OFFICESPACE

Built world market report

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Executive summary

What have we learned from 2025 in the workplace?

The best business leaders rely on both historical trends and up-to-the minute data to forecast and make sharper decisions. In the same way, by observing the evolution of the workplace, we can more easily spot what's coming next. And, as workplaces have become more data-driven in recent years, the industry now has millions of metrics to predict the future with greater certainty. Here's what 2025 has taught us: The built world, the physical infrastructure where work happens, is in transition.

Average utilization at the workplace hovers around 25 percent, even as midweek attendance spikes to double the norm.

Workplaces grow, shrink, and reshuffle at a high rate, highlighting both the promises and pressures of hybrid work. Employees are choosing the office more intentionally, while organizations are still working to align space, resources, and experience to meet those demands.

We've also uncovered that the gap between expectations and outcomes is widening. Despite an investment of resources, organizations still contend with underutilized space, last-minute breakdowns, and disengaged teams. Those results aren't due to poor intent, but limited visibility.

Now, for the first time, we can not only quantify each moment in the workplace—how teams interact, how long equipment will last, how long a desk sits vacant—but see a unified picture of those insights. Signals from every

corner of the built environment feed into one story to guide decision-making and close the gap.

Of course, not every moment can be measured with exact science. The best teams still have off days; quotas are missed; projects veer off-budget. By the same token, new partnerships between teams happen daily that go unaccounted for. Slack channels are filled with shoutouts and celebratory emojis; spontaneous run-ins and last-minute happy hour invites strengthen company culture even if they don’t make it on the calendar. The data tells one story, but the people who make up those workplaces are an equally important source of truth.

The best leaders know that, too, which is why the outlook for 2026 is an optimistic one. As organizations focus on designing the built world around people, viewing workplaces as a center for culture-building and collaboration, those data points have richer meaning. They become purposeful. The numbers back up that story. Even as organizations embrace flexibility, they’re investing at the highest rates since COVID, with 10 to 20 percent of P&L dedicated to the workplace.

In this market report, we’re looking back at 2025 to understand what will stay in the past, and what will guide us through 2026 as we build spaces with more confidence, clarity, and care.

— Erin Mulligan Helgren

A note about our methodology

This report analyzes behavioral signals across 950+ organizations to understand:

1. How often employees choose the office
2. How space is configured and reconfigured in today's workplaces
3. How facilities and workplace teams actually run the environment day-to-day

2025 sample workplace dataset analyzed

954
Organizations

3.9M
In-office employees

116M
Square feet

27K
Spaces

Behavioral signals analyzed

The insights in this report are grounded in a broad and diverse set of workplace activity and operational data collected throughout 2025. The dataset includes more than **20.4 million desk bookings** and **12.8 million room bookings**, providing a robust view into how employees plan and use reservable spaces. In addition, over **6 million records related to seat assignment patterns** by department support analysis of organizational seating strategies and team-based space allocation.

The analysis also incorporates data spanning multiple space types, including individual ("me"), collaborative ("we"), amenity, support, circulation, and other areas, enabling a comprehensive view of space mix and portfolio composition. Operational dynamics are reflected through more than **1 million scheduled move events** across all segments, as well as approximately **267,000 inspections and work orders**, capturing the ongoing facilities activity required to support workplace environments.

Together, these datasets form the empirical basis for the utilization, behavior, and operational insights presented in this report.

Key findings

Workplace utilization is low, but employees are choosing the office with intention

Average peak utilization (the % of seats in use during the busiest times at the office) is just 25%. Despite this, interactions with workplace tools (searching for and booking desks and meeting rooms) have increased by 8% and 20%, respectively. This indicates that barring mandates, employees are choosing the office as a place to work, carefully selecting where they sit and with whom, to be most productive.

Flexible seating vs reality

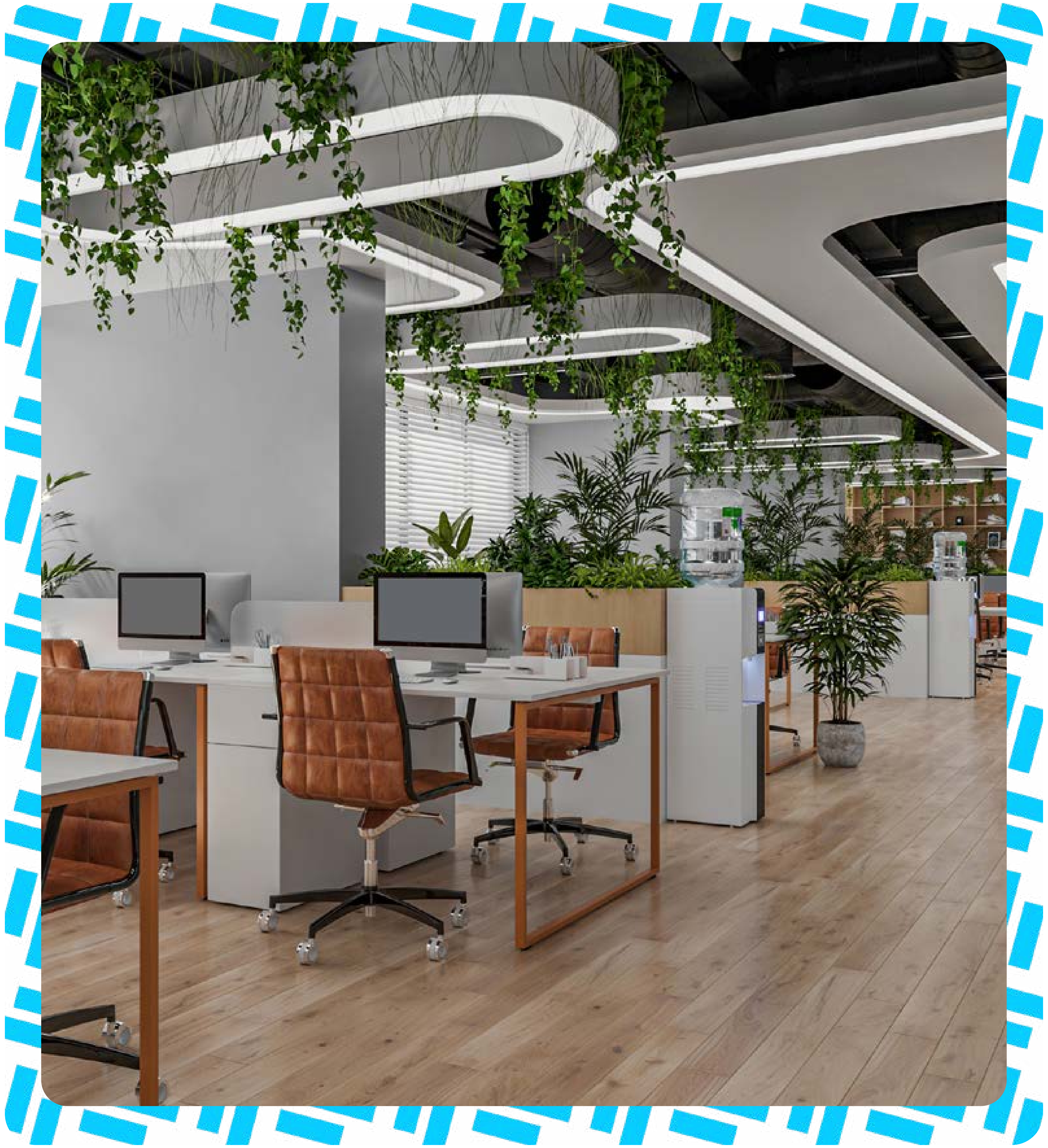
Despite predictions that hoteling and hot desking will dominate the workplace, many organizations, including those with remote-capable employees and variable schedules, still operate with a 1:1 assigned seating model.

Desire for built world workplace insights are accelerating

More teams are leveraging presence data (live space utilization signals from badge swipes, sensors, and WiFi), to gain a more accurate understanding of workplace attendance and usage. Adoption of presence data increased by 58% since 2024 with more organizations looking for live data to see what's happening in real time.

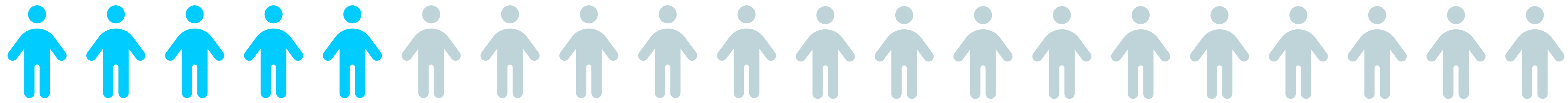
Organizations are adapting their workplaces daily in some cases

Overall, organizations executed millions of seating changes in 2025. If there's one thing we can be sure of, it's change. Turnover rates, organizational changes, and the demand for more flexible workspaces are prevalent, making space agility key so companies can operate without constant interruption.



SPACE UTILIZATION

Who's at the office?



25% Average peak utilization in 2025

Average peak utilization in 2025, defined as the percentage of seats in use during the busiest collaboration hours, was up from 22% in 2024.

68%
Highest utilization

April saw the highest utilization at 68%

April stood out as the busiest month with active use of the office across segments.

35%
SMB office utilization

29%
Enterprise office utilization

SMBs are leading the office comeback, but significant real estate optimization remains

Small and medium-sized businesses (<$1B in annual revenue) drove nearly 60% year-over-year growth in office utilization, reaching 35% in 2025, while enterprise (>$1B in annual revenue) utilization rose more modestly to 29%. Despite gains, utilization levels still point to a material opportunity to optimize real estate costs.

DESK AND ROOM BOOKING TRENDS

Finding the right space

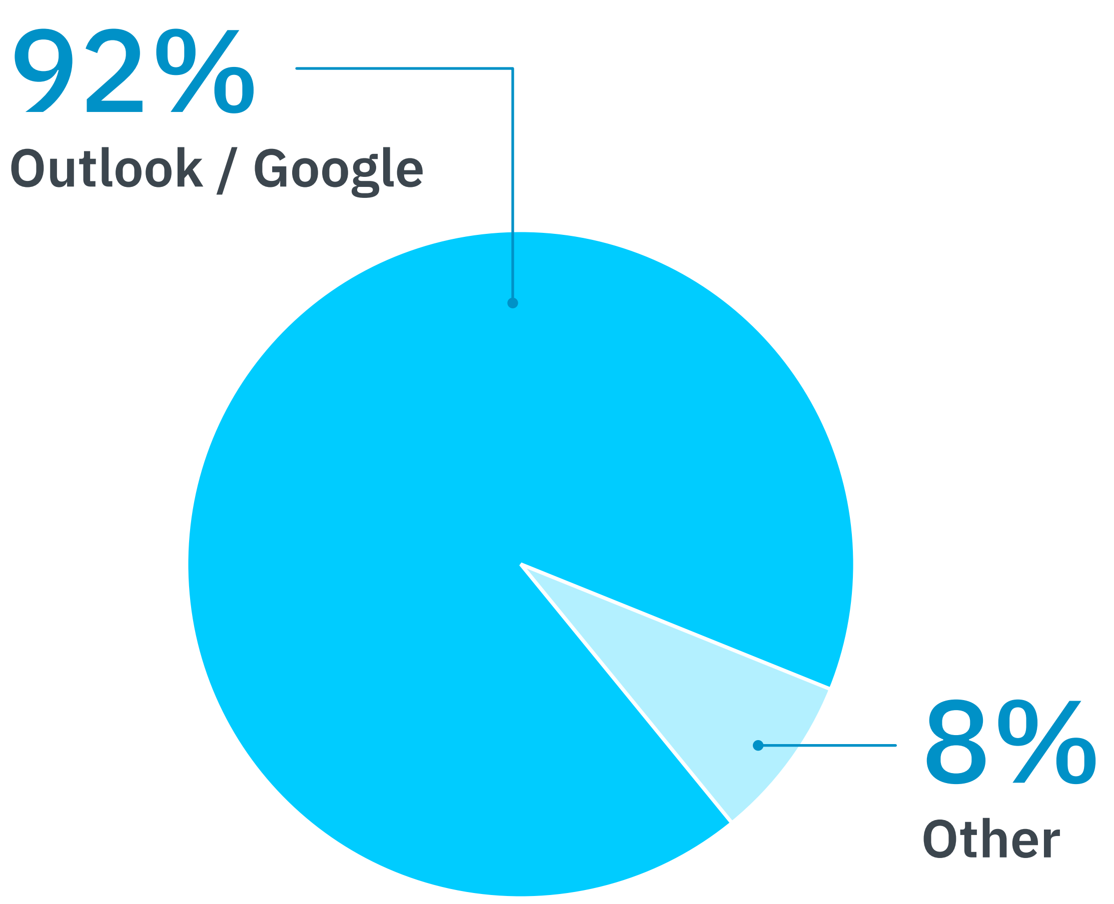
Although offices are not consistently operating at peak capacity, demand for reservable space continues to grow. Desk bookings increased 8% and room bookings rose 20% year over year, reflecting a more intentional approach to in-office work and collaboration.

20M
Desk bookings YTD up 8% since 2024

12.8M
Room bookings YTD up 20% since 2024

10.4M
Searches for people and assets in the workplace

Employees show a clear preference for booking workspace through core calendar tools such as Google Calendar and Microsoft Outlook, underscoring the importance of workplace experience platforms that integrate seamlessly with existing enterprise technology stacks.



TIP

Meet employees where they are. Deep tech integrations ensure that the office is accessible from calendars, collaboration tools, and mobile, so employees don't need to operate in multiple tools to find the right space.

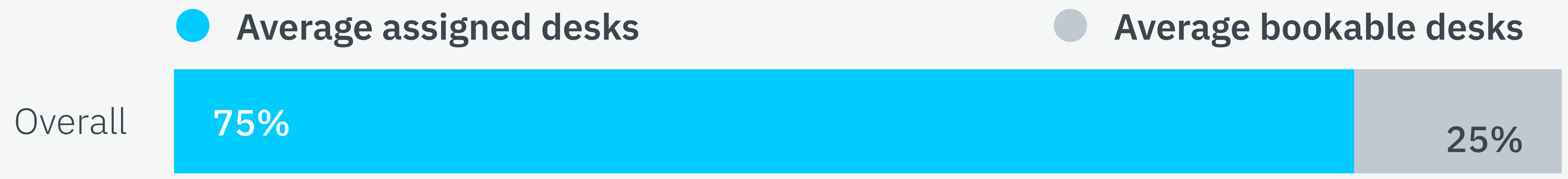
SEATING STRATEGIES

Is this seat taken?

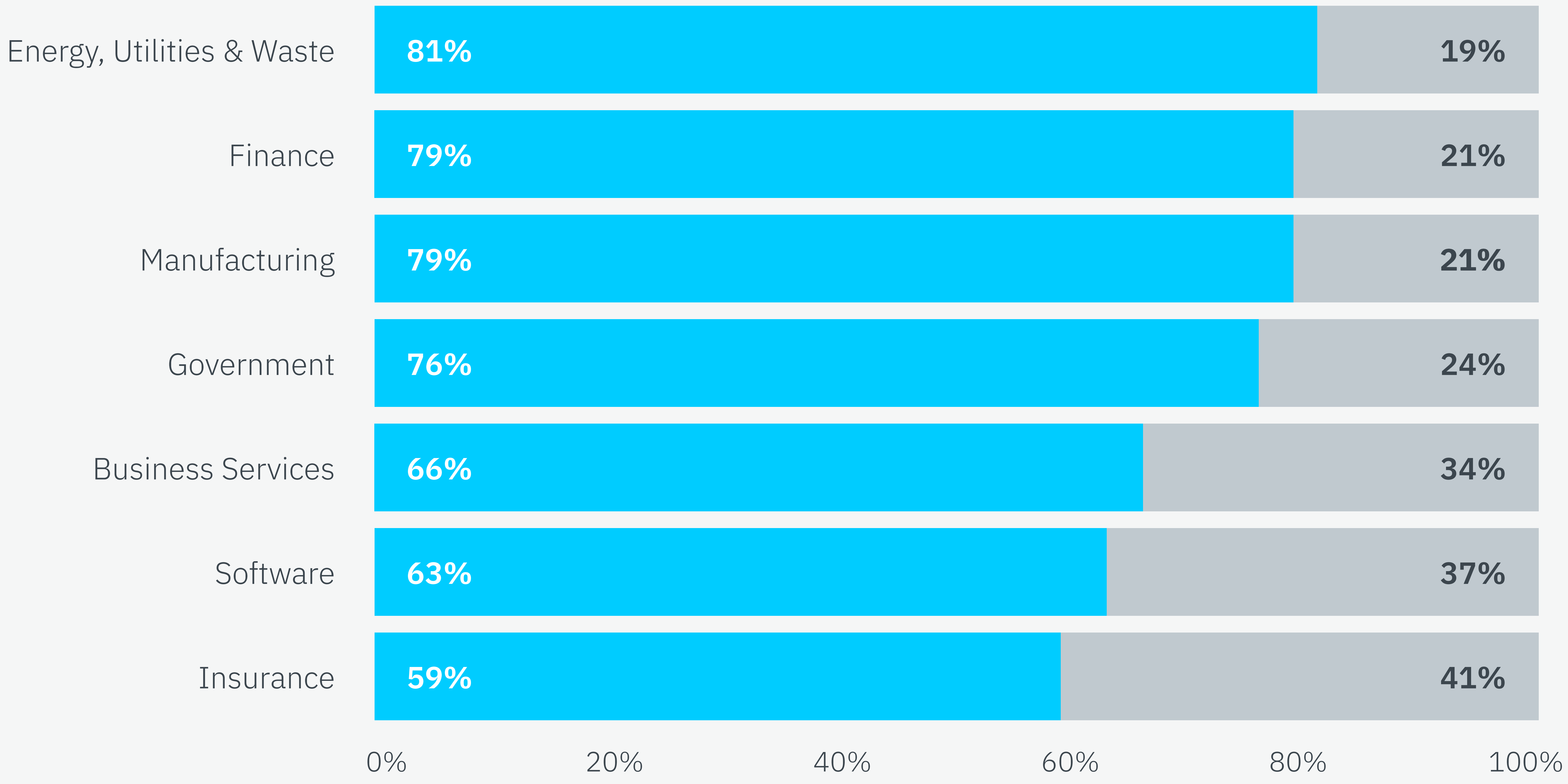
Across organizations analyzed, assigned seating continues to be the dominant seating model. On average, 75% of desks are assigned, while 25% are bookable, indicating that most workplaces still allocate the majority of seating to individuals rather than shared use.

The balance between assigned and bookable desks varies by industry. Asset-intensive sectors such as Energy, Utilities & Waste (81% assigned) and Manufacturing (79%) show the highest reliance on assigned seating. In contrast, industries with more flexible or knowledge-based work patterns allocate a larger share of desks as bookable. Insurance organizations average 41% bookable desks, followed by Software (37%) and Business Services (34%).

Assigned vs. bookable desks, overall



Assigned vs. bookable desks by industry



Every workplace needs different seating strategies.
They often change as teams grow, shift, and adopt new rhythms.

CATEGORY	WHO USES THE DESK	BEST FOR	HOW IT WORKS	WHAT IT SOLVES
Assigned seating	One employee permanently assigned	Stable in-office teams or offices with ample space	Desk is manually assigned and fixed	Predictable and easy to track
Bookable or hoteling	Anyone can book the desk; no permanent owner	Hybrid teams reducing real estate costs	Employees book daily through an interactive floor plan, Slack, or Teams	Flexible and space-efficient
Desk lending	One assigned user; others book it when that person is away	Teams that want to maximize use of assigned seats	Desk owner or admin lends the desk for specific dates	Supports flexibility without losing ownership
Shared assigned seating	Two to three employees share one desk and coordinate use, up to five supported	Hybrid organizations wanting to share seating without daily booking	Facility manager assigns multiple people to one desk; presence data shows who is in	Provides ownership while optimizing space

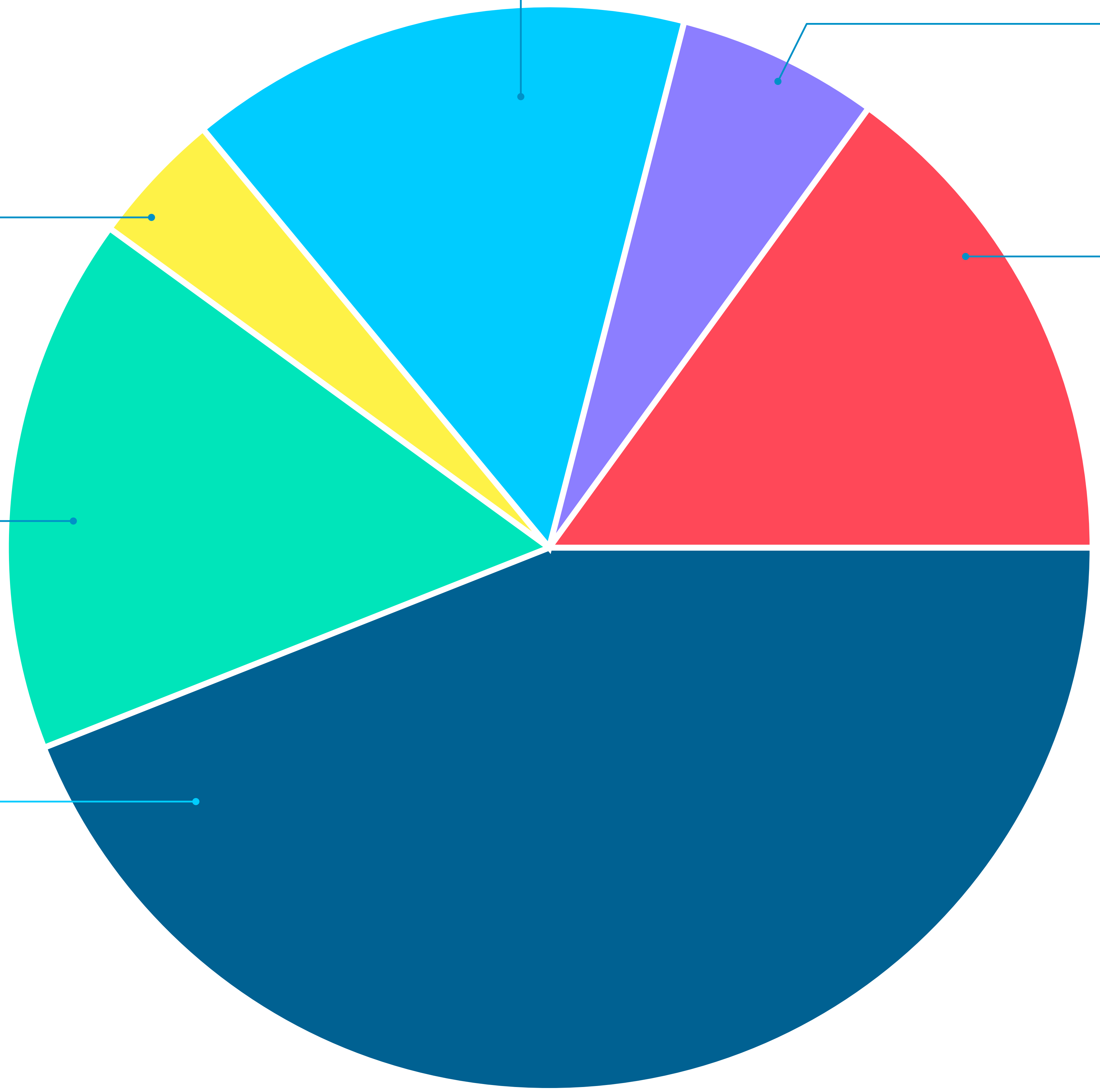
Workplace layout: Flexibility vs. reality

Office layouts are still optimized for individual work, with 16% of spaces designated for collaboration.

TIP

By categorizing space by type, organizations gain clearer visibility into how different areas are used and where opportunities exist to consolidate or repurpose underutilized space. Scenario planning tools support this analysis by enabling teams to evaluate and compare multiple layout options and assess potential impacts before making physical changes.

The space breakdown



MOVES, ADDS, CHANGES

The workplace shuffle

In 2025, workplace teams scheduled 1,017,011 employee moves—**on average, 1,000+ per organization**—reflecting ongoing adjustments to seating, team configurations, and neighborhood layouts. Move activity also shows clear seasonality, with higher volumes occurring during the summer months and lower activity during holiday periods, when overall office presence tends to decline. This pattern suggests that organizations time space changes to align with periods of higher employee availability and lower operational disruption.

85,000
Average moves per month

May
Peak month (110,612 moves)

December
Lowest month (19,174 moves)

HOW FACILITIES TEAMS ARE USING OFFICESPACE

How FMs are powering the workplace

Facilities and workplace operations involve a sustained volume of behind-the-scenes activity to support day-to-day workplace performance.

In 2025, teams processed 267,164 inspections and work orders, reflecting the ongoing operational effort required to maintain workplace environments. Monthly volumes typically ranged between 22,000 and 26,000 requests, with activity peaking in September (25,148) and October (26,427). These patterns indicate consistent operational demand throughout the year, with moderate increases during early fall.

Facilities managers and workplace leaders are actively shaping and maintaining workplace environments through ongoing configuration of neighborhoods and the addition of utilities to floor plans. These actions reflect continuous efforts to support team organization, operational readiness, and evolving workplace requirements.

Neighborhoods created
352,213

Utilities added to floor plans
166,964

From static records to live signals

Organizations are increasingly relying on live presence data—such as Wi-Fi and badge signals—over historical data uploads that do not reflect real-time conditions. This shift signals a move away from manual tracking and static reporting toward continuously updated inputs based on observed patterns of use.

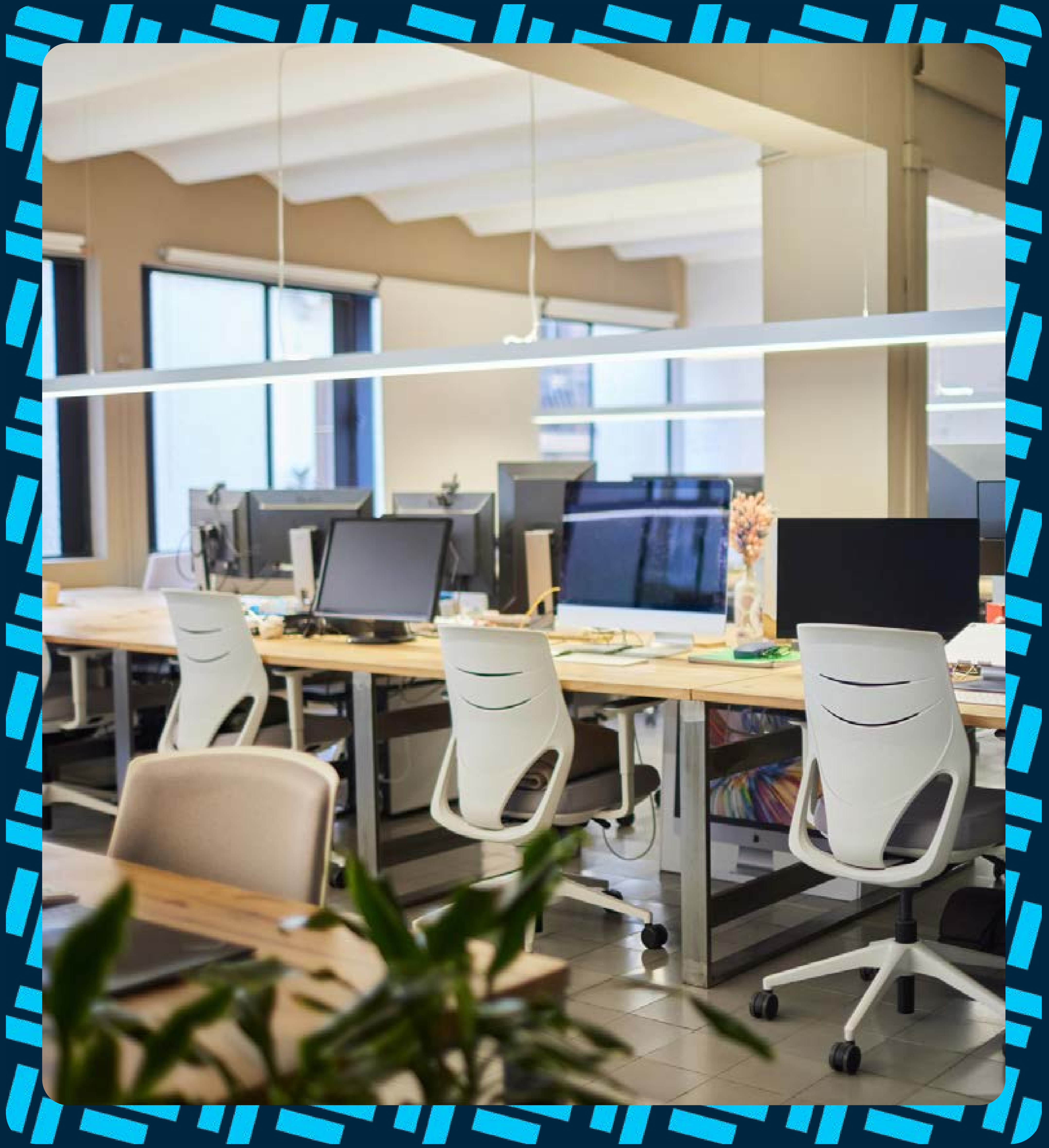
As adoption grows, real-time presence data is becoming a common input for workplace and facilities decisions, supporting more precise approaches to space planning, cleaning, and energy management by aligning resources with actual occupancy.

54%
Badge and Wi-fi

46%
Data uploads

58%
YoY growth

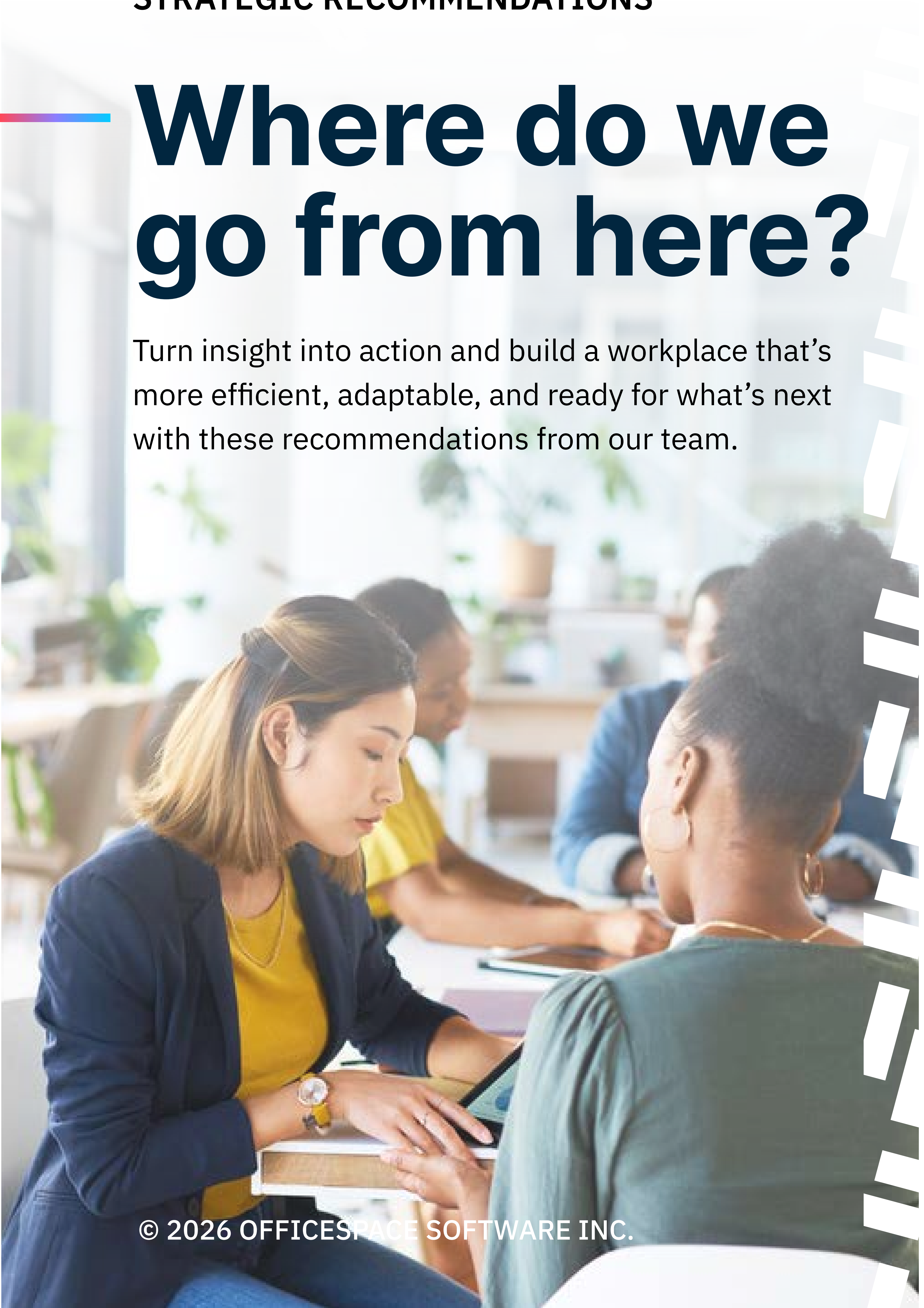
Presence data grew in 2025 with more organizations looking for insights into overall workplace engagement



STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Where do we go from here?

Turn insight into action and build a workplace that's more efficient, adaptable, and ready for what's next with these recommendations from our team.



1 Optimize portfolio ROI

Organizations are increasingly moving away from assumption-based space planning in favor of decisions grounded in actual usage data. Utilization and occupancy patterns are being applied to identify opportunities to consolidate or repurpose underused areas rather than automatically renewing existing space. Where employee behavior supports it, companies are transitioning from assignment-heavy seating toward more flexible models. At the same time, space portfolios are being rebalanced between individual and collaborative environments to better align with how employees choose to work when on site.

3 Reduce operational friction

When viewed holistically, operational data can reveal meaningful patterns that are not visible in isolation. Organizations are analyzing move activity and work order trends to identify recurring problem areas by site, floor, or department that drive disproportionate operational effort. In response, many are increasing automation across moves, approvals, and maintenance workflows to reduce manual processes and allow facilities teams to focus on higher-value initiatives.

2 Advance ESG and smart infrastructure goals

Companies are increasingly using workplace data to support sustainability goals and more efficient operations. By connecting insights on utilization, presence, and assets with building systems, organizations can better align lighting, HVAC, and other resources with actual demand. These data-driven approaches are also being used to strengthen reporting, disclosure, and compliance efforts as ESG expectations related to space efficiency and workplace quality continue to evolve.

4 Prepare for AI-native workplace management

Workplace management is increasingly evolving from reactive practices toward more intelligent, data-driven models. As the availability of badge, Wi-Fi, and API-based presence data expands, organizations are progressing beyond descriptive analytics (what happened?) toward prescriptive—and eventually more autonomous—approaches that inform or automate operational decisions. This shift is laying the foundation for more adaptive and responsive workplace environments.

References

This report is based on OfficeSpace Software's proprietary insights and aggregated market data available as of the date of publication and as represented in the methodology.

Disclaimer

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