

Sustainability Targets Prompt Business-Software Overhaul

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Business-software providers are introducing tools to help companies keep track of their progress toward sustainability goals.

Thousands of businesses have pledged to achieve net-zero carbon emissions in response to growing environmental demands from investors and governments. But sustainability professionals say organizing emissions data can be an unwieldy process, requiring companies to analyze information from different software sources on about everything from buildings' energy consumption to electricity purchases.

"This process makes reporting and dashboarding extremely time-consuming and error-prone," said Gabe Wing, director of sustainability at **Herman Miller** Inc. The furniture maker last fall started using Salesforce's Sustainability Cloud suite, which automates the data-collection and emission calculations. That has saved time on tracking emissions across Herman Miller's eight brands, Mr. Wing said. "The more we can track and manage, the more we can improve our overall footprints," he said.

Herman Miller says it generates all its electricity from renewable sources and has laid out other sustainability targets, from reductions in water use to the elimination of waste. It also uses software from San Francisco startup Ecomedes Inc. to access a database of environmental information about its raw materials that it can pass on to customers, Mr. Wing said.

Peter Lacy, chief responsibility officer and global-sustainability services lead at consulting firm **Accenture** PLC, said business software is gradually being updated to take sustainability considerations into account, including applications companies use to prepare financial statements and monitor investment risks. For instance, financial-reporting software maker **Workiva** Inc. added environmental, social and governance-reporting tools to its disclosure application earlier this year.

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