

Business leaders today view workplace environments that effectively support their people as a key financial asset with a quantifiable impact on business success.

workplace design: evolution or revolution?

The workplace has undergone significant changes in the last few decades. Workforce diversity, technology innovations and uncertain economic climates are driving a changing vision of office environments that is hard to predict and difficult to manage.

Trends either work independently or are synergistic. In our work with major corporations, we see common business drivers influencing how we approach and design spaces for changing business needs. In workplace design it is critical to understand how these factors impact the organization's real estate holdings.

Our point of view is that space is a strategic business asset that can be leveraged to implement diverse corporate stakeholder mandates. In today's world, real estate and design can enable interconnected corporate initiatives such as corporate social responsibility mandates, human resources objectives, technology platforms and business innovation targets.



Our clients are discovering that new models of workplace design are not only cost-effective but effectively enable business change initiatives.

We see six key business trends driving workplace design today:

- 1 alternative officing for mobile workers
- 2 utilization vs density
- 3 workstyle ecosystems
- 4 generations in the workplace
- 5 brand in architecture
- 6 sustainability mandates



Hand-in-hand with monitoring how space is really being used, is a new cultural acceptance that ‘work is not about where you do it, but about what you do’.

1 alternative officing for mobile workers

‘Alternative’ workplace concepts are certainly not new. Non-dedicated workplaces for mobile workers have been accommodated through ‘free address’ or ‘hotelling’ work environments for years. So what’s different about today’s ‘agile’ workplace designs? In part, advances in technologies are enabling virtual work and collaboration in increasingly affordable ways. At the same time we see a ‘perfect storm’ of business drivers impacting acceptance of different ways of working: the need for business innovation, drives towards CSR initiatives to reduce environmental impact, and cultural shifts embracing flexible and collaborative work environments. The result is an increasing understanding of real estate and design as a means to reducing overhead costs while achieving key business mandates.

The classic ‘road warrior’ sales rep equipped with mobile phone and laptop is just one functional workstyle now embracing work-from-home programs. Flexible programs are popping up everywhere - in sales, technology, and project-based workteams. We see a new cultural acceptance that ‘work is not about where you do it, but about what you do’.

2 utilization vs density

Historically designers and facilities professionals have measured relative density - square feet per person - as the primary metric for effective use of space. Ever-shrinking footprints have seen overall averages of 250 square feet per person gradually reduce to a typical range of 150 to 180 square feet per person for corporate office environments.

We are also seeing a growing interest in capturing ‘utilization rates’ - how much time employees spend working within the workplace every day - as an alternative metric for space usage.

IBM, a pioneer in developing utilization-based facilities for mobile workers reports 30 to 50% of under-utilized workplace in many of it’s existing facilities. Figure3’s innovative Workplace on Demand workplace design strategy is being deployed worldwide, capturing ‘lost’ space by implementing mobile and virtual reservations technologies to enable workers enrolled in flexible work programs.

This ‘smarter’ real estate solution has consistently resulted in significantly reduced leasing costs, capital investments and operating costs by minimizing IBM’s workplace footprint worldwide.



Today, true agility in the workplace relies upon our ability to respond to business change strategically, rapidly and cost-effectively.

3 workstyle ecosystems

Development of non-traditional workplaces involves a strong understanding of how people work, both independently and collaboratively by looking at cultural influences, behavioural characteristics and the interconnected workstyles of a complex organization.

In taking the time for a 'deeper dive' into organizational workstyles, our goal is a more responsive and flexible workplace strategy that supports the way people really work, rather than catering to traditional organizational silos.

figure3's discovery process with stakeholder groups uncovers work processes and touchpoints to learn where and when people need 'headsdown', 'touchdown' or 'collaborative' spaces. This 'workstyle ecosystem' is unique to every organization - a workplace fingerprint that informs a workplace strategy responsive to your business.

4 generations in the workplace

As Gen Y hits the workplace, and Boomers delay retirement well into their 60's there is a significant cultural dynamic happening between these two large demographics and the sandwiched Gen X employees. Social researchers are helping us to

understand the different cultural expectations and practical needs of each demographic group.

Forward-thinking corporations like IBM, RBC and TELUS are looking for ways to attract and retain a technologically adept younger employee, while accommodating the needs of their experienced managers to mentor and train new recruits.

5 brand in architecture

'Branding' is really about making strong emotional connections with a desired audience. Leveraging your architecture - the physical touchpoints where people experience your brand - is the goal behind implementing a brand in architecture strategy to reinforce emotional connections and create brand champions of your employees.

'Branding' is no longer a logo application exercise conducted after the design is completed. Instead, it drives the entire design process. Our approach integrates a holistic understanding of your brand's messaging, creating visual imagery, space plans, brand vehicles, and look and feel in a clear articulation of the desired 'brand experience' for employees, customers and the public.

Mapping out a smarter, greener and more agile workplace strategy is the first step in creating a responsive real estate portfolio that works every day for your people.



6 sustainability mandates

As LEED certification for major Commercial Interiors projects becomes more common in new and renovated facilities, there is a significant level of expertise and awareness required of both client representatives and design teams.

By working collaboratively with landlords, architects, engineers, project managers and client representatives we establish clear objectives and sustainable design strategies for today's high performance, energy-efficient workplaces - an essential first step in creating an integrated design solution to significantly reduce corporate carbon footprints.

how can you better leverage your working environments?

We see that business leaders are more aware of the workplace as a strategic business asset, and no longer as a cost centre for controlling expenses. Maximizing the effectiveness of the real estate investment is our first goal, ensuring the expense is recaptured over the life of a realistic business case model. But soft objectives such as environmental leadership, brand articulation, and enabling of mobility programs for a changing workforce can also be achieved through a

collaborative, thoughtful strategic discovery process to map out a smarter, greener and more agile workplace strategy for your business.



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