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RESEARCH



The Welcoming Workplace

How offices are creating a better, more productive work experience

UNDERWRITTEN BY BRIVO  brivo

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Introduction

Offices are not always the most welcoming places. Most offices were designed with more thought to keeping unwanted occupants out than welcoming people in. This is unfortunate because when workers feel welcome they are more likely to come to the office and are more productive when they get there.

Office buildings are being rethought as a place not where people have to go to work, but where they want to be productive and succeed. That means reconfiguring every part of the user journey to help make the experience easier and more conducive to work. New technologies, strategies, and mindsets are changing almost every aspect of the physical workplace to help it adapt to our new work reality.

In this report we will look at the different ways that occupants interact with buildings and provide ideas and resources on how to make each interaction more welcoming.



Sponsor Letter

LETTER FROM THE UNDERWRITER

This report emphasizes a common issue in many offices since the pandemic: the lack of thoughtful consideration when creating spaces that are welcoming and supportive of employee well-being. As the world changes and work dynamics evolve, it becomes crucial to rethink the traditional concept of an office merely as a place of work. Instead, the focus should be on designing an environment that employees genuinely want to be in, and that empowers them to succeed.

By incorporating innovative technologies, adopting new strategies, and embracing progressive mindsets, workplaces can adapt to the evolving reality of work and better meet the diverse needs of remote, hybrid, mobile, and digital workforce.

Office spaces that prioritize employee well-being and engagement have been proven to increase morale, retention rates, and most importantly, boost productivity to new levels. A warm, inclusive environment encourages employees to be physically present at the office, rather than exclusively opting for remote work.

This physical presence, in turn, fosters collaboration, enhances creativity, and nurtures a sense of belonging among the workforce.

We must strive to create an ecosystem that supports the growth and success of businesses and their employees. Initiatives that focus on human-centric workspace design demonstrate a commitment to employee satisfaction, which ultimately contributes to the organization's overall success.

Transforming office spaces into places where people want to be productive and thrive is crucial in our post-pandemic world. This shift in focus aligns with the changing dynamics of the modern workforce and presents exciting opportunities for businesses to innovate while empowering their employees to reach their full potential.

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Pre-Arrival

Traditionally “the office” was a physical place, so what happens outside of it didn’t really matter much for office managers and designers. But now that work is becoming increasingly hybrid the office encompasses everything that workers do. That means that the office experience starts before workers even leave their home.

To make a workplace welcoming and entice workers to want to come to the office the entire experience office experience needs to be considered.

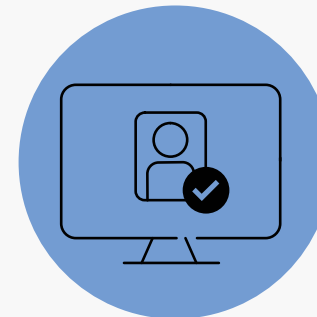
Scheduling & reservations

Workers want to know that they will have a positive office experience and that means access to a productive workspace. To provide for that everything from desks to conference rooms need to be reservable online. To enable this building managers and tenants will need to connect a number of important pieces of software:



SCHEDULING PROGRAM

Desks, conference rooms, lounge space, and even parking spots needs to be easily schedulable by employees.



ACCESS CONTROL

PA building's access control system needs to be able to be updated by users so they will have permissions to enter the right areas at the right time.



CLOUD-BASED SOFTWARE

For occupants to be able to physically access their spaces, on-prem attestation software will have to be updated to give the proper permissions.

Collaboration suggestions

Not only do workers need to understand where they will be working, they will also need to be prompted on when their teammates and collaborators will be in the office as well. A welcoming workplace will not only show occupants where they will be able to sit to be close to people that they are working with but will also notify them when those people are scheduled to come in.

Conference rooms are often used as a place for collaboration but if not conference rooms are available workers should be able to reserve other areas, such as lounge space. In order to avoid distractions for others, spaces around these meeting areas should come with a noise warning.



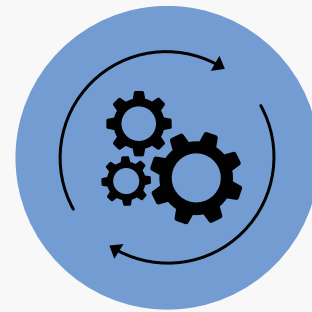
Challenges

Providing pre-arrival services like space booking and visitor management is important to creating a better user experience but a number of challenges can make it difficult.



MULTI-TENANT BUILDINGS

To ensure smooth access and navigation throughout the building, office buildings with multiple tenants must integrate their systems with the common areas effectively. This requires close cooperation between tenants and landlords.



LEGACY SYSTEMS

Most buildings already have some of their hardware access control already installed. It is important to find software that will be able to connect every type of system, no matter how old or antiquated it might be.



CONNECTIVITY ISSUES

Since internet connectivity is needed for both workers and building systems property infrastructure needs to be in place for both wired and wireless connectivity throughout the building.

Arrival

First impressions leave a mark. This is true when meeting someone for the first time but is also true when it comes to arriving at the office. How people first experience an office sets the tone for how they feel about the rest of their time there so buildings and the people working in them need to do their best to create a good first impression.

To create a good first impression offices will have to understand the entire user experience with their building, starting with how they get there. Creating a good impression will also mean rethinking how lobbies are designed and retraining staff to prioritize hospitality, while not sacrificing safety.



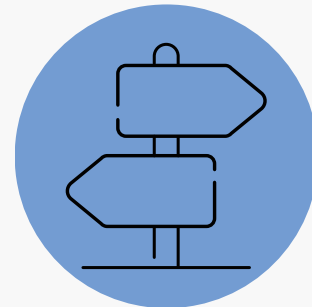
Parking & Transit

The journey for office workers starts when they leave their homes. The commute can be enough for many to avoid going to work so anything offices can do to make those commutes easier will help. These systems will also help building staff manage parking areas more efficiently and will help avoid congestion that creates a poor overall experience.



TICKETING

To simplify the check-in process, workers can validate parking with a card, fob, or mobile device. Some buildings also enable users to pre-reserve spaces and validate charges in advance.



WAYFINDING

To prevent workers from getting lost, use clear instructions via traditional painted signs or modern digital posters.

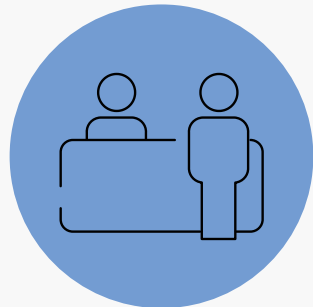
LICENSE PLATE READERS

One great way for parking garage to be more efficient and provide important information to building management is license plate readers that can track each car as they come and go.



Check-in

The check-in process is a crucial opportunity for building owners or managers to create a welcoming workplace. It goes beyond a simple greeting; there are various measures buildings can take to enhance the check-in experience and foster a warm atmosphere for employees and visitors.



LOBBY DESIGN

To ensure visitor-friendly lobbies, buildings are opting for a more welcoming approach. Instead of having guests approach security officers at a desk, they station someone near the entrance to personally greet and assist visitors.



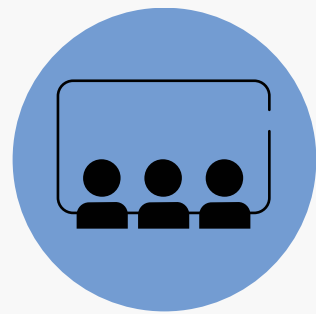
ACCESS CONTROL

Entering a building should be as quick of a process as possible. Access can be made easier by giving employees option of different authorization methods like key cards/fob, mobile credentials, and biometrics.



Challenges

Creating a better check-in experience requires buildings and building staff to rethink their processes.



TRAINING

Building staff, including security, should undergo hospitality training. Automating processes can free up time for more personalized interactions with occupants. New hires should possess both technical and interpersonal skills.



SECURITY

To focus on hospitality and experience-related tasks, staff must spend less time overseeing security. Computer vision-equipped security cameras can alert staff to potential breaches, even when they can't monitor the video feeds constantly.



CONGESTION

Security checks can often cause lines and congestion in the office lobby. By designing an easier check-in process and offering the ability to prescreen visitors buildings can reduce the waiting and create a better experience.



MULTIPLE TENANTS

Check in becomes more difficult when a building has multiple tenants so the property software integrations is critical to make sure that all authorized occupants have access to the correct areas of the building.

In the workplace

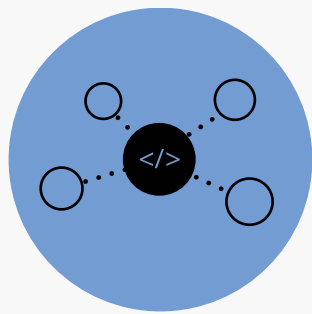
After building occupants arrive and enter their workspace they need to continue to have a welcoming experience. This can be done by giving them easy access to information and tools that they need to be successful at their work as well as by enhancing other aspects of their lives like socialization with others and health and wellness programs.

One of the difficulties in providing a welcoming workplace is bringing together the systems of both the landlord and the tenant. Workers don't want to have multiple apps to access their workspace, which means that access control and booking systems for both the building and the tenant controlled spaces need to integrate.



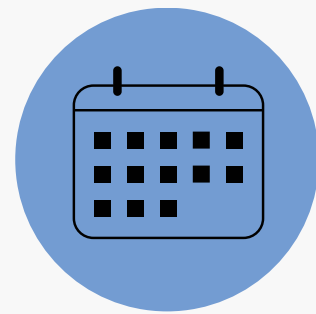
Whole building experience

To create a welcoming workplace environment, buildings should aim to offer a comprehensive and immersive experience. There are various approaches to achieve this goal.



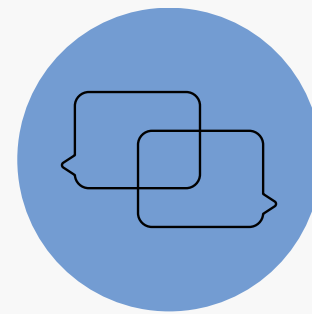
INTEGRATED ACCESS

To ensure smooth building access, integration of systems is necessary to allow shared access between common and tenant spaces without requiring separate credentials. This includes controlling elevators, opening doors, and sharing usage data across all platforms.



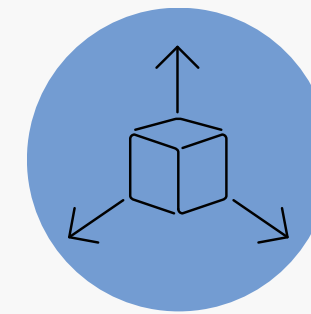
AUTOMATED RESERVATIONS

Convenient space reservations are vital in modern offices. Initially, enabling reservations through the building's software is crucial. To streamline the process further, integration with popular workplace software like Microsoft Outlook or Google Calendar is necessary.



COMMUNICATION

Modern workplaces offer realtime data on cleaning schedules, air quality, and energy usage. To empower occupants, seamless communication with building staff is essential for reporting hot/cold calls, repair requests, and safety/hygiene issues.

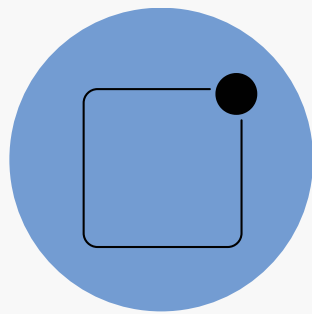


SPACE OPTIMIZATION

An office space is never "finished." In order to help buildings continue to improve, data from access control systems and sensor arrays are used to help optimize space and prevent inefficiencies like conference room poaching.

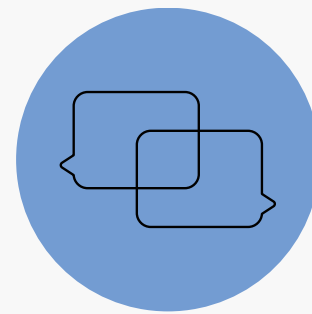
Tenant experience apps

Mobile phone apps have become the primary platform for various functionalities in the modern office. These applications offer more than just reservations or access control capabilities.



NOTIFICATION CENTER

Tenants generally don't have a direct line of communication with building staff but by using tenant experience apps buildings can push important information about the building to all of the interested parties.



INTER-TENANT COMMUNICATION

In multi-tenant buildings applications can become a communication portal that can help different users communicate about important building issues or even plan events and programs that can be an additional benefit to workers looking for extracurricular activities.



RETAIL OPPORTUNITIES

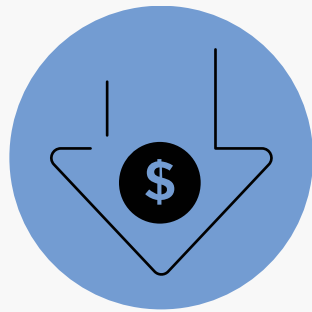
Tenant communication apps can provide a way for local businesses (and even the buildings themselves) to sell goods and services to office workers. There can be a benefit to employees by providing discounts to occupants and can unlock ancillary revenue for buildings.



Benefits

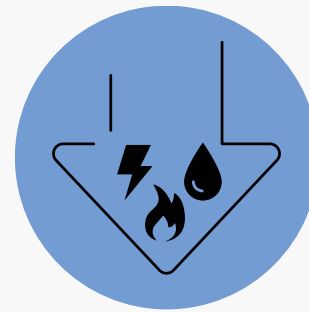
Operational savings

Building owners and managers that invest to create a more welcoming experience have the added benefit of reducing costs.



LABOR

Labor costs can be reduced by installing systems that can automate processes like check-in, service calls, and troubleshooting. These savings can be re-invested in more value add services like onsite concierge services, maintenance professionals, and/or leasing agents.



UTILITIES

The sensors and software that can make a workplace more welcoming can also help reduce utility costs. Smart lighting and HVAC capabilities can help lower energy bills and reduce carbon emissions, something that occupiers are increasingly focusing on.



NEW REVENUE

A tech enabled building can unlock many different sources of revenue. New services like coworking, public parking, and rentable amenity space can be done with the right tech stack. This can open up new revenue streams for building owners and also makes a valuable amenities for current occupiers.

Building valuation

Not only will a better workplace experience help buildings be more efficient, they can also impact other aspects of the building including its sales price.



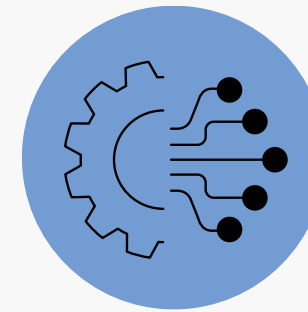
MARKET APPEAL

Corporations seek a productive, creative, and healthy workforce. Creating welcoming workplaces can achieve all three objectives. With occupiers reconsidering office space needs, having an inviting workplace will help justify its expense.



DATA

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IMPROVEMENTS

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