



The Hybrid Workplace Planning Guide for Government Agencies

Start Creating Your Hybrid Workplace Strategy



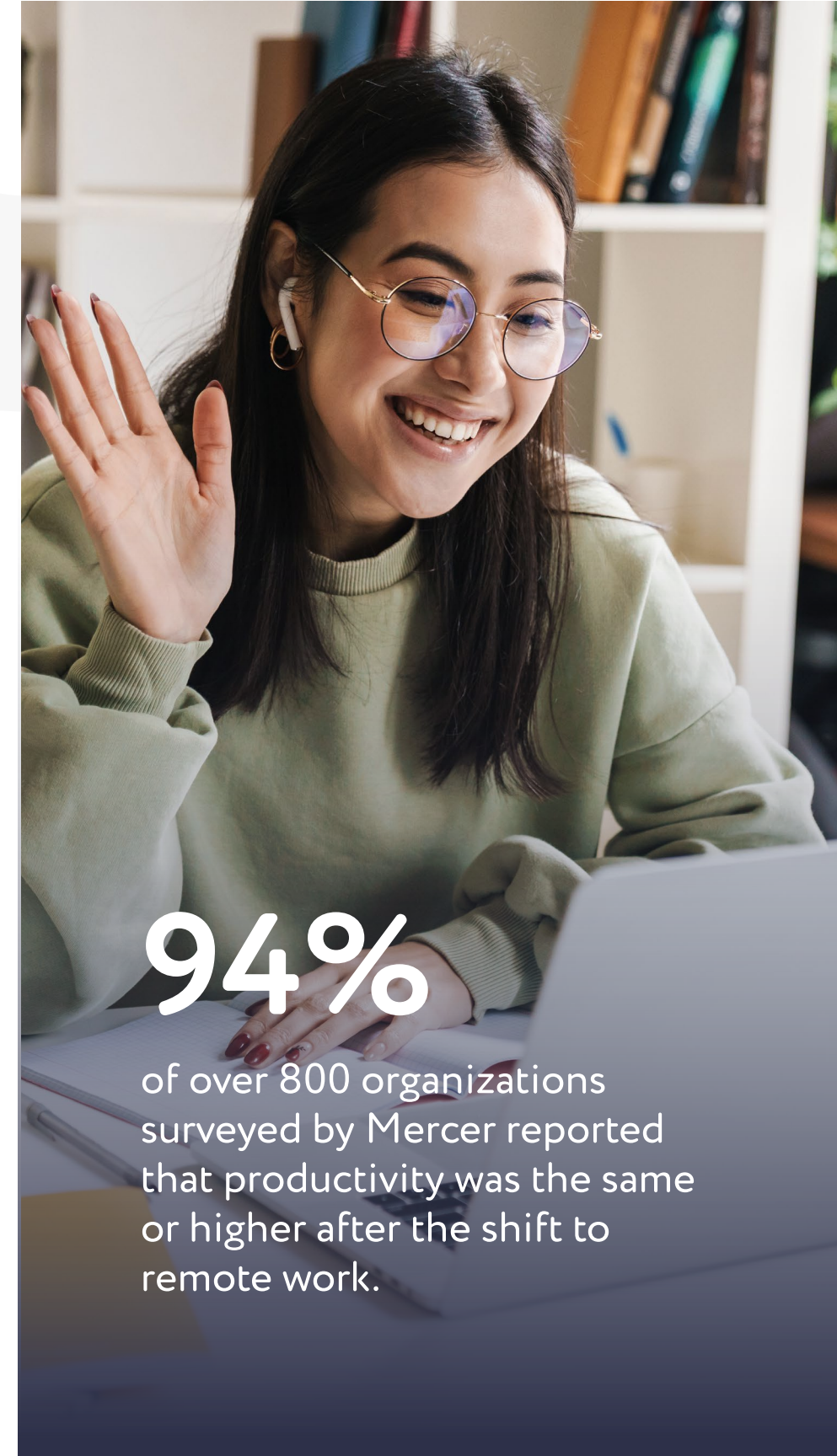
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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic forever changed the way we think about the workplace as it forced remote and virtual work to the forefront of our collective experience. Employers and employees alike discovered that productivity is not negatively impacted by the worker's location. In fact, 94% of over 800 organizations surveyed by Mercer reported that productivity was the same or higher after the shift to remote work.

Embracing flexible work and hybrid workplaces as a company strategy can have years-long positive impacts on your organization in terms of employee productivity and engagement, real estate cost control and long-term performance, recruiting and retention goals. A 2016 Forbes study inside a Fortune 500 company found that employees who were placed on a flexibility program were both happier at work and less prone to burnout and psychological stress than their colleagues who were not on the program. Flexible work was often considered a unique benefit pre-pandemic by HR leaders, an important part of a benefits package, especially when recruiting Millennials or Gen Z workers who have different expectations for mobility and technology. Studies over the last several years have consistently demonstrated the benefits of flexible work to both employees and employers.



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of over 800 organizations surveyed by Mercer reported that productivity was the same or higher after the shift to remote work.



This guide is interactive!

There are clickable buttons throughout for easy document navigation and downloadable resources.

Giving all employees equal access to both flexibility and a high-functioning physical space gives every individual the opportunity to work in the place and time that best suits both their work style and their lifestyle, optimizing their overall performance. The key is outfitting a digital workplace that connects mobile and virtual workers to the physical space, offering fluid and productive work experiences both in and out of the office.

This Hybrid Workplace Planning Guide will give you practical guidance on creating a hybrid workplace strategy. With an emphasis on cross-departmental collaboration as a key to success, the guide is designed to support the work of a hybrid planning team consisting of FM, HR and IT. With a focus on balancing cost-savings and change management, this guide will help you adopt forward-thinking strategies that lay the foundation for growth into a future state that is dynamic, flexible and resilient. Let's get started!



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Implementing Hybrid Work

An enduring result of the COVID-19 pandemic will be the widespread acceptance and adoption of remote and virtual work. Some organizations may ask employees to work from home permanently to enable lease consolidations and portfolio reductions. At the same time, employees may have discovered they are far more productive from home without the burden of lengthy commutes and stressful schedules. Other employees may be eager to return to the office for the benefits of in-person collaboration. Hybrid workplaces allow organizations to accommodate the individual needs of employees while improving the overall performance of the corporate portfolio. There are a variety of ways to implement a hybrid workplace, and when well-executed, they can lead to significant benefits to both employers and employees.

Benefits to Employees

- ✓ Better work life balance
- ✓ More autonomy over schedule
- ✓ Reduced commuting time
- ✓ Improved Productivity
- ✓ Improved Engagement
- ✓ Improved job satisfaction
- ✓ More flexibility for relocations

Benefits to Employers

- ✓ Real estate optimization and lease cost-savings
- ✓ Expanded talent pool without geographic limitations
- ✓ Recruiting differentiator as younger generations seek out flexible schedules and a rich digital experience
- ✓ Competitive differentiator as productivity increases boost overall organizational growth and performance
- ✓ Reduction in turnover with improved job satisfaction



80% of workers

want the continued option to work from home at least part of the time according to a recent survey by Harvard Business School.

Establishing a Hybrid Workplace Team

Facilities, Real Estate, HR and IT represent the primary components for a successful digital workplace strategy, encompassing the physical space, the workforce and the systems and apps that keep them connected no matter where they are.

Senior leadership teams and the collaborating sponsors in FM, HR and IT must work together to incorporate the new workplace reality into company policy and culture, to efficiently manage it against real estate costs and to effectively communicate an agile plan to a distributed workforce. Collaborating across these departments and involving them in the decision-making process will align priorities and result in solutions that have broader impact.




Key Considerations for Successful Hybrid Work

1. Empowering Employees
2. Rethinking Policy
3. Investing in Digital Equity
4. Succeeding with Change Management

Empowering Employees

The ideal hybrid workplace makes it easy for employees to make informed decisions about their workday. Employees must have digital visibility to resources and co-workers to plan effective days either in or out of the office, ensuring they have access to the appropriate space and necessary resources for the task at hand. Resource availability and utilization can be managed through software applications, mobile apps, IoT sensors and digital signage.

There are typically four types of workers within a flexible, hybrid workplace:

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
|  | Stationary
In the office at least 3.5 days a week.
60% of the day spent in workstation. |  | Externally mobile
In the office 1-3.5 days a week. |
|  | Internally Mobile
In the office 3.5 days a week. Less than
60% of the day spent in workstation. |  | Remote
In the office 1-4 days a month. |

Assess your population for their preferred work style to better understand the type of workers you have. From there you can consider your options for hybrid workflows and strategic floorplan design: neighborhoods, hoteling, hot desking and open seating concepts can all be adapted to suit the needs of your unique workforce.



Additional Resources

1. [The Worst of Both Worlds: Zooming From the Office - New York Times](#)
2. [Adjusting to Work on the Move - FM:Systems](#)
3. [FAQ: The truth about America's return to the office - JLL Technologies](#)



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**How to Create
Employee Personas**



Types of Neighborhoods

A workplace neighborhood is a working environment or section of the office intended for a specific segment of the workforce. There are a variety of ways to organize neighborhoods, and they offer the flexibility to quickly adapt to the changing needs of your workforce.

Function-based neighborhoods: The original neighborhood- individuals in the department or with similar job function all sit together.

Activity-based neighborhoods: Activity-based work environments focus on the type of work being done. Companies can dedicate these spaces to collaboration, heads-down individual work relaxation or any other activity-type that suits their unique workforce.

Amenities-based neighborhoods: This option focuses on the amenities or assets available to workers in that space. Areas with dual monitors, sound-proof telephone booths or rows of standing desks let people work in the place that gives them the tools they need to get their best work done.

Project-based neighborhoods: This neighborhood type surging in popularity is project-based collaborative spaces. The goal is to put all contributors to the project in one place to collaborate cross-functionally for a set period. These neighborhoods can be easily re-assigned as projects are complete and new ones begin. This highly flexible approach lets organizations adapt to changes in their team without changing the physical layout of the floor.



Rethinking Policy

HR leadership must consider the inherent shift from time-based work to output-based work, where the measure of the employee is in the quality of their production, not the hours logged. Remote work principles should be incorporated into formal company policy, and lines of communication with employees must remain open to understand what is working and what isn't.



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**Implementing Hybrid
Workplace Strategy**



Investing in Digital Equity

One of the most challenging aspects of hybrid and virtual work is maintaining a sense of balance, equality and culture across distributed teams. Remote members of largely stationary teams may feel disconnected or as if they do not have an equal weight in the team. Organizations can combat this by ensuring all employees have access to high-quality video conferencing solutions, cameras, monitors and other digital solutions that improve connectivity. Managers and team leads need to be aware of the potential for unbalanced teams and work to foster open communication and offer a variety of channels to keep employees engaged. HR leaders are thinking outside the box to extend culture and keep employees connected: virtual break rooms; online happy hours, food tastings or cooking classes; exercise challenges and holiday charitable-giving contests.

Succeeding with Change Management

A successful hybrid workplace strategy requires clear communication and thoughtful planning as the solutions are deeply tied to the employee's day-to-day experience. As organizations shift towards hybrid workplaces, it's important for members of HR, IT and Facilities to work in tandem. These three teams represent the three components of a hybrid workplace: employees, the physical space and the technology that connects them. When communicating new solutions and policies, communicating as a team will present a more cohesive picture to your organization, improving employee confidence and driving adoption. Leverage multiple communication channels to appeal to different types of learners, such as town halls, emails, newsletters and direct communication from managers and team leads.

Another key component of change management is bi-directional communication with employees. A regular cadence of surveys and feedback will communicate to employees that their feedback is valuable, and it will give them a sense of control in their workplace which builds trust and fosters ownership.

*Survey Tips:

1. Surveys are a powerful way to track employee sentiment as you make decisions and introduce change. Surveys can help you gauge direction with simple yes/no questions. If you want more insight into a scale of sentiment, you can offer questions with a ranked answer (i.e. 1 is strongly agree and 5 is strongly disagree).
2. For specific feedback or to generate ideas, use free form answers. It's important to follow up post-survey to let employees know the general response and actions that are being taken as a result.
3. A regular cadence of surveys and feedback will communicate to employees that their feedback is valuable, and it will give them a sense of control in their workplace experience.



Rethinking Your Portfolio

A Gartner, Inc. survey of 317 Finance leaders on March 30, 2020 revealed that 74% will move at least 5% of their previously on-site workforce to permanently remote positions post-COVID 19.

“This data is an example of the lasting impact the current coronavirus crisis will have on the way companies do business,” said Alexander Bant, practice vice president, research for the Gartner Finance Practice. “CFOs, already under pressure to tightly manage costs, clearly sense an opportunity to realize the cost benefits of a remote workforce. In fact, nearly a quarter of respondents said they will move at least 20% of their on-site employees to permanent remote positions.”

Finance Leaders and real estate executives alike are keenly aware of the potential cost savings of converting employees to permanently remote working. But not every role or every employee is suited for or desires to be fully remote. Flexible work strategies give you a middle ground: flexible options for schedules and seating and IoT data to understand true utilization lets you fine-tune a cost savings strategy. Not only can you consolidate the real estate for those employees who are now permanently remote, you can optimize the remaining portfolio for employees who are no longer tethered to expectations for the traditional 9-5 workday. As the pandemic subsides and requirements for physical distancing are lessened, a hybrid workplace can accommodate future growth within the existing footprint by adjusting the workplace density and the desk-sharing ratio.

In the current economic environment, cost-savings will be a key driver in decision making as organizations look for ways to recover losses or plan for a decline in revenue streams. Understanding your workspace utilization is the first step to identifying cost-savings opportunities within your real estate portfolio. You will also want to gather data about workspace operating costs, such as utilities, janitorial cleaning, security, and maintenance. By breaking these costs down by the square foot, you will be able to more accurately predict the total impact of plans to expand or reduce your workspace.

Many organizations use benchmarking to establish points of comparison. Ultimately, you want your changes in workspace management to provide your organization with competitive advantage, so it is important to find out what is “average” for a company of your size or within your industry. Many real estate management companies publish regular benchmarking surveys, giving you access to global utilization data as well as insight into agile work strategies and workplace trends.



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**Refocus & Rationalize Your
Real Estate Portfolio**



Facility Portfolio Value Matrix



To begin your workplace strategy planning, assess each facility based on its capacity to serve the goals of the organization and effectively support employees. Then focus your re-opening efforts based on their priority/criticality ranking

Consider the following questions to plot your facilities in the value matrix.

1. **Does the facility help to support the mission of the organization?**
2. **Does the facility provide good financial value?**
3. **Does it provide a positive experience for employees and visitors?**
4. **Does the location make sense for your hybrid workforce?**



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**How to Make a Hybrid
Strategy Succeed**



Potential Cost-Savings

One of the strategic benefits of a flexible work strategy is the possibility for cost-savings via real estate consolidation and optimization. By offering flexibility and manipulating different factors such as average workplace density and employee-to-desk ratio, organizations can completely rethink the amount of physical real estate that is required to support their workforce. An effective flexible work strategy combined with a real estate optimization strategy creates a powerful opportunity for organizational growth.

Cost Savings Calculator:

This cost savings calculator examines three core components where tech solutions can result in a substantial cost savings from more efficient processes to more-informed portfolio decisions.



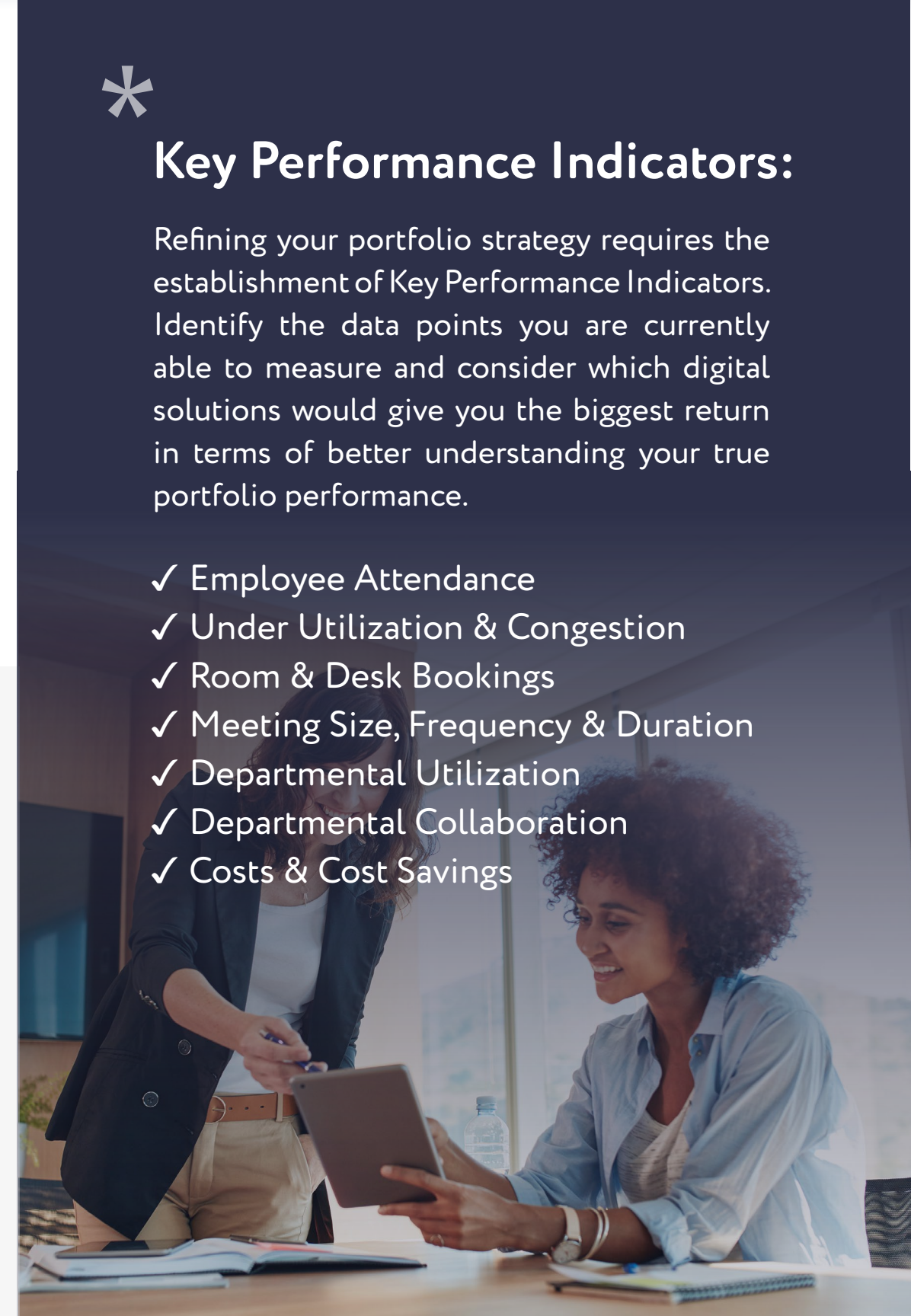
[Free Planning Resource]
Hybrid Planning Calculator



Key Performance Indicators:

Refining your portfolio strategy requires the establishment of Key Performance Indicators. Identify the data points you are currently able to measure and consider which digital solutions would give you the biggest return in terms of better understanding your true portfolio performance.

- ✓ Employee Attendance
- ✓ Under Utilization & Congestion
- ✓ Room & Desk Bookings
- ✓ Meeting Size, Frequency & Duration
- ✓ Departmental Utilization
- ✓ Departmental Collaboration
- ✓ Costs & Cost Savings





Harnessing Data for Strategy Optimization

The digital solutions you choose to power your hybrid workplace are essential as they also generate the data that continually informs the strategy. The current technology environment of IoT hardware and cloud software offers a variety of dynamic and passive data sources, creating a rich view of organizational activity. Organizations can aggregate and analyze that data for actionable insights on optimization, cost-reduction and behavioral trends, allowing them to adapt and adjust as business needs change. Applied data sciences let you take the next step towards predictive analytics and utilization forecasting.

- ✓ Understand utilization by location, resource type and department
- ✓ Compare actual vs. planned meeting data
- ✓ Reduce under-utilization, ghost meetings and no shows
- ✓ Reveal underutilized and under-performing spaces
- ✓ Aggregate a variety of data sources for multi-dimensional analysis
- ✓ Identify utilization trends and monitor usage to plan for future growth



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**Cost-Savings & ROI Potential
in the Digital Workplace**



Smart Technology for the Hybrid Workplace

The advent of cloud and mobile technologies over the past decade put us in a unique position to respond and adapt to the onset of COVID-19. Many companies were able to seamlessly transition to a fully remote workforce with very little disruption to their business continuity. The future state will be a hybrid of the pre- and post-COVID experiences with increased flexibility and a digitization of the physical space that empowers employees to access workspaces in real time for fluid work experiences.

Smart building, smart devices and the Internet of Things create new opportunities to gather data, automate processes, and optimize systems, realizing significant cost savings through improved efficiencies and increased visibility to utilization and trends. Adopting the right technologies and implementing the right strategies will accelerate your recovery by creating a digital workplace that augments your physical space, increasing visibility and access for mobile, distributed workers.

Building A Business Case for Technology Investments:

- ✓ Quantify Potential Savings
- ✓ Share Case Studies
- ✓ Present a strategy for communication and change management
- ✓ Clearly define the benefits to employees

Technology Checklist:

Space Management Software: digital floorplans are the foundation of an effective hybrid workplace

IoT sensors: objective, real-time data on occupancy, utilization and capacity

Desk and Resource Reservation Software: facilitate hoteling strategies and create visibility to available resources

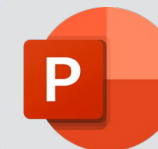
Strategic Planning + Move Management: refine your strategy with utilization data and implement floorplans that are tailored to your workforce

Environmental sensors: achieve your wellness and sustainability goals by monitoring and maintaining environmental levels in your physical office

Mobile Apps: for contactless solutions and touchless workflows

Visitor Management: prioritize safety and compliance while creating a welcoming experience for visitors and guests

Digital Signage: bring your workplace strategy to life with interactive hardware that promotes collaboration



Download the “Build Your Case” Template



Conclusion

FM:Systems is proud to be a leader in global facility and workplace management, delivering innovative solutions to help over 1200 organizations worldwide navigate the challenging aftermath of COVID-19. We have collaborated with many government agencies to develop tools that support healthy, hybrid workplaces and ideal workplace experiences. The right workplace management platform can achieve a variety of cost-savings and efficiency gains while the right flexible work strategy can boost employee satisfaction, morale and productivity. The combination of cost-savings and productivity gains promises returns that extend beyond the immediate business need. A thoughtful investment in your workplace strategy today can yield dividends in employee loyalty and engagement that will resonate for years.

Schedule a free consultation with one of our experts
and get started on your hybrid workplace strategy.

