

IF YOU TAKE A STEP BACK AND CONSIDER THE MYRIAD <u>CHANGES IN TECHNOLOGY</u> OVER THE PAST COUPLE DECADES, YOU'LL DISCOVER MOST THINGS WE TAKE FOR GRANTED ARE REALLY QUITE EXTRAORDINARY.

We're almost never *not* connected with our employees, partners, clients, friends and family. Within seconds, you can communicate with anyone in your contact lists. And using a few handy applications on your ever-present smartphone, you can check your email, book a flight and order lunch in one elevator ride.

If you wanted, you could even live-stream a video of your dog to your entire company at 3 a.m. (Though we strongly advise against doing it.)

And just as we become accustomed to one channel, we're exposed to yet another platform. From smartwatches to virtual reality headsets, things that seemed far-fetched only a few years ago are now part of the norm.

Nowhere is this innovation more evident than in the office.



TODAY'S WORKPLACE TECHNOLOGY ALLOWS FOR A MORE NIMBLE AND DYNAMIC WORKFORCE, AND YOU AND YOUR EMPLOYEES ARE NO LONGER BOUND BY THE LIMITS OF SPACE AND TIME.





Depending on the role and industry, today's workforce can work from anywhere at any hour, so long as they have the right device and a reliable Internet connection.

And while you can't set up office on the moon yet, it's not inconceivable to think that in a couple decades we'll be telecommuting in spacesuits.

But with all the benefits of rapidly growing technology, there are drawbacks. Chief among them is the fact that technology is evolving faster than many companies can keep up. When this happens, managing your business environment, keeping a hold on security and efficiently utilizing space becomes a significant challenge. And failing to take control of these aspects of your business could have catastrophic consequences.

How can innovative and savvy business leaders like you stay ahead of the technological curve and ensure success? Let's take a look.

WORKSPACE MANAGEMENT

Workspace management is no longer just about changing lightbulbs and making sure the office has enough cubicles.

From ergonomics and sustainability to buying equipment and finding and onboarding new vendors, workplace management requires both maintenance know-how and technology expertise. In other words, today's workplace manager has a big job and needs ongoing support from the leadership team to ensure your workspace runs optimally.

As a business leader, it's up to you to help make sure the workspace is managed well.



You can become more involved by:



FACILITATING COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION ACROSS DEPARTMENTS.

Can you say, with total confidence, that every person in your building knows how to reserve a conference room, who to contact in the event of a facility emergency (like a leak) and what process to follow if their desk chair breaks? Chances are good that at least a small fraction of your team doesn't. While your workspace manager (also called a facilities manager, or FM) may communicate this information, support from the executive team can help drive the message.



FOCUSING ON ERGONOMICS TO KEEP EMPLOYEES SATISFIED.

As a busy business leader, it's easy to overlook things like office layout, furniture style and workstation setup. But these are the things that affect your employees every day. Ergonomic office furniture is no longer a nice perk—it's an essential line item. Taking this need seriously will help promote a <u>happier</u>, <u>healthier workforce</u>.



INVESTING IN AUTOMATION TO IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY.

A thermostat that automatically adjusts the office to the optimal temperature for each time of day, lighting and security systems that can be controlled from a smartphone, sensors that monitor the condition of everything from water pipes to server racks in real time—all of these technological solutions can cut down on menial maintenance tasks performed by your FM team and free them up to focus on big-picture workspace strategy and take better proactive measures.



BUILDING DYNAMIC WORKSPACES THAT SUPPORT A GLOBAL WORKFORCE.

Your office is no longer the required space for workers to spend their 9-to-5 hours, but a "home base" they can utilize when it serves their needs best. Technology has freed companies from the bounds of traditional business hours, and allows for remote work. By making sure your technology can support employees thousands of miles away, you can hire the sharpest professionals from around the globe without the relocation expense.

Of course, technology doesn't come without its vulnerabilities. Let's take a look at how you can protect your most critical assets: **your people and your data**.



SECURITY

While all of this exciting tech means huge opportunities, the proliferation of technology means double, triple or quadruple the number of access points for cyber criminals, unscrupulous competitors and others hungry for sensitive information.

In 2015, U.S. companies saw an average of <u>160 successful cyber attacks</u> each week more than triple the average recorded in 2010. These attacks cost businesses between \$1.9 million and \$65 million.

That statistic alone is enough to make you want to shut down your whole system and revert back to the Stone Age. But the fact is **technology is essential to success in every industry**. And while cyber crime is continually on the rise, there are ways you can reduce your risk and protect the privacy of your people and your data.

Achieving a successful security strategy requires cooperation between you, your facilities leader and your CISO and/or CTO.





Once you've assembled your team, here are a few areas you'll need to tackle:

BYOD (BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE)

Even if you've forbidden any employee from bringing in a personal mobile phone, tablet, laptop or other device, you should know: They're going to do it anyway. For most of us, our smartphones are like another appendage and the link to our entire world. And today's **wearable technology** looks so much like standard watches or jewelry, it can slip through completely undetected.



In other words, like it or not, these devices are present in your workplace and likely connected to your network. And every single one of these devices represents another vulnerability point.

Instead of banning personal devices at work, it's better to implement better processes. **For example...**

- Use system-wide encryption to prevent unauthorize personnel from being able to decipher internal messages.
- Enact device recognition to prevent employees from adding data to unauthorized devices, such as personal flash drives or Bluetooth devices.
- Create two wireless connections: a secure connection for employees and an open connection for guests. This will prevent visitors from using their devices to access internal systems.



INTERNET OF THINGS

Earlier we mentioned thermostats that automatically adjust the temperature, app-controlled lighting and sensors that monitor critical building systems. All of this technology makes up the **Internet of Things (IoT)**. This innovation is brilliant for workspaces because it allows you and your facilities team to easily access all the information you need, instantly and often in real time.



For example, if there is a leak in the server room, you'll know about it before it becomes a catastrophe, ruining millions of dollars' worth of equipment and information.

But IoT also means another pathway by which criminals can access your system and disrupt your business. A 2014 Cisco whitepaper about IoT and network security points out that "IoT will increase the amount of operational data by a factor of 10, so data security controls and practices will need to scale accordingly," and "IoT applications will consume assorted data from outside the network, thereby opening new threat vectors."





DATA SECURITY AND PERSONAL PRIVACY

From trade secrets to financial information and employee Social Security numbers, your technology hosts data that, if compromised, would not only damage your business—it could affect your employees for the rest of their lives. So what precautions should you take, and teach your team?

- **Change passwords.** Passwords should be changed every 90 days. Encourage your teams to use passwords that cannot be easily guessed, such as birthdays, their mother's maiden name or "1234." The most secure passwords are those that include letters, numbers and special characters.
- Use secure networks. If your wireless connection is not secure, make sure it is immediately. Set up a VPN for remote employees, secure email access and, if you're not already, switch to a cloud-based storage system that offers advanced encryption.
- **Regularly update antivirus software.** Unfortunately, antivirus software isn't a failsafe option, but it does offer an important layer of protection. Just make sure the software is regularly updated to prevent the latest versions of malware from attacking your system.





BUILDING SECURITY AND SURVEILLANCE

In addition to protecting your business from a digital standpoint, you also need to protect your brick-and-mortar space. You should invest in surveillance systems—including door alarms, motion detectors and cameras—that can be managed from off-site. You also need to track all visitors who enter your office space. **A visitor management system** can help you easily register and monitor visitors for security purposes, and will also streamline the check-in process to provide a better experience for guests.

To secure and protect physical and digital portals, businesses must hire professionals who have the right experience and skills to recognize suspicious activities and be able to educate the rest of your workforce. While facilities leaders should have some of this experience, monitoring networks, acting upon threats and educating your workforce is a full-time job.

Now that we've discussed how to protect your space, let's discuss how to use it efficiently and how technology can help you transform your office into an efficient and positive workspace.



SPACE UTILIZATION



As we touched on earlier, the way we use space in the office environment is changing.

Modern offices incorporate more flex-space, collaboration areas, fewer walls and more open-office style workstations. Cubicles and closed office rooms are disappearing in favor of shared spaces. Today's employees work from standing desks, booths, quiet rooms, sofas and maybe even the occasional bean bag—whatever helps them be most productive.

But while the lack of permanent, assigned workstations can foster collaboration and communication between departments, it can also make it more difficult to determine how much space you need. And with employees working at different hours or working remotely, getting an accurate count is nearly impossible. Once again, technology swoops in to save the day.

By investing in an IWMS that integrates with IoT and your preferred workspace applications, you can better understand space occupancy (the number of people in an office at a given period of time) as well as space utilization (how often a space is used, who uses it and why it's being used). Knowing these metrics will help you make the most of your office area.





To maximize operational efficiency, you'll need to consider ...

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE.

Determine when it's time to acquire more office space versus when it's time to simply restructure the space you're currently occupying. This way you can save time, money and effort while still ensuring your teams have all the square footage necessary to do their jobs.

WHETHER OR NOT SPACE IS BEING USED MOST EFFICIENTLY.

Are there certain areas of your office that aren't being effectively utilized? For example, an unused conference room could be turned into workspace or divided into small phone booths.

MEETING SPACE RESERVATION.

There's nothing worse than preparing to meet with a client only to discover there's no meeting spaces available. It's not always enough to throw your belongings on the table and scream "mine!" A **room reservation application** can help employees plan better. If you know in advance that all rooms are booked, you could make alternate arrangements and save an awkward exchange.

AVOIDING OVERCROWDING.

When your business experiences rapid growth, you may end up hiring more people than you have space for them to work. Overcrowding can lead to frustration, employee dissatisfaction and increased turnover. By keeping abreast of your spatial usage, you can better anticipate future needs.

DOWNTIME CAUSED BY MOVING.

Whether you're moving to a different office space, opening another office or downsizing your company, moving can be a nightmare. In addition to the hassle of packing and unpacking, there's the downtime you experience while waiting for utility hookup and other resources. **Move management technology** can help streamline the experience to minimize downtime.

Switching your teams to new applications is always a challenge. From the downtime caused by training and IT set-up to issues with integration, often it doesn't make sense to shake up an already efficient and effective environment. That's why it's important your IWMS integrates the most popular and best loved applications available—instead of building their own proprietary version you'll have to relearn. You and your team are able to keep the apps you love and the processes you know.

This allows you the opportunity to bring all your data together for real-time visualization, and manage the most important assets of your space, including:

- Digital signage
- Room kiosks
- Sensor technology
- Security badges
- Energy usage (including HVAC and lighting)
- And much more

If you're interested in learning more about this solution, check out the *iOffice Marketplace*.



C-SUITE + FACILITIES LEADERS = A POWERFUL PARTNERSHIP

Creating a safe, secure, efficient and productive workspace is no longer a job reserved for the heads of IT or HR, respectively—it's a team effort.

And one of the key players in helping break down the silos and drive your business toward a more innovative and successful future is your facilities manager. If your facilities leader isn't spending time in the boardroom, you're missing a huge opportunity. This workspace guru can help the leadership team better understand facility needs thanks to "boots on the ground" intel and experience, and can also benefit from the guidance of top executives.

As a business leader, it can be difficult to recognize what's missing. After all, you're so busy building relationships, increasing ROI and growing your business that the tangible elements of your business can fall lower on your priority list. But it's important to remember your workspace not only houses your best assets—your people—it's also a visual representation of your business to clients and potential new hires.

Better collaboration between you, your C-suite and your facilities leader will help you build out strategies to achieve greater workplace management, data protection and space utilization, stay a step ahead of technology and maintain greater control over the **future of your business**. By better serving your employees with the office space, functionality and security, you can drive positive change and realize your top objectives.



FINAL THOUGHTS

We've covered a lot of information, and it can be overwhelming when you consider just how much technology is affecting your business. There are many positive benefits, but equally as many dangerous drawbacks if you don't take the time to improve your internal processes. By working with your key players—especially your facilities leader—and adopting the right tools, you can prevent your company from falling behind and position your organization as the industry leader in innovation.

office

Ready to use technology to your advantage, streamline your processes and create a workspace that drives your company into the future?

WE'VE GOT WHAT YOU NEED!

Request a free, customized demo today.

