

Steve Halbert Chairman, Alcumus Group

Workplace health and safety perhaps used to provoke a look of disdain. Nowadays, it has never been more critical to a business's operational success. Complying with ever tightening regulations and certifications can be a full-time job. This is increasingly supported by specialist providers such as Alcumus, the U.K.'s leading technology-led provider of compliance risk management, certification and accreditation services. The business serves over a third of the FTSE 100, and teamed up with Inflexion in 2015 to help accelerate its growth.

"If you're running a business, you can't yawn at health and safety," says Steve Halbert, Alcumus' Chairman. "It's not a question of do business leaders have to take it seriously, because they definitely have to. It's a question of how they do it, how cost effectively and how professionally." Ultimately, Halbert notes, Alcumus helps its clients "manage their brand by helping ensure employees, clients and customers are safe."

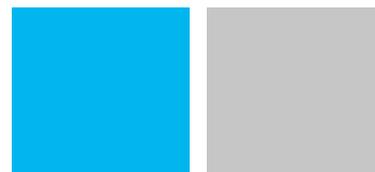
For some businesses, this extends all the way down the supply chain and it quickly becomes complicated. For example, a large retail group's procedures need to be accredited across hundreds of sites, involving multiple contractors from catering and cleaning through to more technical electrical and mechanical services. Using Alcumus SafeContractor, which accredits 30,000 contractors a year, from small local firms to large, complex national groups, managers can verify that their supply chain meets the criteria they have laid down using a tailored programme devised by them and their Alcumus consultant.

Alcumus bought SafeContractor within two months of Inflexion's buyout, as part of its £47 million acquisition of Santia. "This quadrupled the Alcumus client base and has been transformative in terms of our profile," Halbert says, "and in particular our

ability to blend services together." Most of these are tech-enabled now; Alcumus's Information Exchange software platform is at the forefront of its industry and is paramount in how it provides clients with a fully integrated and seamless service, enabling clients to record and track the health and safety of their employees and manage supply chains including fleet, contractors, energy and environmental. "Our software facilitates diagnosis of recurring issues and our advisers identify potential ways of solving them," Halbert says. "Our software is the platform around which our advisory services wrap."

Alcumus also owns a database approaching one million COSHH assessments – which are a legal requirement if working with substances that are hazardous to health. Alcumus' assessments provide clients with current guidance on protective equipment and handling them safely. A further division handles certification to globally recognised ISO standards. "This and all of our technology-led services have huge international potential," Halbert says. Overseas growth is most likely to come through acquisitions, or by targeting regions where existing multinational clients are already active. Halbert stresses "we'll be very selective" when sizing up targets. SafeContractor has brought significant value to Alcumus' client base. U.K. expansion may include "penetration of new sectors," Halbert adds, citing food as an obvious example. But there is plenty of room to grow organically. "People with big property estates, whether it be a bank or a supermarket, are perfect clients for a huge amount of what we do," Halbert says.

Wherever Alcumus chooses to focus, "our business is about making organisations safer, healthier and stronger" he concludes. "That's what we'll be famous for."



Alcumus Group is a market-leading provider of technology-enabled business assurance and compliance risk management solutions, serving over 32,000 clients, including 35% of the FTSE 100. It provides services which are critical to compliance with U.K. regulations and internationally recognised standards.