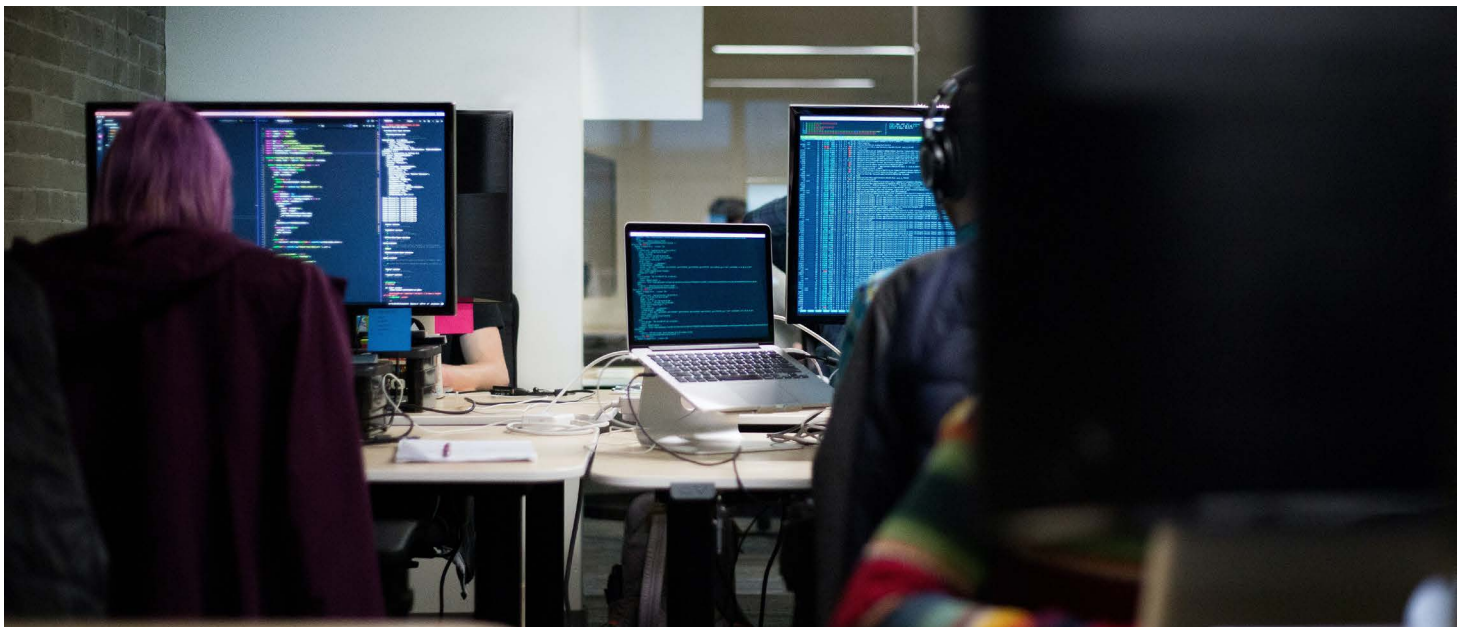
Start by clarifying what the business needs from the system, rather than leading with specific technologies.

Focusing first on people and processes, helps ensure that tools serve decision-making and execution. This makes them easier (and a priority) to adopt and use.



How to make this happen

- ✓ Begin with a business and process assessment before defining system requirements.
- ✓ Define future-state processes and key user groups, mapping out how they interact with the systems.
- ✓ Identify current pain points, decision bottlenecks, and opportunities to create value.
- ✓ Select solutions based on strategic fit and usability over feature lists.
- ✓ Use testing, phased migration, and targeted enhancements to reduce disruption and build confidence.



QUESTION 2:

Our system is expensive to maintain. How do we know if it's still worth the investment, or if it's time to change?

Older systems often carry hidden costs in rising maintenance, infrastructure, and labor fees. But lower cost alone is not a compelling enough reason to change; the new solution must materially improve how the business operates. This could include ways to simplify operations, reduce overhead tasks, and strengthen the capabilities that matter most to the business.



Recommendations

When evaluating changes, focus on the total value a system will bring, not just headline savings.

Moving from on-premise to the cloud, for example, may simply shift costs from hardware to subscriptions unless the new platform clearly aligns with your objectives, improves efficiency, and strengthens capabilities.



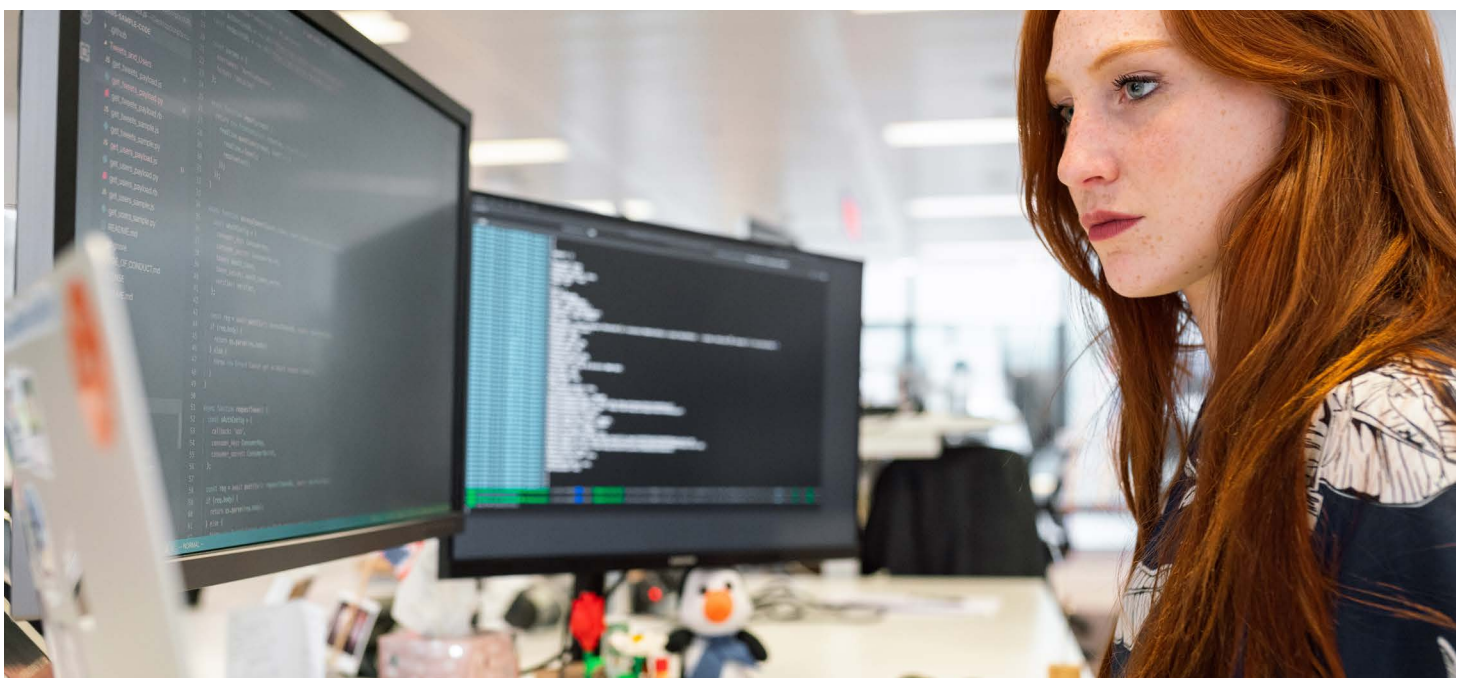
How to make this happen



Assess cost and value together. To do this, compare factors beyond on-premise and cloud costs, to also look at efficiency gains, risk reduction, and long-term scalability. Account for the transition effort early, which includes disruption, retraining, and data migration. Also consider harder-to-quantify benefits, such as better user experience and data quality gains.



Be explicit about which capabilities truly matter to the business and resist lower-cost solutions that may add complexity or technical debt later. Where possible, use modular enhancements or integrations to defer unnecessary full replacements.



QUESTION 3:

Our current systems are disconnected. How do we get reliable data to run our operations more effectively?

A reliable data foundation starts with visibility. Disconnected systems, spreadsheets, and file shares fragment critical EHS information, making it difficult to get a single, reliable view of your performance. This undermines audit readiness and slows decision-making when leaders need clear answers fast.

A coherent data foundation enables the reuse of trusted data across needs, improves transparency, and supports consistent reporting and automation. It allows teams to collaborate more effectively, respond faster, and have greater confidence that the information behind decisions will withstand internal and external scrutiny.








Recommendations

Existing systems can be boosted by using application programming interfaces (APIs) and modular AI components to connect data and augment your current digital landscape. This enables cross-system analysis while keeping core tools in place.

At the same time, data governance and architecture should be treated as an ongoing journey: build these capabilities incrementally, guided by a clear roadmap, so that new elements can be added as needs evolve.



How to make this happen

- 
 Advanced automation can't outrun inconsistent workflows. Build consistency across processes; it matters more than deploying sophisticated automation in isolated areas.
- 
 System rationalization: assess what combination of systems and tools is needed to meet your EHS goals. Fewer systems often mean less variability in the final data.
- 
 Establish data governance, ownership, and quality standards, and then mature them alongside business needs.
- 
 Dashboards are a diagnostic, not the destination. Use them to expose gaps in information and decision-making, not as the end goal of modernization.
- 
 Highlight early wins to demonstrate value, build confidence, and sustain momentum.



QUESTION 4:

We want to use AI, but we are not sure where to start. How do we know if we are ready?

The pressure to “do something with AI” often clashes with the functionality of ageing systems, and the readiness of people to leverage it as a tool. This leaves many organizations unsure whether they have the capabilities to support meaningful AI pilots and projects.

AI is not a magic wand, but it can be a powerful accelerator. While trustworthy data underpins reliable outcomes, it does not have to be perfect to begin, nor does it require a system overhaul. In practice, AI can layer into existing systems or be used on either end to surface insights and detect patterns that are difficult or time consuming to identify manually. Early AI pilots can also help companies improve data quality and organize their data foundations.

Recommendations







Once again, start with the business problem, not the technology. Most organizations face recurring inefficiencies which can be tackled using existing information. Identify workflow pain points, prioritize those with clear business relevance, implement targeted AI interventions, and then embed what works.

When AI is anchored to genuine business needs, teams can deliver value early. That momentum builds confidence and supports learning by doing, even when data is not yet perfect.

An iterative approach like this helps you avoid “analysis paralysis,” where overthinking prevents action. Modular enhancements can target specific bottlenecks with focused AI solutions that preserve existing investments and can evolve as needs change.



How to make this happen

-  Focus on targeted AI use cases that are closely linked to defined business outcomes.
-  Run an initial working session to map how work gets done today, including how data is generated and used. This is not to decide on specific AI tools, but to spot areas that could be improved. Focus on repetitive, high-volume processes to materially reduce effort, risk, or costs - these are often strong candidates for early AI use cases.
-  Assess whether the underlying data in those areas is accessible and usable. If essential information is buried in historical records or tied to outdated processes, treat that as a signal that your data foundation may need attention before you scale AI.
-  Use APIs from existing systems to create structured access points for AI applications.
-  Accept manageable data imperfections and use pilots to surface gaps and issues. Position pilots as a learning phase, not just for the technology, but for how teams interact with it and where behaviors or processes may need to evolve.
-  Use AI pilots gradually based on what you learn from real-world use and then embed what works. drive continuous improvement.

QUESTION 5:

Adoption is low, and we're relying on a few experts. How do we build something the wider business wants to use?

Complex legacy systems can be hard to use and may be configured around processes that no longer reflect how work gets done. This reduces engagement and makes day-to-day work dependent on a shrinking group of experts with deep institutional knowledge to keep systems running. Workers compare these tools to more intuitive digital experiences they have outside of work, making usability gaps more visible and frustrating.

Organizations that focus only on system design often struggle to drive adoption. As experienced teams move on, this also becomes a knowledge challenge that requires deliberate efforts to retain and transfer expertise. Companies that actively engage users, align with real workflows, and build capability are more likely to sustain change.



Recommendations

Successful system modernization requires a clear people engagement strategy woven into your system roadmap.

System management is a bit like homeownership: digital systems require continuous care and engagement to maintain their value and relevance as your workforce and business needs change.



How to make this happen



Develop a multi-tiered strategy that accounts for stakeholders at all levels. From leadership through to end users, identify potential friction points, build a strong case for change, clarify ownership and be visible as leaders to encourage everyone to work toward the same goal.



Prepare and train existing users early and often. Invest in tailored onboarding and ongoing targeted 'just-in-time' or micro-learning approaches help workers retain information more easily.



Understand what different user groups need to be successful and meet employees where they are. That could mean providing mobile access, simplified workflows, or alternative ways of interacting with the system. Build a network of champions and feedback loops to surface issues promptly and refine the system over time.



Measure with leading and lagging indicators. Use those insights to reinforce progress and drive continuous improvement.

Conclusion

EHS system upgrades are not just technology decisions; they reshape how your organization manages risk, meets regulatory expectations, and makes day-to-day decisions. The challenge is not knowing that change is needed. It's knowing where to start and how to move forward with confidence.

The organizations making progress are not waiting for perfect systems or perfect data. They are taking targeted steps: clarifying what matters, improving what exists, and building toward a more connected, scalable foundation over time.



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