

Hutchinson Builders Implements HammerTech Safety Technology

Hutchinson Builders, or Hutchies as our customers affectionately call us, has been around since 1912. As of today, we are proudly the largest privately-owned construction company in Australia. We're currently 1300 employees strong and work with around 10,000 subcontractors on any given day.

The Hutchies team prides ourselves on being a 'safe pair of hands' for our customers. Our job is to carefully guide each construction process and navigate complex building codes and regulations with integrity and transparency. It's this commitment to outstanding customer service that has enabled us to rise to number one. Our portfolio is dynamic and diverse and includes the recently-completed \$2.7 billion high-rise project in Brisbane. However, we have up to 200 projects on the go everyday.

Having such a vast number of human resources, a growing number of projects, and transparency as a priority, Hutchies puts worker safety before all else. A robust safety culture also nurtures other facets of the business, like productivity and cost-effectiveness. That's why our executive team partnered with HammerTech on our journey to integrate the highest standard of safety into field operations.

Moving Beyond Compliance

Prior to working with HammerTech, compliance was our primary focus. We would take a reactive approach to workplace accidents rather than implementing control measures to prevent them. Near misses were periodically recorded but not consistently addressed. As our company continued to grow and take on a greater number and variety of projects, however, we realized pursuing a path of mere compliance wasn't going to be sustainable and would be costly for everyone in our company in the long run.

After a particularly busy year where near misses nearly fell off the radar altogether, our team noted that workplace accidents were draining a substantial amount of our resources. Lost time events were costing us exorbitant amounts of money, a fraction of which could be used to prevent the accidents from happening in the first place. That's when our safety management team reached out to HammerTech to help pivot our approach and to work with us to develop a proactive solution.

Since we began integrating the HammerTech system in 2019, we've seen immense improvement. HammerTech has enabled us to assess leading indicators across the board and respond to potential hazards before they result in costly lost time events. By reducing the number of workplace injuries, we've kept more of our valuable team working and returning home safely everyday.

Data Straight From The Source

Up until four and a half years ago, Hutchies was almost entirely paper-based. This made safety analysis and communication difficult because information didn't flow quickly from the national record to each site and from each site to the national record. It also meant that safety concerns like near misses often fell through the cracks.

When our company began working with HammerTech two and a half years ago, we started implementing a more paperless approach. With the safety statistics provided by the HammerTech system, we can now harness real-time data as an instrument to better understand the business and implement control measures to protect everyone working in it.

Instead of relying on general industry statistics, the HammerTech system provides us with data straight from the field. Activity data for every worker is recorded, analyzed, and used to improve our processes. This means that when we implement control measures, we are responding to real events happening in our company and not simply adhering to the status quo. As an industry leader, this also enables us to provide valuable data to other construction companies pursuing a higher standard of safety.

Leading From The Centre

Unlike many larger companies, Hutchies does not police our workers when it comes to safety. Instead, we are committed to a coaching approach. We've worked hard to involve everyone in rebuilding the Hutchies culture around safety and our site leaders encourage teams to act as their own safety managers and actively contribute information to the HammerTech system. Safety managers travel between sites to talk to workers about their roles and responsibilities and use real stories about how changes in the safety sphere will impact themselves and colleagues in the workplace.

Empowering our workers to make positive safety decisions rather than forcing them to do so has played an integral role in the success of our new safety program. With real-time data continuously coming in from everyone at Hutchies, our safety management team is well-equipped to respond to safety concerns and develop appropriate control measures before someone gets hurt.

We also use incentives to drive safety. Our top-performing employees are recognized for their hard work and valued contribution to improving working conditions for everyone in the company. When teams aren't meeting the company's safety goals, our safety managers are quick to provide additional training and education.

While HammerTech has enabled managers to analyze real-time safety data from anywhere, we recognize that technology is not a substitute for leadership. All of our Hutchies leaders are constantly in the field, getting their boots dirty and getting to know our people face-to-face. Safety managers also work on site everyday to train workers, identify potential hazards, raise safety awareness, and encourage everyone on the job to report any safety-related incidents and concerns in the HammerTech system.

HammerTech technology is a fantastic tool, but simply having the technology at hand is not the answer. The answer is in the application. With the help of HammerTech, we will continue optimizing the application of our new safety system to better serve the unique facets of our company and to continue improving safety for everyone working on the Hutchies team.