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2027 EHS & Sustainability Software Buyer's Guide

How to Choose an Enterprise Platform Built to Scale—and Put Every Vendor to the Test



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The EHS & Sustainability Software Decision Has Changed

Choosing EHS & Sustainability software used to start with a feature list.

Incident management. Audits. Inspections. Corrective actions. Environmental reporting. Sustainability data. Mobile access. Dashboards.

Those capabilities still matter. But for enterprise organizations, they are no longer enough to distinguish one platform from another. The harder questions sit underneath the feature list.

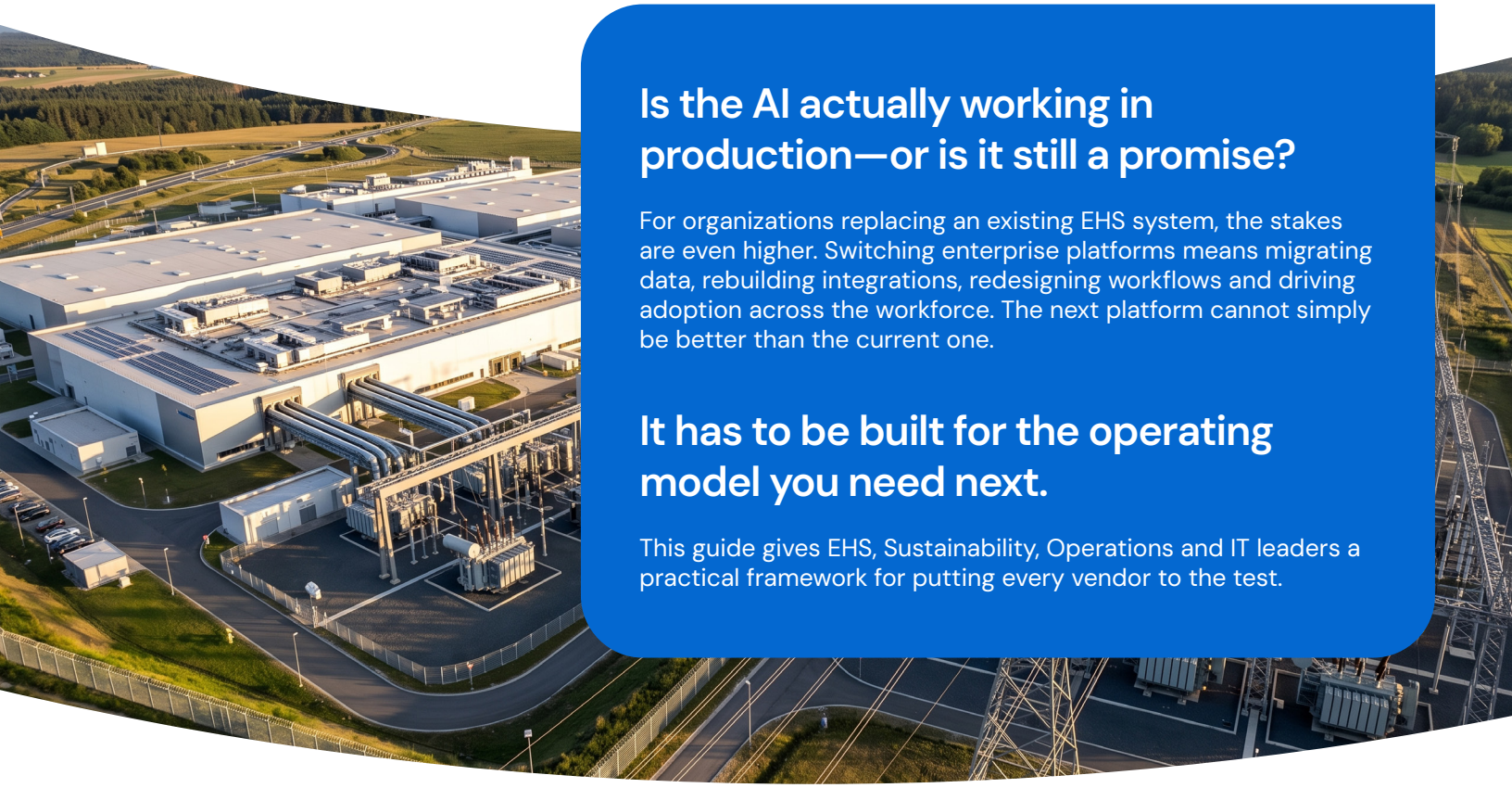
Can the platform standardize execution across dozens—or hundreds—of sites while supporting legitimate local requirements?

Can it connect safety, compliance, environmental, sustainability and operational risk instead of creating another collection of silos?

Can frontline users complete work easily enough to drive adoption and improve the quality of the data entering the system?

Can the platform integrate with the systems already running the enterprise?

Can it expand without another major implementation every time the business adds a site, region, workflow or program?



Is the AI actually working in production—or is it still a promise?

For organizations replacing an existing EHS system, the stakes are even higher. Switching enterprise platforms means migrating data, rebuilding integrations, redesigning workflows and driving adoption across the workforce. The next platform cannot simply be better than the current one.

It has to be built for the operating model you need next.

This guide gives EHS, Sustainability, Operations and IT leaders a practical framework for putting every vendor to the test.

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What Enterprise Buyers Should Expect in 2027

The strongest EHS & Sustainability platforms are moving beyond systems of record.

They are becoming systems of action—connecting operational data, enterprise workflows, risk intelligence and AI so organizations can identify what matters, assign action and drive work through completion.

That changes the evaluation standard.
Your platform should help you:

- ☑ **Standardize execution across the enterprise**
- ☑ **Identify and prioritize risk earlier**
- ☑ **Increase frontline participation**
- ☑ **Improve data quality at the source**
- ☑ **Connect EHS and Sustainability programs**
- ☑ **Reduce repetitive administrative work**
- ☑ **Integrate with the broader enterprise ecosystem**
- ☑ **Turn operational data into decision-ready intelligence**
- ☑ **Scale new capabilities without repeatedly rebuilding the system**

For replacement buyers, add one more requirement:

The new platform must remove the structural problems that made the old one difficult to operate.

Otherwise, you are simply migrating the same problem.

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Start With Outcomes, Not Features

Before building an RFP, decide what needs to change. A software evaluation becomes weak when it starts with hundreds of requirements but no agreement on the business outcomes the investment is expected to deliver. Align your buying team around six questions.

1. Can We Standardize Enterprise Execution?

Determine where common processes are essential—and where sites, regions or business units legitimately require flexibility. The goal is not unlimited customization. **It is consistent governance with controlled configuration.** Ask:

- Which workflows must be standardized globally?
- Which requirements legitimately vary by site or region?
- Who should control configuration?
- How quickly must new sites or acquired businesses be onboarded?
- How will process changes be governed across the enterprise?

A platform that fits one site perfectly but becomes difficult to manage across 100 sites is not an enterprise platform.





2. Can We Reduce Enterprise Risk Exposure?

Your platform should make it easier to identify where attention is needed—not simply produce more data. Evaluate whether it helps teams:

- Identify emerging risk signals
- Prioritize higher-risk conditions
- Escalate overdue actions
- Connect incidents, observations, audits and corrective actions
- Surface trends across sites and programs
- Turn insights into accountable action

Reporting is not the outcome. Better intervention is.

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3. Can We Increase Frontline Participation?

Enterprise EHS performance depends on the quality of information captured where work happens. Complex forms, slow mobile experiences and excessive manual entry reduce participation and degrade the data leadership ultimately relies on. Test the employee experience directly. Can a worker:

- Report a concern quickly?
- Capture information on mobile?
- Use photos or voice when appropriate?
- Work offline when connectivity is limited?
- Understand what information is required?
- Complete common tasks without extensive training?

If frontline users avoid the platform, executive dashboards will eventually reflect that failure.





4. Can We Gain Enterprise Visibility?

Executives and program leaders need more than static reports. They need timely visibility into:

- Risk
- Compliance
- Corrective-action performance
- Site performance
- Environmental obligations
- Sustainability metrics
- Program trends
- Exceptions requiring intervention

Look for analytics connected directly to operational workflows.
Do not stop at: **Can it create a dashboard?**
Ask: **Can an insight lead directly to action?**

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5. Can We Reduce Administrative Burden?

EHS and Sustainability teams spend significant time collecting information, reviewing documentation, reconciling data, preparing reports and following up on routine work. Your next platform should reduce that burden rather than simply digitize it. Evaluate where workflow automation and AI can:

- Structure unstructured information
- Draft or summarize content
- Review documentation
- Identify missing information
- Flag anomalies
- Recommend next actions
- Route work
- Track requirements through completion

The objective is not automation for its own sake. It is returning expert time to risk reduction, operational improvement and decision-making.





6. Can We Connect EHS and Sustainability?

Environmental compliance, sustainability data and enterprise disclosure increasingly depend on many of the same facilities, people, operating processes and source systems. Treating them as completely separate technology decisions can create duplicated data, competing workflows and unnecessary reconciliation.

Your platform should be able to connect operational activity with enterprise reporting and disclosure. That does not mean every program must be implemented at once. It means the technology should not become the barrier when the organization expands.

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The 7 Tests Every Enterprise Platform Should Pass

A vendor demonstration should not be a tour.

It should be a test.

The following seven tests are designed to expose the difference between attractive functionality and a platform capable of supporting enterprise execution.



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TEST 1
Can It Execute Your Critical Workflows End to End?

Most enterprise EHS products can show you an incident form.

That tells you very little.

The real test is whether the platform supports the complete workflow around the event.

Incident Management

Report → Triage → Investigation → Root Cause → Corrective Action → Verification → Analytics → Leadership Visibility

Environmental Compliance

Requirement → Obligation → Owner → Due Date → Evidence → Escalation → Completion → Audit Trail

Sustainability

Source Data → Validation → Review → Approval → Calculation → Reporting → Disclosure

Select the workflows that directly affect your risk profile and force the vendor to execute them live.

Put the Vendor to the Test

Do not ask:

> *"Do you have incident management?"*

Ask:

> *"Show us how an incident moves from frontline reporting through investigation, corrective action and enterprise-level analysis."*

Do not ask:

> *"Do you support environmental permits?"*

Ask:

> *"Show us how a permit requirement becomes an assigned obligation, how missed deadlines are escalated and how compliance status becomes visible across sites."*

Do not accept screenshots.

> *Make the vendor execute the workflow.*

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TEST 2
Can It Standardize Without Over-Customizing?

Enterprise buyers have historically faced a tradeoff. Highly customized systems can match almost any process—but often become expensive to implement, difficult to maintain and increasingly painful to upgrade.

Rigid systems deploy faster—but may fail to accommodate legitimate differences across sites, regions and business units.

The better model is:

Configuration Within a Common Platform

The platform should support local requirements without creating a different software version for every operation.

Evaluate:

- ☑ **Workflows**
- ☑ **Forms and fields**
- ☑ **Roles and permissions**
- ☑ **Organizational hierarchy**
- ☑ **Local terminology**
- ☑ **Approval rules**
- ☑ **Notifications**
- ☑ **Regional requirements**
- ☑ **Reporting views**
- ☑ **Site-level settings**

Then ask what happens after configuration. Can the organization still deploy improvements efficiently?

Can corporate teams maintain governance? Can a new business unit use the same core platform without starting over?

Put the Vendor to the Test

Ask:

> *"Show us one global process with a common corporate standard and three different site-level requirements. What changes through configuration, and what requires development?"*

Then ask:

> *"What happens to those configurations when you release new functionality?"*

The Principle

> *Customization solves today's requirement. Configurability protects tomorrow's scale.*



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TEST 3
Is It Actually One Connected Platform?

"Integrated platform" has become one of the most overused phrases in enterprise software. Do not accept it without proof. A vendor may offer many modules while still operating multiple underlying products, data models, permission structures or technology architectures.

Those differences may remain invisible during a polished demo. They become visible later through:

- Duplicate administration
- Inconsistent user experiences
- Separate reporting
- Integration work between modules
- Different upgrade cycles
- Data synchronization issues
- AI that only works in certain areas

Test What Is Truly Shared

Ask whether the platform uses:

- Common navigation
- Common users and site structures
- Common permissions
- Shared workflow components
- Consistent configuration
- Connected analytics
- Shared data definitions
- A common AI layer

Put the Vendor to the Test

Ask:

> *"If we deploy incident management, compliance, environmental management and sustainability today, what must be integrated between those products?"*

Then:

> *"If we add another module two years from now, what works immediately because it is already part of the platform?"*

And:

> *"Do all customers run the same current software version, or are customers operating on different generations of the product?"*

Architecture is not an IT-only issue.

> *It determines how quickly your platform can evolve.*

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TEST 4
Can EHS and Sustainability Operate From a Connected Data Foundation?

Sustainability should not be the last checkbox on an EHS requirements list. It is a core enterprise evaluation area. Organizations increasingly need to collect, validate, manage and disclose information originating in operational systems across the business.

Evaluate how the platform manages:

- ☑ Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions
- ☑ Energy
- ☑ Waste
- ☑ Water
- ☑ Environmental performance
- ☑ Sustainability initiatives
- ☑ Disclosure requirements
- ☑ Data ownership and approvals
- ☑ Supporting evidence
- ☑ Audit trails
- ☑ Reporting frameworks
- ☑ Data quality

The goal is not simply producing a report.
It is strengthening the operating process behind that report.

Put the Vendor to the Test

Ask:

> *"Show us where sustainability information originates, how it is validated and who owns approval."*

Then:

> *"Show how environmental operating data can flow into sustainability reporting without manual reconciliation."*

And:

> *"When an anomaly is identified before disclosure, how does the system assign remediation and preserve the audit trail?"*



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TEST 5 Does the AI Pass the Reality Test?

By 2027, nearly every enterprise software vendor will describe its product as AI-powered. That phrase should carry almost no weight in an evaluation. Force the vendor to prove six things.

The AI Reality Test

1 Is It Live?

Separate:

- Generally available
- Early access
- Beta
- Pilot
- Roadmap

Do not score them equally. **A roadmap slide is not a capability.**

2 Is It Embedded?

Operational AI should work inside the workflows employees already use. It should not require users to move data manually into another tool or repeatedly recreate context through prompts.

Ask:

"Show us where AI appears during the work—not in a separate AI demonstration."

3 Can It Act?

Determine whether AI can:

- Extract requirements
- Create structured records
- Identify gaps
- Initiate workflows
- Recommend action
- Assign tasks
- Track multi-step processes
- Maintain context over time

4 Is It Governed?

Enterprise AI requires more than output quality. Ask how the vendor controls:

- Data access
- Permissions
- Model access
- Human approvals
- Audit history
- Security
- Encryption
- Data retention
- AI-generated changes

5 Does It Work Across the Platform?

An isolated AI feature can be useful. A shared AI capability becomes strategically more valuable when intelligence can extend across workflows.

Ask:

"Is AI built once across the platform or separately into individual products?"

Then:

"Can AI use operational context from multiple workflows while respecting user permissions?"

6 Are Customers Actually Using It?

Capability availability does not equal adoption. Ask for evidence of:

- Active users
- Repeat usage
- Production workflows
- Time saved
- Improved data quality
- Risk identification
- Process outcomes
- Real customer examples

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TEST 6
Can the Platform Connect to Your Enterprise?

No enterprise EHS & Sustainability platform operates alone. It must fit into a larger technology ecosystem.

Typical connections may include:

- ERP
- HRIS
- LMS
- Work-order systems
- Business intelligence
- Identity management
- Sensors and IoT
- External regulatory content
- Supplier systems
- Data warehouses
- APIs
- Enterprise AI tools

Do not evaluate integration by counting endpoints. Evaluate whether those integrations support useful workflows.

Put the Vendor to the Test

Ask:

> *"Show us an employee record entering from HR, changing a permission or training requirement and flowing into reporting."*

Or:

> *"Show us operational data entering from another system, changing an EHS workflow and triggering an action."*

Or:

> *"Show us how enterprise analytics consume EHS and sustainability data without recurring manual exports."*

The Principle

An integration should eliminate work—not simply move data from one silo to another.

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TEST 7
Can It Scale Operationally—not Just Technically?

Most vendors will tell you their software scales. The better question is what scaling requires from your organization.

Test expansion across:

- Sites
- Countries
- Languages
- Business units
- Users
- Data volumes
- Workflows
- Integrations
- Acquisitions
- New regulatory requirements

Then evaluate the operating burden.

Ask:

- How long does a new site take to configure?
- Can proven configurations be reused?
- Who administers the system?
- Does expansion require external consultants?
- Can internal teams manage common changes?
- Are upgrades automatic or project-based?
- How are new capabilities deployed?
- What happens when another program is added?

The technology may technically support 50,000 users. That does not mean the operating model scales.



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Replacing an Existing Platform? Ask Harder Questions.

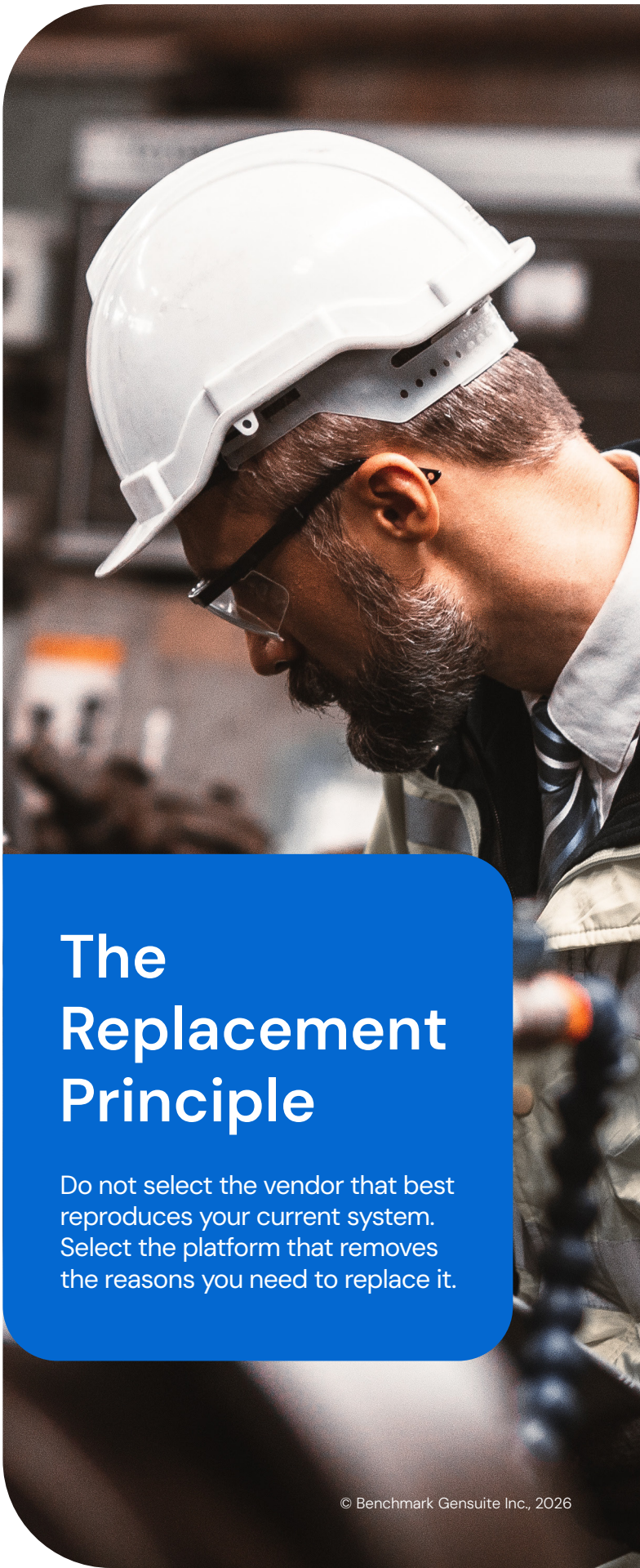
Replacement buyers should not run the same process as first-time buyers. You already know what does not work. Use that advantage. Start by documenting the structural problems in the current environment.

Common triggers include:

- ☑ **Excessive customization**
- ☑ **Difficult upgrades**
- ☑ **Fragmented modules**
- ☑ **Poor mobile adoption**
- ☑ **Weak integrations**
- ☑ **Inconsistent data**
- ☑ **Dependence on consultants**
- ☑ **Slow configuration changes**
- ☑ **Difficult reporting**
- ☑ **Limited cross-site visibility**
- ☑ **AI that requires migration or additional products**
- ☑ **Separate systems for EHS, environmental and sustainability programs**

Then convert those pain points into **vendor elimination criteria.** If upgrade complexity is the problem, require the next vendor to demonstrate its release model. If fragmentation is the problem, force cross-module workflows during the demonstration. If adoption is poor, put frontline users—not just administrators—in the evaluation.

If reporting is slow, require decision-makers to build and act on an insight live. If customization created years of technical debt, make the vendor show exactly how configuration works before approving another customized deployment.



The Replacement Principle

Do not select the vendor that best reproduces your current system. Select the platform that removes the reasons you need to replace it.

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Make Vendors Demonstrate Your Scenarios

Never let the vendor define the entire demonstration agenda. A scripted demo shows what the vendor does best. A buyer-defined scenario shows whether the platform works for you. Select four to six scenarios before finalist demonstrations.

Scenario 1

Frontline Risk

A field employee identifies an unsafe condition.

Require the vendor to show:

Capture → AI Assistance → Risk Identification → Escalation → Corrective Action → Closure → Enterprise Visibility

Scenario 2

Incident Investigation

A recordable incident occurs at a manufacturing site.

Show:

Initial Report → Investigation → Root Cause → Evidence → Corrective Action → Approval → Trend Analysis

Scenario 3

Environmental Obligation

A permit introduces a new operating requirement.

Show:

Document → Requirement Identification → Compliance Obligation → Owner → Deadline → Evidence → Audit Trail

Scenario 4

Sustainability Data Quality

An emissions dataset contains incomplete or anomalous information immediately before a reporting deadline.

Show:

Detection → Notification → Ownership → Correction → Validation → Approval → Disclosure Readiness

Scenario 5

Enterprise Expansion

Your organization acquires 12 sites across three countries.

Show:

Organizational Setup → Template Deployment → Local Configuration → Permissions → Language → Reporting → Enterprise Roll-Up

Scenario 6

AI Agent

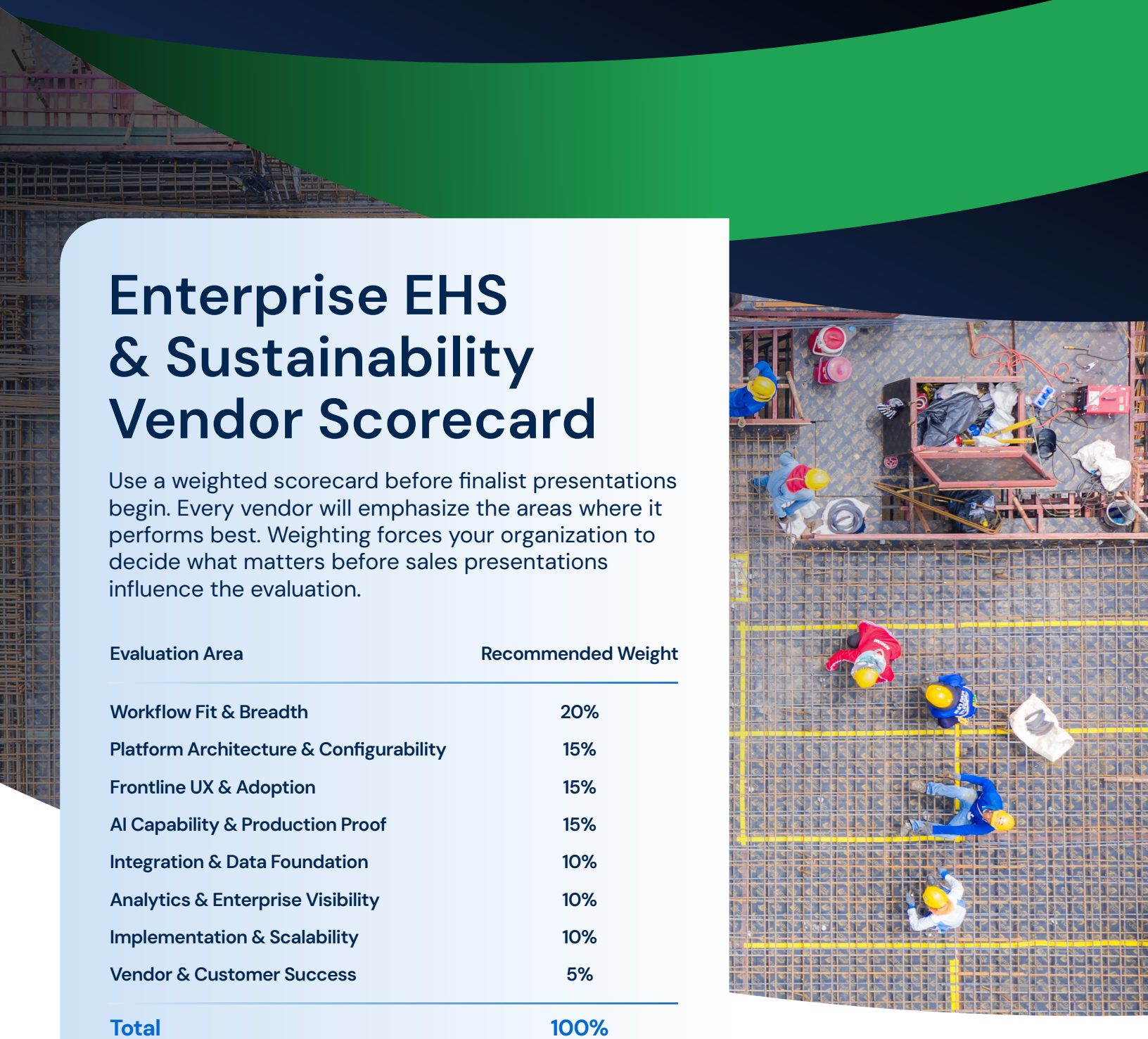
Provide a multi-step program requirement rather than a simple prompt.

Ask the vendor to show:

- ☑ **What the AI does**
- ☑ **What it changes**
- ☑ **What requires human approval**
- ☑ **How permissions are enforced**
- ☑ **How the activity is audited**
- ☑ **How the workflow progresses over time**

The goal is not an impressive answer. **The goal is controlled execution.**

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Enterprise EHS & Sustainability Vendor Scorecard

Use a weighted scorecard before finalist presentations begin. Every vendor will emphasize the areas where it performs best. Weighting forces your organization to decide what matters before sales presentations influence the evaluation.

Evaluation Area	Recommended Weight
Workflow Fit & Breadth	20%
Platform Architecture & Configurability	15%
Frontline UX & Adoption	15%
AI Capability & Production Proof	15%
Integration & Data Foundation	10%
Analytics & Enterprise Visibility	10%
Implementation & Scalability	10%
Vendor & Customer Success	5%
Total	**100%**

Adjust the weighting to your organization's priorities—but do it before vendor scoring.

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Scorecard: What to Evaluate

Workflow Fit & Breadth — 20%

Evaluate:

- EHS Management
- Operational Safety
- Compliance
- Environmental Management
- Sustainability & Disclosure
- Enterprise Risk
- Quality, where relevant
- Product and Supplier Risk, where relevant
- End-to-end workflow depth

Red Flag: Large functional gaps repeatedly answered with "we can customize that."

Frontline UX & Adoption — 15%

Evaluate:

- Mobile experience
- Offline capability
- Ease of reporting
- Task completion
- Photo and voice capture
- Accessibility
- Training burden
- Adoption analytics

Red Flag: Excellent administrator experience with a poor frontline experience.

Platform Architecture & Configurability — 15%

Evaluate:

- Shared platform components
- Common permissions
- Common organizational structure
- Configurable workflows
- Upgrade model
- Cross-module workflows
- Site and regional flexibility

Red Flag: Modules require separate administration, integration or upgrade projects.

AI Capability & Production Proof — 15%

Apply the AI Reality Test:

- Is it live?
- Is it embedded?
- Can it act?
- Is it governed?
- Does it work across the platform?
- Are customers actually using it?

Red Flag: The strongest AI capabilities appear in roadmap slides rather than production workflows.

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Scorecard: What to Evaluate

Integration & Data Foundation — 10%

Evaluate:

- APIs
- Enterprise integrations
- Data ingestion
- Data export
- Identity
- Business intelligence
- Data governance
- Workflow interoperability

Red Flag: Integration means scheduled file transfers for most important use cases.

Analytics & Enterprise Visibility — 10%

Evaluate:

- Operational dashboards
- Cross-program analytics
- Trend detection
- Risk visibility
- Executive reporting
- Drill-down
- Action from insight

Red Flag: Analytics show what happened but cannot initiate response.

Implementation & Scalability — 10%

Evaluate:

- Time to value
- Configuration effort
- Customer resource requirements
- Migration
- Rollout model
- Global deployment
- Support
- Expansion effort

Red Flag: Every rollout depends on significant bespoke services

Vendor & Customer Success — 5%

Evaluate:

- Domain expertise
- Implementation methodology
- Support model
- Adoption support
- Product roadmap
- Customer community
- Innovation process

Red Flag: Strong software with no credible model for sustained enterprise adoption.

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15 Questions Every Finalist Should Answer

Require written answers before final selection.

01 What parts of your platform share the same underlying architecture and data structure?

02 Where does your platform rely on separate products or integrations?

03 What can our internal administrators configure without vendor development?

04 How are upgrades delivered, and what work is required from customers?

05 Show three enterprise workflows that cross multiple modules.

06 How do you support corporate standards while allowing legitimate site and regional differences?

07 How does frontline mobile functionality work with limited or no connectivity?

08 How do EHS, environmental and sustainability data connect?

09 Which AI capabilities are generally available in production today?

10 Which AI capabilities can execute work rather than simply generate content?

11 What governance controls apply to AI actions and data access?

12 How do you demonstrate real customer adoption of AI?

13 How does your architecture support future agents and enterprise AI interoperability?

14 What happens when we add another site, region, business unit or program?

15 What typically causes enterprise implementations to struggle, and how does your deployment model reduce that risk?

A vendor that cannot answer these questions clearly is giving you useful information.

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What Strong Enterprise Software Looks Like

The strongest platform will not necessarily have the longest feature list. It will demonstrate a coherent operating model. Look for:

Connected workflows rather than isolated modules.

Configuration rather than uncontrolled customization.

Enterprise standards with local flexibility.

Frontline usability rather than administrator-only sophistication.

Operational analytics tied to action.

EHS and Sustainability built on connected information.

AI embedded into real work.

Agentic workflows with governance and human oversight.

Integration into the broader enterprise.

Expansion without repeated reimplementation.

That is the standard.

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The Benchmark Gensuite Approach

Benchmark Gensuite is built to help enterprises connect EHS, Sustainability, Risk, Compliance and operational performance through a common enterprise management platform. The approach centers on four principles.



Connected Enterprise Execution

EHS Management, Operational Safety, Compliance & Enterprise Risk, Environmental Management, Sustainability & Disclosure Management and adjacent programs can operate within a connected platform environment. The objective is not simply application consolidation. It is creating a more consistent operating model across enterprise programs.



Configuration at Enterprise Scale

Organizations need standards without sacrificing legitimate local requirements. Benchmark Gensuite supports configurable workflows designed to help enterprises standardize core processes while adapting execution across sites, business units and regions. That enables organizations to scale without treating every new requirement as a new software implementation.



AI Embedded Into Operational Workflows

Genny AI brings AI into day-to-day EHS, Sustainability and Risk workflows. Operational AI supports users as work is performed, helping improve information capture, identify risk, reduce repetitive effort and accelerate routine activities. Purpose-built AI Agents extend beyond individual assistance into multi-step workflows with human oversight and enterprise controls. The standard is straightforward: **AI should help execute work—not simply talk about it.**



A Platform Designed to Evolve

Enterprise requirements will continue to change. Regulations will change. Disclosure requirements will change. Technology will change. AI capabilities will change. Your platform needs to evolve with them without forcing the organization through another cycle of fragmentation, migration and reimplementation. That is why architecture, configurability, data and AI should be evaluated alongside functionality.

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One Final Rule

Throughout your evaluation, apply one rule consistently:

Do Not Accept the Claim. Make the Vendor Prove It.

If a vendor says the platform is integrated:

Make them show the workflow.

If they say it scales:

Make them add the site.

If they say it is configurable:

Make them change the process.

If they say EHS and Sustainability are connected:

Make them trace the data.

If they say the AI is production-ready:

Make them execute the work.

The strongest vendor should welcome that scrutiny.

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Ready to Put Your Shortlist to the Test?

Use the 2027 EHS & Sustainability Software Buyer's Guide to align your buying committee, define enterprise requirements, structure vendor demonstrations, test AI claims and score every finalist against the same standard.

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