



Smarter, Faster, Safer:
**Improving Safety Compliance
with Mobile Technology**

INTRODUCTION

The Problem with Compliance Today

Compliance, there are many ways we talk about it. A necessary evil, a chore, a struggle, or a critically important part of business. We all know how crucial it is, helping save lives and keeping projects on track.

Whether you are in construction or waste management, there are a variety of things that must be checked, some multiple times a day. Equipment, proper safety gear and clear fire exits could all be things you check and recheck. A simple oversight such as using the wrong pair of gloves can lead to [disastrous consequences](#).

You may think you have your compliance bases covered. But did you know that paper forms can undermine your safety? They are an inherently bad way of collecting and sharing information. Paper can take hours or days to get back to your office, be difficult to understand, or omit important information.

Even worse, it takes additional time to enter all this information into your system. A broken piece of equipment, thus, could take hours or days to fix, just because of slow reporting. This lag drains time and money: employees spend time on data entry and filing instead of other tasks. Instead of making decisions, you spend hours collecting and formatting the data just to get an understanding of what's happening in your business.

You deserve the bigger picture, especially on compliance. You deserve to get that quickly, with accurate information. You deserve to get it in a way

that allows you make the best decisions for your business. But getting the bigger picture with paper or excel spreadsheets is costly and inefficient.

In this guide, we'll show you how the strategic use of mobile technology can help you save hundreds of hours and get actionable intelligence in real time. With more accessible and affordable options for smartphones and tablets, there are new ways to ensure your work is safe and more productive than ever.

More than faster work, you'll get greater insights and stronger record keeping.



CHAPTER ONE

How to Think Strategically About Compliance and Technology Today



For this section on thinking strategically about compliance and technology, we reached out to Clare Epstein, Vice President of [TRA](#). Ms. Epstein oversees TRA's IndustrySafe Safety Software group and manages IndustrySafe's product strategy, direction and sales and marketing efforts. With over 13 years of working with companies of all kinds to use IndustrySafe Safety Management Software to assist with compliance, we wanted to get her perspective on technology and the safety industry today.

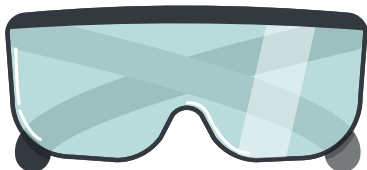
Note: Canvas has a partnership with IndustrySafe, a Product of TRA.

Canvas: 10 years ago, the iPhone didn't even exist: How has mobile technology changed the safety industry?

Clare: Mobile technology has had a huge impact on the safety industry within the past few years.

Today with a smartphone or tablet, an employee out in the field has the ability to conduct and record safety inspections and share their findings faster than ever before. Thus safety coordinators have access to the most current information.

Even if employees are working in an area without an internet connection, they can still use mobile technology to collect and share data. For example, TRA's safety management software, IndustrySafe, works with Canvas and allows users to sync their inspection results to the IndustrySafe Software once they regain internet access.



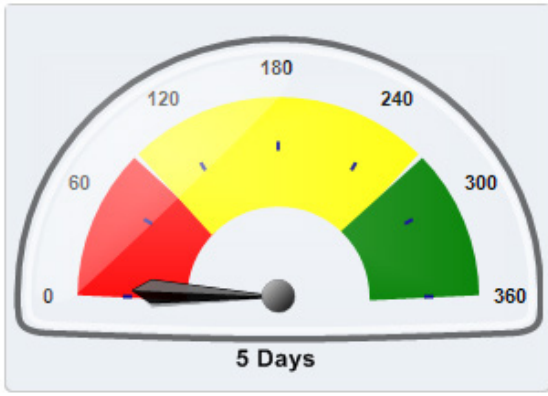
Has technology made compliance easier? Has anything become more difficult in the past 10 years?

Technology has certainly made it easier for organizations to achieve regulatory compliance. Many safety management software systems allow users to quickly and easily generate accurate regulatory reports, such as OSHA 300, 300A, and 301 logs.

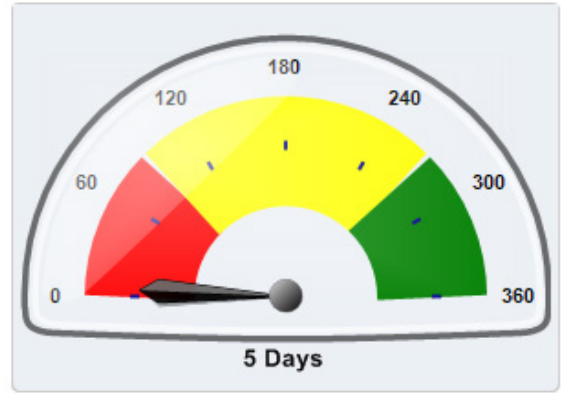
Managers can also use safety management technology to reinforce their employees' compliance with safety processes. This can be done simply by using the system to schedule email notifications to alert employees to complete a training course or to perform an inspection or corrective action.

As regulations change, technology makes it easier to update inspections and other forms quickly. Instead of printing off new forms that take hours or days to reach the field, edits can be made quickly to a mobile app, and ready for immediate use.

In the past 10 years, regulations and safety training requirements have increased in complexity, which has made using safety technology even more crucial.



Incidents - Days Without an Employee Injury



Incidents - Average Time Lag in Reporting

Does technology give companies a strategic advantage? Why or why not?

Technology absolutely gives companies a strategic advantage because it saves their employees time and energy by allowing them to automatically generate required reports and collect data more efficiently than a manual process. A safety inspection done on paper, for instance, could take hours or days to make it to the office.

In addition, safety management software allows safety professionals to easily track and identify trends in their companies' reporting, giving them increased visibility into their business' operations.

For large work sites, corporate sites, or mobile workforces, safety management technology helps promote consistency in record keeping and reporting.

Still, many companies resist adopting time saving technology. Why is that?

Change, in itself, is often difficult and professionals may be reluctant to modify their established business practices. In addition, a company must feel not only that a piece of technology will help save time, but also that it will be easy for employees to use.

Location	Number of Incidents
1111 main	104
Mississippi Main	46
Completions	17
Cerone	9
ALC	6
Branch #2	6
Owensboro	6
The Hughston Clinic	5
Alaska Final Assembly	4
Deerfield	4
TOTAL Number of Incidents	207

Incidents - Incidents by Location

Facility	% Deficiencies
Muncie, Montana	75
Fort Collings, Colorado	71
Indiana, Pennsylvania	66
aaa	50
Completions	50
ALC	42
Mississippi Main	38
Atlanta	36
Alaska Final Assembly	28
1111 main	21

Inspections - Locations with the Most Deficiencies by Percent

How do you overcome barriers to adopting technology?

At TRA, we ensure that our software’s navigation is clear and its design elements are simple and straightforward. We also believe that it’s important to work with customers throughout the implementation process to ensure that their specific business needs are correctly assessed, that the software is configured to best suit their organization, and finally, that they are familiar with all of IndustrySafe’s tools and features.

It’s wonderful if an organization decides to use safety management software, but if they aren’t leveraging all that the technology has to offer, they won’t get the maximum return on their investment.

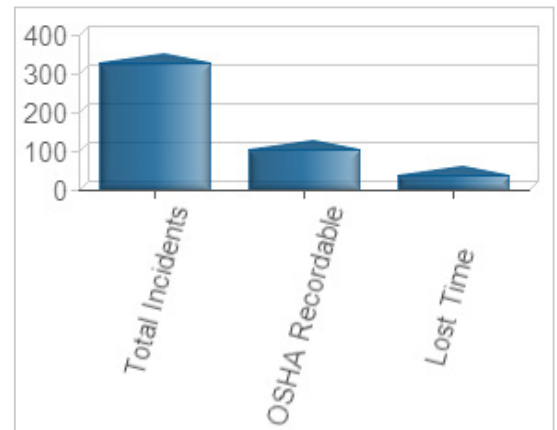
Moving forward, technology is changing faster than ever before. What strategic questions must companies keep in mind?

Because technology is advancing at such a quick pace, keeping an eye out for emerging trends has become extremely important.

Companies should be mindful of how these trends and changes will impact their users’ needs and how they could be used to better serve them. Collecting feedback is a great way to determine the next steps that users would like to see.



Incidents - Employee Injury Pyramid Report



Incidents - OSHA Recordable vs. Lost Time



- Mechanical Failure
- Materials -Wrong Type for Job
- Improper PPE
- Machine/Equipment -Defective Equipmer
- Slipped/Broken/Worn Tool
- Complacency
- Other
- Materials -Defective Raw Material

Incidents by Root Cause



- Neck
- Internal
- Upper Extremities
- Lower Extremities
- Trunk
- Head
- Multiple Body Parts - Other

Incidents - Employee Injuries by Area of Body

CHAPTER TWO

Five Ways Mobile Inspections Ensure Better Compliance

The whole point of inspections is to ensure compliance. They help you ensure your work is up to code, and your employees are safe.

But paper inspections come with a host of issues, many of which could be leaving you at risk. Here are five reasons that mobile inspection apps ensure better compliance:

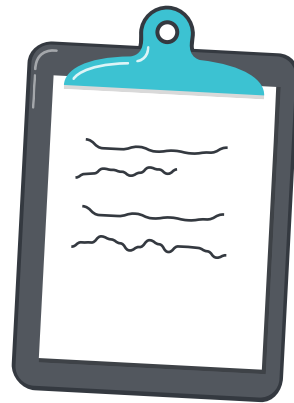
1. Receive each and every report

Perhaps it got lost on the way to your office. Maybe you go to look up a form later on and just can't find it: either way, you're missing a report. It happens to many businesses. In fact, up to 11% of documents are misfiled or lost. That's 11% of your time wasted. Worse, lost inspections create a massive liability risk.

Going mobile ensures you receive every inspection. Every finished safety inspection is stored securely in the cloud. There, you can access each and every form as a PDF, or download them for your own databases in various form types.

Canvas also makes it easy in case OSHA audits you. With all safety inspections stored in your Canvas account, you can quickly retrieve your safety inspections to prove your continued dedication to a culture of safety.

A mobile app ensures your business has all the safety inspection records you need to stay in compliance and give you an accurate bigger picture.



2. Wait, what does this say?

Reading handwriting can be an art. You can have amazing inspectors, but if you can't read their writing, they might as well have written the information in Greek!

Mobile apps allow you to gather that information in a clear and easy to understand way. Every inspection has typed text. Easily read it at your computer, or even on the go on a smartphone or tablet. You'll spend less time trying to translate and more time getting work done.

3. Right time, right place

A safety inspection done on paper can be hard to verify. How can you be sure that it occurred at the appropriate time and place? Some companies have tried to game the system: New York is taking up a case against a business that hired [unqualified people to pose as licensed site safety managers](#). These bad eggs, however, can put additional pressure on other businesses to prove that their work sites are safe.

Going mobile can provide additional information to protect and validate your inspections. Automatic date and time stamps prove when an inspection took place. With one click, you can have GPS capture your location, proving that the inspection occurred at the right location. You can also take photos, providing visual information to back up your inspection. Need a signature? Just sign with a finger or a stylus.

All of these features provide additional proof that paper forms can't provide. They create external validation, protecting your business even further. Mobile apps keep your business safe: and help you gather more information than ever before.



4. Safe from grease, dust, and other dangers

It's a dangerous world out there. Grease, dirt, heck even a cup of water can ruin a paper form! All it takes is a stumble for you to tear up an inspection and lose an hour of hard work.

Sure, smartphones and tablets can break. But you can easily protect these devices in away that was never possible with paper. You can put a paper inspection in a folder, but to use it, you have to write directly on it.

On the other hand, with smartphones and tablets you have choices of different ruggedized devices and protective cases. Not only can you gather information, but you can also ensure that a cup of coffee won't ruin your hard work.

5. No more holes in knowledge

It doesn't matter how many asterisks or underlines you use: sometimes forms come back incomplete. With forms taking hour or days to come to your office, it's often too late to go back and get good information.

A mobile inspection removes this headache. With one click, you can make fields required. Even if an employee skips a section, they won't be able to submit their inspection until they fill out the required fields. No more chasing down employees days later, just easy to read and complete inspections at your fingertips.

Creating accurate reports relies on having the best data possible. Mobile technology reduces human error and allows you to gather more information in real time. Say goodbye to illegible handwriting, missing paperwork, and other holes in your information. Say hello to more accurate information in real time each and [every time](#).

CHAPTER THREE

The Austin Company Streamlines Inspections and Saves Money with Mobile Safety Inspection

We've covered the ways that mobile inspections can help improve compliance. Read on to learn how one company (a Canvas subscriber) has improved its inspections by going mobile.

Highlights

- Inspections reduced from 2 hours to 15 minutes
- Improved internal communications
- Streamlined data collection saves sites days each year

Apps Used

- Project Safety Audit- Graded
- Storm Water Construction Site Inspection Report
- QA/QC 034410 Per Cast Concrete



BACKGROUND

The Austin Company, is a US-based international firm, offering architectural, engineering, design-build and construction management services. The company has a rich history with more than 135 years of experience serving clients in diverse industries.

One of their core values is a constant focus on safety, ensuring a safe work environment for employees, clients and partners. For every site or building inspection, the company has a rigorous process for quality and safety reports.

However, paper based reports were causing delays and issues for The Austin Company. Since they were filled out manually, it could take hours or days for reports to return from the field to the office.

In addition, it required hours of data entry to put this information into their system. The Austin Company realized that paper was inefficient, and costing them precious time and money. They needed a better way to capture more information while improving productivity and efficiency.



SOLUTION AND RESULTS

In February 2013, The Austin Company addressed this business challenge by turning to Canvas, the global leader in mobile apps for businesses. Thousands of organizations use Canvas's cloud-based mobile app to replace paper forms with customizable mobile apps that improve their data collection and productivity. With a simple drag and drop tool, people with no programming knowledge can build their own custom apps in minutes.

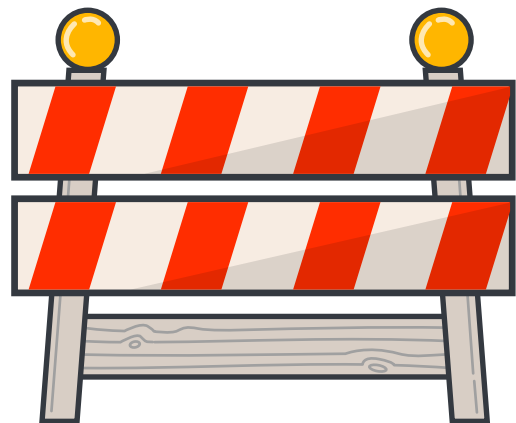
The Austin Company worked with Canvas to develop project safety and quality apps to be used in the field for any project. About 40 inspectors are using Canvas currently. They have seen real and measurable results. These include:

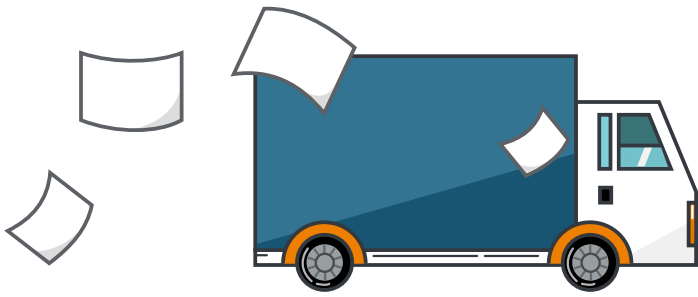
FASTER INFORMATION COLLECTION

Inspections that once took 2 hours now take only 15 minutes. They found time savings with Canvas's powerful feature set. Ways they save time include:

- Automatically populate forms with job-site information such as name, location and address, instead of filling this information out manually.
- Fill out only the information that applies to specific job-sites, no longer worrying if they're skipping fields they may or may not need.
- Choose which section of a job-site is being inspected and navigate to that section within the inspection form. Use automated color coding to quickly determine if a section of a form needs to be started, is in progress, or has been completed.

According to Charlie Engel, their director of QA/QC and Safety, this represents significant cost-savings. For each inspection, Austin is saving money in both personnel time as well as the cost of paper, copier maintenance and supplies, and postage required for reports that were previously mailed out. They are expecting significant time savings in their first year working with Canvas.





REAL TIME ACCESS TO DATA

Previously, collecting inspection information required a multi-step process. Inspectors would fill out the information by hand on site. Then, forms would return to the office hours or days after the inspection occurred. Finally, an employee would manually enter this information into the database. Only then could management access this safety information.

With Canvas, all forms are now submitted immediately to the cloud. With a quick search, site managers can access files. Canvas removes the need for any additional data entry or filing. Site managers can also do a bulk export of forms. With either an Excel or CSV file, these formats allow for easy integration into other database systems.

IMPROVED USER EXPERIENCE

Switching to Canvas has created an easier experience for The Austin Company's inspectors. Instead of lugging around a clipboard and paper, employees carry smartphones.

Also, with conditional branching, inspectors can only fill out the sections they need to on their inspections. This helps them fill out inspections more quickly and not be frustrated by filling out the wrong section!

Instead of a lengthy description on the site, inspectors now take photos of the site they're inspecting. Not only do photos expand Austin Company's data, they also help make the inspectors work faster and easier.

FLEXIBILITY TO MEET EVOLVING BUSINESS NEEDS

As a cloud-based, mobile platform with an easy-to-use mobile app builder, Canvas provides The Austin Company the flexibility to add new features to their mobile apps. As needs change, Canvas makes editing apps a frictionless process.

For instance, as safety regulations change, The Austin Company can easily update their safety inspections to comply with new rules. What once took hours or days to update and send out to sites now happens in minutes.

With over 40 users and growing, The Austin Company has saved paper, time, and money that has more than paid off its investment in mobile apps. Canvas has given The Austin Company an easy to use mobile experience that allows the company to focus on quality projects.



CHAPTER FOUR

10 Common Misconceptions about safety and environmental mobile inspections



Working with thousands of companies, we know there can be a lot of confusion and misinformation about mobile apps, especially for safety and environmental inspections. Below are ten of the most common misconceptions we hear and how mobile inspections actually work.

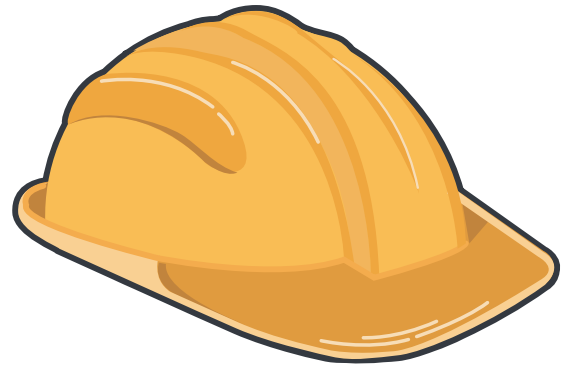
Misconception #1: Our employees are not technically savvy. They rarely use or even send an email. We like the idea, but it will be too hard to implement here.

Over the past couple of years, Canvas has worked with thousands of organizations both large and small. Many of our customers have been in construction safety, food safety, and warehouse/manufacturing safety positions. The beauty of a custom mobile app with Canvas is that it can be as easy as you'd like. You can create mobile apps as simple as our [vehicle inspection form](#), or our [environmental controls inspection checklist](#). Your employees can have a mobile app experience that is simple, fast, and painless.

Admittedly, some of our customers have had hesitation in this transition, but were able to get through this. Their advice to other companies includes:

a. Start with a test group

Companies often use our free trial period to test out their mobile apps for any potential issues. Often, they will start with technologically savvy users and their complete opposites. Even during the trial, employees start seeing that Canvas makes their work [faster and easier](#). Employees begin approaching management and ask to go mobile!



b. Integrate with your back end system

People love easy to use technology. With Canvas, it's easy to integrate your data with backend safety software and remove the job people hate most: data entry. One New England client says it best:

“When employees get used to finding the data easily, they will ask ‘hey, what about this other safety checklist?’”

Not only will this mean your employees are freed to do other tasks, they also become mobile app advocates on your behalf.

Misconception # 2: We want to go mobile, but we want our own custom mobile app.

That's one path you can take. But do you know how much time it will take and cost? [AnyPresence](#) did a survey of IT professionals and found:

- Over 50% spent more than \$50,000 and 3 months to develop a mobile app
- 24.3% spent \$100,000-500,000 and 6 months developing a mobile app

For custom development, that's only the beginning of the costs. [MGI Research](#) found that most mobile apps will need to be updated at least four times between 2012-2014! These costs just keep rising.

A subscription service with Canvas will often be cheaper and far more powerful than creating your own mobile from scratch. Our unlimited annual plans cost just \$210 per user, so you'll be spending a fraction and can begin using a mobile app today.

Even better, you can still create custom mobile apps as powerful or as simple as you need. IndustrySafe created and launched nine custom apps with Canvas in less than a month. Whether you use nine custom mobile apps, or one from the application store, it's the same low price.

You can have a custom mobile app experience with Canvas, at a fraction of the cost and time it would take to create and deploy your own.

Misconception #3: We use a lot of different devices. Android tablets, iPhones, even Blackberries! It's just too complicated to deploy a mobile app for our business.

This is a common concern, especially if you have been looking at custom mobile app development. Often, this will lock you into one platform, and can be difficult not only with a range of devices, but also limits your future mobile strategy!

With Canvas, we want to help you do business your way. So our platform works on iOS, Android,

Blackberry, and some Windows devices. If you need a rugged device, or a large tablet, you can still enjoy an intuitive and easy inspection experience with Canvas.

Misconception #4: My team writes faster than they type. This will slow down our processes further.

Our mobile apps can bypass the need for typing in several ways to make your inspections, or surveys even faster. They include:

- Drop-down lists: providing a range of pre-written answers to fill in.
- Checkboxes: click once, and all done.
- Reference data: add in your own information into apps such as equipment information, or location or client specific data, to make your inspections faster and more accurate.

On top of these powerful features at Canvas, many smartphones and tablets have talk-to-text ability. So even if your users have to fill in descriptions, they can talk into their device, and it will transcribe for them.

In all, most of our customers find that forms take less time, have less errors, and also allow them to capture more information than ever before.



Misconception #5: I have team members in places where they can't get the Internet or Wi-Fi. So going mobile won't work for our business.

This is a common issue for companies. Canvas understands that lots of companies, have workers in remote places. Internet isn't always available, especially in the safety industry.

With Canvas, you don't need to be connected to the internet to fill out forms. Employees can still fill out a Canvas mobile app. Once you have access to the internet, all your forms will be automatically submitted to the cloud.

Misconception # 6: We use many different carriers. I don't have the time to figure how it would work with each one

Our emphasis on flexibility and ease of use has meant that we work with various carriers. We can work with any carrier in any country. We have customers in California, South Africa, United Kingdom, and even Singapore! Our customers live and work in over 60 different countries and use over 100 different carrier networks.

Wherever you are, whatever network you use, Canvas can work with you.



Misconception #7: I like capturing data on the mobile devices, but I don't need information in the cloud. I need to integrate it into our other systems.

Being able to collect and store data quickly and efficiently is great, but we go far beyond easy information collection at Canvas. We have an open API, which allows the customers to integrate their Canvas data with almost any software or database. You can integrate with:

- Quickbooks
- SAP
- Oracle
- Sharepoint
- Peoplesoft
- PeachTree
- Sage
- [IndustrySafe](#)
- Custom, industry-specific software

Many customers integrate with others systems by downloading information as a simple CSV or Excel file. Other options are also available.

Misconception #8: I'm too busy; I don't have time to implement another program.

Transitioning to Canvas isn't like other programs. We've launched as many as 5,800 users in a 24 hours. With hundreds of safety and environmental inspections in our store, organizations can download an app and use it within the same hour. No matter what industry you're in, we have something to help you get started today.

With years of helping thousands of companies transition, we've seen many companies fully implement Canvas well within their 30-day trial period.



Misconception #9: Building a mobile safety inspection app? I don't have time to learn how to do that.

Our app builder is simple to use. You don't need to learn any coding, or any html: simply drag and drop the features you want. You can have a simple custom mobile app in five minutes, or a more powerful app in under an hour. The choice is yours.

Still don't have the time? No worries, we can convert your form for you. We'll convert your first form into a custom mobile app [for free](#). Through the whole process you'll have a point of contact keeping in touch, and ensuring the mobile app fits your needs. Our mobile app consultants are available via phone and email. We are always happy to answer any of your questions.

After the first form, we're happy to convert as many forms as you'd like. Each of these cost just \$50 each. Many of customers find something close to their needs in our application store. A simple 'safety inspection' search brings up nearly 200 apps, all of which are customizable. In a few minutes, you can tweak an inspection to fit your unique needs.

Misconception #10: Mobile apps will mean a strain on our data costs, making it more expensive than paper!

What kind of information will you be gathering? If you will be using simple text or checklists, our forms are as light as an average email. That's light for data, and probably won't affect your data costs.

Want to use images or GPS? That can cause some additional use of data. However, Canvas is flexible and you can use it on Wi-Fi, or offline. That can help reduce your use of data in the long run.

Still worried or have questions about mobile safety inspections? Feel free to [contact us](#) and we can help you find a custom solution to your problem.

CONCLUSION

Compliance will always be a crucial part of your job. The rules and regulations aren't going away. If anything, they're becoming more complicated than ever. Today you can make it easier on your company to gather, collect, and visualize this data. Mobile apps and software management systems allow you to collect and use this information in real time.

Unchain yourself from paper forms and start saving time and money today with Canvas.
Send us your first form, and we'll convert it into a mobile app for free.



Try it Today

