Digital Tools

Use Technology to Prevent Losses and Manage Your Risk

BUSINESSES ARE increasingly using smartphones and tablets to manage their risks and improve their workplace safety.

A growing number of applications for these devices — matched with other technologies — can help companies prevent losses, reduce the chances of workplace accidents and manage risk.

There are also a number of innovative apps that allow businesses to identify, report and address safety issues, security risks and other problems remotely.

This technology can make life easier for a company's risk manager or human resource officers, adding another layer of protection.

On-site systems

Mobile devices can connect to security and utilities systems via apps from their security equipment vendors, giving business owners instant information when they're away from the premises.

For example, the system may send a text alert to a smartphone if a security camera picks up sudden movements.

Other products may stream videos from multiple security cameras to a smartphone app, enabling the owner or personnel to keep an eye on the premises during off-hours.

For example, a system might send a text alert when it detects a leak in the building's plumbing system. Once alerted, the building owner can shut off the water remotely or in person, thus limiting the damage.

Video from cameras that monitor the premises can also be saved and used in helping police recover stolen property. A coffee manufacturer in Portland, Oregon, implemented a system like this.

Weeks after installation, the company recorded video of a burglar stealing thousands of dollars in equipment. The owners downloaded the video, sent it to the local police and posted it on social media channels. The video produced a full criminal investigation, arrest and conviction.

Risk management apps

There are several noteworthy applications on the market that businesses can use to manage their risks and workplace safety, including the following:

RiskReporter – This app is designed to help risk managers keep track of their organization's potential risks. Users can record risk-related events as they occur and e-mail them to supervisors, all the while noting suggested risk-control measures and action plans.

Origami Mobile – The app enables risk professionals, employees and contractors to conduct job site audits and inspections and report incidents remotely, even in instances where Wi-Fi is unavailable.

Users are able to detect and report workplace operational hazards and behavior trends, monitor effectiveness of safety programs, gather and leverage real-time incident data and provide coaching and training services to workers.

Kizeo Forms – This app allows users to customize components of the app specifically to their workplace. Its main function is the ability to report incidents from remote locations, using geolocation.

The app also includes features like:
- Remote near-miss reporting
- Remote security log
- Remote risk assessment
- Remote check of personal protective equipment
- Ergonomics inspection.

Risk Assessor – This app lets you create detailed safety reports from your phone or tablet. You can brand the reports with your company details and create a bespoke hazard and control list to suit your business. ❖

Employers Should Double Down on Workplace Safety

- The violations resulted in worker fatalities, a worksite catastrophe, or five or more injuries or illnesses. Catastrophe is defined as inpatient hospitalization of three or more workers from a workplace hazard.
- Within the 12 months immediately preceding the underlying violation, 10% of all employees at the cited worksite sustained workplace injuries or illnesses.

The takeaway

The proposed regulations pose the largest risk for companies with multiple locations.

Fines will be adjusted each year to account for infation.

Employers should double down on their workplace safety efforts and ensure that there is buy-in to the program from top management down to supervisors and line workers at all locations. ❖