

4 Tips to Build a Winning Business Case for QHSE Software

Today's QHSE business leaders are faced with doing more with less and often find difficulty in securing the necessary funding to push QHSE software initiatives forward. When advocating for a deeper corporate investment into improving Quality, Health, Safety & Environment technology, QHSE leaders are most successful when presenting stakeholders with a compelling, persuasive and data-driven business case that demonstrates how the solution aligns with organizational objectives and how it can improve the bottom line. This article can assist QHSE professionals to craft a compelling business case and aid in justifying the investment into new QHSE technology.

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Tip #1: Overcome the Pit-falls of just *Another* Digital Transformation Project

Digital transformation is a hot topic, as businesses scramble to keep up with new technology, business leaders are getting presented with countless technology transformation projects, many of which never end up going anywhere. For a successful proposal to implement new QHSE technology, you need to be able show that your business case is not just some pie-in-the-sky idea for digital transformation, but something that can add tangible value to the organization. Here we outlined some points to consider when framing your business case for QHSE software:



Position your business case in terms of creating operational excellence with the implementation of new QHSE technology. Demonstrate how the technology will improve processes and align people within your organization.



Be clear on the intended outcome that will come from implementation of a new QHSE system. Will it reduce workplace injuries, improve product quality, reduce environmental risk etc.?



Align your business case to your organization's overarching strategic objectives.



Present key metrics and supporting data. Outline the gaps from the current state to the anticipated desired state.

Tip #2: Present what Matters to your Specific Audience

A successful business case must effectively consider the specific needs of various stakeholders. Always speak to your specific audience about what matters to them. If you can circle back to the priorities and demands of each stakeholder, it will certainly help in winning over allies to support your QHSE initiative. Here's a few points to focus on when presenting to different stakeholder groups.



Presenting to Senior Leadership: CFO, COO, VP's, Directors



Presenting to Business Function Managers: Operations, QHSE, HR Managers

- Align the QHSE objectives to the overall company's strategic objectives
- Highlight the anticipated business value that will come with QHSE automation and create key linkages between improved QHSE processes and improved financial metrics - Explain how the QHSE solution will help the bottom line and reduce costs stemming from a reduction in workplace injuries, incidents, fines and operational downtime etc.
- Highlight the benefits that will come from a new QHSE system in terms of increased visibility into operations and field data, and how it will empower leadership to make data-driven decision
- Outline how the solution can mitigate operational and environmental risk and assists with maintaining regulatory compliance
- Reinforce the commitment to the corporate vision, mission and core values of safety and quality

- Address operational pain points and highlight how a QHSE cloud-based solution will assist in breaking down silos, eliminating redundancies and will create a unified view of departments, plants, and all QHSE operations
- Demonstrate how leveraging QHSE Big Data can minimize operational risk, reduce downtime, improve processes and help allocate resources more efficiently
- Highlight how QHSE technology could positively impact employee performance and output
- Outline how new QHSE technology can improve the management of people, maintain a safe workforce, improve product quality and mitigate environmental hazards
- Demonstrate how the new technology can help streamline the collection and analysis of field and workforce information

Information Technology Teams

Although I.T teams may not be the ultimate decision makers in most organizations, they do play a key role in systems implementations and have a big influence on the types of systems that are implemented and the timing of implementations. These teams have a lot of insight in terms software compatibility constraints and integration. When it comes time to evaluate the different QHSE software options, it is wise to be well informed of the I.T constraints, their current resources, overall priorities and other technology projects that might be occurring.

Tip #3: Outline the Business Value and the Cost of Doing Nothing

With any technology implementation project, financial and operational risks are expected. However, QHSE software offers an unprecedented opportunity to mitigate operational risk, reduce workplace injuries and streamline operations. As a QHSE business leader, you must have a good understanding of the risks involved when implementing a new QHSE system, then position your proposed solution as ultimately creating business value and outweighing those risks. Be sure to communicate the benefits of unlocking new and innovative processes to optimize operations and outline that the anticipated return on investment is tangible by leveraging industry data and relevant statistics to support your position.

Here are a few examples of statistics that can demonstrate the business value of such investments. We suggest you research statistics that are relevant to your industry and provide trends over recent years for more impact.

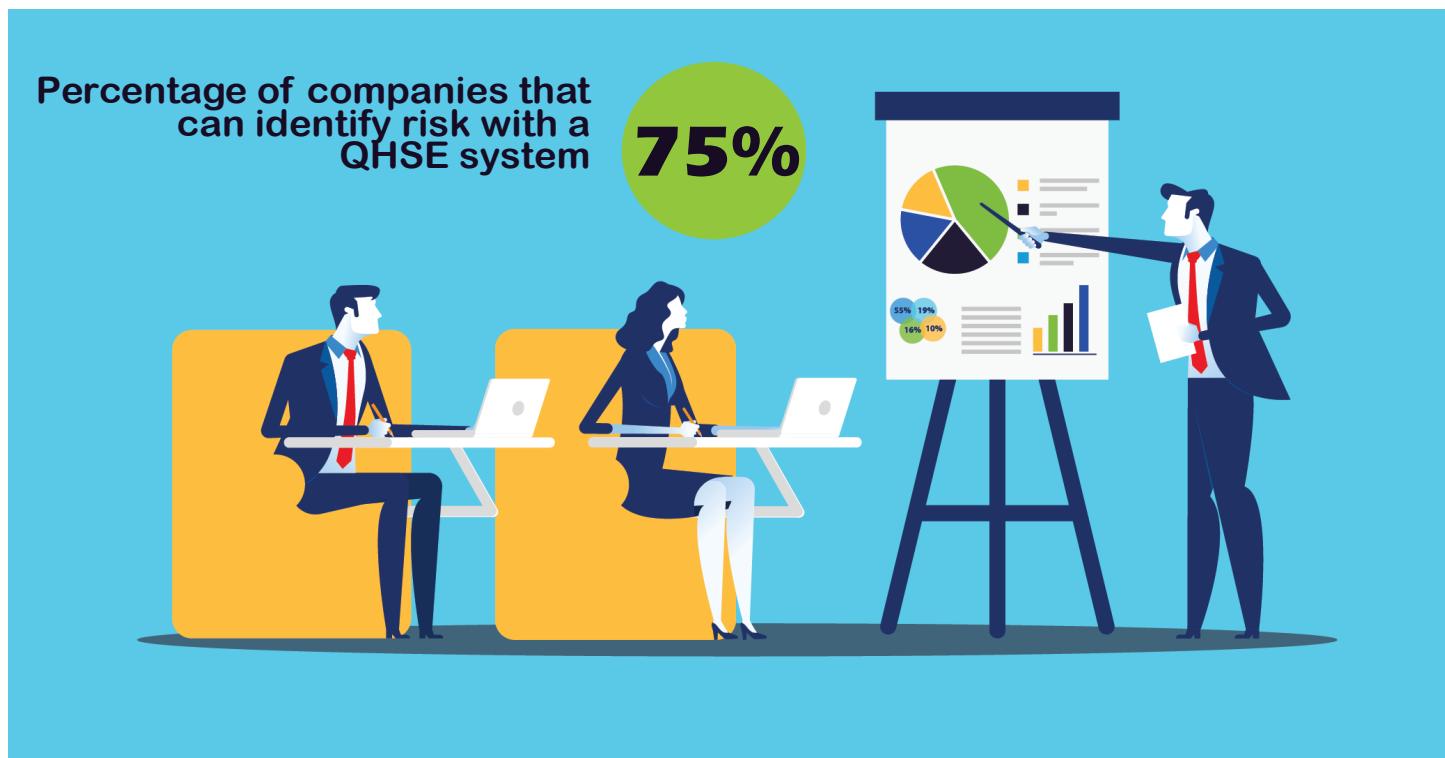
Statistics to Consider

- Annual costs associated to workplace injuries, sick leave, medical expenses and worker compensation costs
- Annual costs incurred due to fines, non-compliance penalties and lawsuits
- Annual costs associated with worksite shut downs and machinery and equipment malfunction due to hazards
- Overall impacts to productivity metrics such as OLE (Overall Labor Effectiveness) and OEE (Overall Equipment Effectiveness)
- Overall impacts to annual financial metrics from rising QHSE costs

Other Information to Consider

- Examples of existing poor departmental collaboration, lack of visibility and ineffective metrics that have cost the business time and money
- Specific examples of current redundant work processes that lead to re-work, errors and lost time

Poor QHSE management is costly, and as safety and compliance regulations around the world become increasingly stringent, the costs associated with workplace incidents can potentially become crippling to organizations. When presenting your business case, it is important to demonstrate an understanding of what the organization's current QHSE challenges are and its costs to the business. You will need to articulate the benefits of moving to new technology and to the desired state where those challenges and costs are minimized. Gathering your company's existing QHSE data and operational metrics will go a long way in achieving this. If these statistics are poor, it can strengthen your case, as you can approximate the anticipated value from taking different steps to strategically improve these performance metrics with the new QHSE technology. Demonstrate that the new solution will not only enhance operational performance, but will allow the business to collect valuable operational and field data to enable more insightful business decisions.



Tip #4: Know your Internal and External Business Environment

Knowing the internal and external business environment is essential in building a winning business case. Business cases can sometimes appear ideal on paper, but may prove to be unrealistic or unachievable in practice. Many proposals never get off the ground due to internal factors and constraints, such as the organization's available resources, culture, or the current technology environment. Other times, the external environment surrounding the organization can be unfavorable. You will need operational support for a new system launch, so it is wise to first investigate if your organization is set up to support a new systems implementation project. By also examining the internal and external threats and opportunities, you can add a new level of insight and outline how to mitigate the threats and capitalize on the opportunities. Here are a few examples of internal and external factors to consider when building your business case.

Internal Factors to Consider



Technology: What are the current software systems in place? Does your company use multiple disjointed outdated legacy systems that are hard to integrate with other software?



Process: What are some of the current operational processes in place? What are some QHSE operational pain points that could be improved with a new QHSE systems?



People: Does your company culture support and embrace safety and compliance projects? Are there enough resources to support a systems implementation? Who is ultimately responsible for approving investments into software implementation?

External Factors to Consider



Government: Legislative, political and legal changes that impact your organization and how a QHSE system can mitigate the risks that come with these changes.



Technology Landscape: The changing technological landscape in your particular industry and how your business can remain competitive.



Consumer Perceptions: The changing consumer and social perceptions in your industry and how improved safety and compliance processes can have a positive impact for your organization.

Conclusion

As a QHSE business leader, your job is to ensure the safety of your workforce and compliance of its business operations, by driving innovation and bringing new solutions, you enable your organization to better manage its resources and keep its employees safe.

If you have already identified the need for a new QHSE system in your organization, then you've probably seen gaps that can be resolved with technology. Believe in your vision and remember to view your business case as a journey, with the ultimate goal of obtaining buy-in from the key internal stakeholders and moving your project forward. It is fair to anticipate some opposition to your proposal, so prepare to answer questions and concerns by considering all angles and gathering as much relevant data as possible to support the desired outcome.



To learn about what ITRAK 365 QHSE software can do for your business visit www.useittrak.com or take the free trial on AppSource.com.