

BearingPoint®

Suva enhances Swiss accident prevention with a new, immersive virtual reality platform

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BearingPoint and Suva, Switzerland's largest accident insurer, are jointly launching a Netflix-style Virtual Reality (VR) training platform. This immersive new tool will provide more than two million workers insured by Suva with impactful and accessible safety training. The goal: to strengthen workplace safety, integrate cutting-edge technologies, and fundamentally transform training practices.

Founded in 1918, Suva employs over 4,700 people at its headquarters in Lucerne, across 18 agency locations throughout Switzerland, and in its two rehabilitation clinics in Bellikon and Sion. As an independent public-sector enterprise, Suva insures more than 138,000 companies and over 2.2 million employees against the consequences of occupational accidents and diseases. Unemployed individuals are also automatically insured through Suva. In addition, Suva manages the military insurance and the accident insurance for individuals in disability (IV) programs on behalf of the Swiss federal government. Its services span prevention, insurance, and rehabilitation. Suva operates on a self-financing basis, without public funding, and returns profits to policyholders in the form of lower premiums. The Suva Council includes representatives from social partners – employers and employees – as well as the federal government.

Harnessing innovation to reduce accident risks

Preventing workplace accidents is essential not only for employee protection but also for reducing financial and operational risks for businesses. This is especially critical in the construction sector, where workers face potential hazards daily. Despite increasing safety measures, between 260,000 and nearly 300,000 accidents still occur each year in Switzerland —on construction sites, for instance—often due to non-compliance with regulations, time pressure, or negligence.

To tackle this challenge, Suva, a leading Swiss insurer, aimed to revolutionize workplace safety training. The goal was to make workplace risks easier to see, understand, and prevent through immersive, interactive learning. Since 2018, Suva has been exploring the potential of virtual reality (VR) to enhance safety protocols. To scale this approach and encourage its widespread adoption across industries, the company had to pursue systematic support in developing a new business model. This support would focus on three core areas: producing high-quality VR content, designing interactive training modules, and implementing effective change management strategies. A key goal was also to integrate this innovative approach into Suva's internal processes. This could be accomplished with the assistance of an end-to-end partner able to support the company in implementing this ambitious vision.

Real-world scenarios in a scalable simulation platform

The solution took shape through close collaboration between Suva and BearingPoint, who developed a next-generation training platform combining Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR), and Mixed Reality (XR). After assessing the capabilities of these technologies, BearingPoint created immersive training scenarios that focused on high-risk tasks such as securing heavy loads in construction or preventing falls from unprotected areas. This marked a pivotal step in enhancing traditional prevention methods.

These insights enabled the team to develop several prototypes that clearly demonstrated how immersive technologies can support accident prevention and the effective delivery of safety instructions. From the outset, the platform was designed to be both scalable and user-friendly, regardless of the user's profile.

As part of this effort, Suva and BearingPoint also developed a robust operating model, a sustainable technology architecture, and a turnkey service offering tailored to the Swiss market: Swiss Safety VR. This ever-expanding library features 20-minute interactive modules that vividly illustrate the consequences of workplace accidents. The format is not only more engaging and educational than conventional approaches, but also more cost-efficient. BearingPoint supported the business model development as well as the design and simulation of new application scenarios.

Special attention was given to change management, notably through “train-the-trainer” programs—essential for seamlessly integrating the XR platform into Suva's operations. Another key success factor was the establishment of a strong collaborative ecosystem. In partnership with numerous stakeholders—including major Swiss construction firms and professional associations—new VR content was developed, unlocking valuable synergies.

A new era in safety training

With the launch of Swiss Safety VR, Suva is ushering in a new way to train and raise awareness: more mobile, more interactive, and more accessible. Companies and their partners now can modernize their internal processes while adopting forward-looking training and communication practices.

The platform is expected to significantly reduce the need for in-person workshops, resulting in considerable time and cost savings. It also leads to better retention of safety guidelines compared to traditional classroom or e-learning formats.

By offering these training modules free of charge to all organizations—including schools—Suva and BearingPoint are actively contributing to the democratization of high-quality safety education. Even organizations with limited resources can access this advanced training technology. The platform is available on the Meta Quest 3 headset, in German, French, Italian, and English.

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