Space utilization with a high IQ

The market is flooded with tools and technology for measuring, monitoring, and visualizing space utilization. Which tools are the right ones to address your organization’s utilization questions and what’s the best process and approach to ensure success? Do you already have the data you need to get to the heart of your utilization challenges? There are many options to generating valuable utilization insights and data visualizations that reveal how space could be better used. Let us help get you started…
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Introduction

Change is in the air—and the walls of your facilities. Take a look around your office and it’s easy to see that the world of work is evolving quickly. Millennials are becoming the largest generation in the workforce, with new expectations for their workplace experience. Smart Building technologies, Big Data, the Internet of Things and automation are delivering new possibilities for the office environment.

Broader forces are at play, too. Converging industries and shortened product lifecycles are forcing companies to rapidly reshape their operations around new business strategies. The challenge of the day: how can you improve business agility while also reducing costs? As you prepare for the Future of Work, smart space utilization has come to the forefront as a way to create the most effective workplace strategies for achieving your organization’s ambitions.

Success in the Future of Work means your company must excel in every dimension of corporate real estate (CRE) management: financial performance, operational excellence, continuous innovation, digital drive and, critically, the human experience. Space utilization is fundamental, intersecting every aspect of CRE.

Using space efficiently and providing an engaging, productivity-boosting employee experience is today’s workplace mandate. Forward-looking companies recognize that the most effective workplace strategy starts with understanding supply and demand in the workplace today so you can make smarter decisions for tomorrow.

It’s all about achieving a high utilization IQ for your workplace.
Operational excellence: Trimming the waste out of space

Understanding how space is used today and how it could be used in the future can help you avoid waste. That is, whatever your business situation, your workplace should encourage behavior to drive your business ideals, goals and objectives, and boost the bottom line. Any space that doesn’t encourage the right behaviors—whether that means higher productivity, more innovation or something different—amounts to wasted space. The optimal amount of space is the amount you need to achieve your workplace goals.

The larger question is, what is that optimal amount for your facility? It depends on the business question you need to answer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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<tr>
<td>Are you growing out of your space because your organization is expanding?</td>
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<td>Is your business shrinking or changing its business model?</td>
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<td>Do you suspect that space is underutilized, but you’re not sure where or why?</td>
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<td>Do you need to change your organizational culture with a workplace that will encourage more engagement and collaboration?</td>
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<td>Do you want to support mobile working inside and outside of the office?</td>
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To answer these questions, you need to understand employee behaviors within your space. That means starting with the right questions, and using as much or as little data needed to create actionable answers.

Digital drive: Choosing the right digital tools

Your building systems and networks undoubtedly generate reams of data about workplace activities. But do you really need to boil the ocean of data? No. You only need the data and insights that address your core question.

Keys to creating a utilization plan

1. Purpose
   What is the purpose of this utilization engagement?

2. Scope
   At what level does your organization want to track utilization?

3. Scale
   For which spaces does your organization want to track utilization?

Getting to the right utilization strategy begins with understanding why you need the data and knowing what you can do with it. You’ll also need to define your budget for measuring or monitoring utilization, and also for responding to what you learn. There’s no point in gathering voluminous data if you don’t have the resources to translate it into actionable insights, or to respond to those insights.

The market is flooded with tools and technology for measuring, monitoring and visualizing space utilization. Which tool is the right one to address your organization’s utilization question? Contrary to popular perception, you don’t have to pick one
A high utilization IQ is less about the volume of data and more about quality of data for the questions you want to explore.

Rather than undertaking a new technology implementation, you now have the option of using a cloud-based, technology-agnostic, subscription-based (software-as-a-service, or SaaS) data and analytics platform for highly informed space utilization. With a SaaS platform, you can connect to as many or as few data sources as needed, including building systems, sensors, networks and your Integrated Workplace Management System (IWMS) or Computer-Aided Facility Management (CAFM) application. With built-in advanced analytics, you can generate valuable insights and data visualizations that reveal how space could be better used.

You can also integrate spatial data from your Computer-Aided Design software (CAD), Building Information System (BIM), Geographic Information System (GIS) or other sources. Combining numeric and spatial data will enable you to connect what the numbers say to the physical activities of employees.

First, identify your **purpose**. Do you need a simple utilization measurement, quantifying whether and how space is being used, or do you need to implement ongoing utilization monitoring, to see exactly how space is being used if occupancy spikes or headcount growth are concerns? Monitoring can also provide real-time utilization and analytics visualization for using space efficiently throughout the day.

Fine-tune the **scope** of your utilization project. That is, do you want to track utilization for an entire building or portfolio, or to hone in on individual floors—or even individual desks or rooms? For example, badging and building data can indicate how many people are using your building each day. Add wireless and fixed network login data, and you’ll know how many people are working on a particular floor throughout the day. Add wireless sensor data, and you’ll see which rooms or desks are being used, and when.

And, you’ll need to define your **scale**. For which spaces do you want to track utilization? You might need only a narrow deployment, focusing on particular meeting rooms or a collaboration space. Or, you might target a particular group of employees, a pilot floor or all collaboration spaces. Alternately, you can choose a wide deployment to monitor usage across your entire building or a full portfolio.
Understanding why employees choose or avoid particular workspaces is just as important as knowing where and when activity happens. By combining selected data sources with analytics and visualizations, you can gain a better understanding of employee preferences, and design the workplace accordingly.

**Human experience & continuous innovation: Utilization is about more than space—it’s about the people**

With a better understanding of how and when space is being used, you are better equipped to improve not only efficiency, but also the Human Experience in the workplace. In a global survey of employees, JLL’s research finds that, by focusing on the Human Experience, companies can gain value from their workplaces in the form of reduced turnover and greater productivity.

In particular, JLL’s research shows that employees are turning away from the traditional workplace of assigned desks, cubicles or offices. Instead, they prefer activity-based working and feeling empowered to choose among different kinds of workspaces for different kinds of work.

A well-planned space utilization analysis will help you identify the workspace options that will help improve the Human Experience and boost employee productivity—while making the most of your space. If analysis shows, for example, that one floor is trending toward overcrowding, while another is under-utilized, you can take steps to address the problem before it affects employee satisfaction and productivity.

Smart space utilization also lends itself to the continuous workplace innovation that is essential for organizations to succeed in the Future of Work. Understanding ongoing patterns in your workplace will help you respond to employees’ evolving needs with workspaces that support new modes of working.

Initially, you may need only a one-time picture of your space utilization. Later, you may determine that ongoing monitoring, with advanced real-time management and visualization, is needed so you can respond quickly as business and workplace needs change. With a SaaS space utilization platform, you can gain fast access to the data sets and intelligent insights you need to support workplace innovation and business agility.

Understanding ongoing patterns in your workplace will help you respond to employees’ evolving needs with workspaces that support new modes of working.

**Financial performance matters, too**

Creating a great human experience that leads to high productivity is the ultimate goal of workplace strategy. However, return on investment also matters. Among the top 10 characteristics of a productive business workplace, several relate to the financial impact of space: smart, cost-effective space utilization; low per-person costs; and the ability to grow without additional expenditure, for example.

Since workplace costs include the resources used for gathering and analyzing workplace data, you can see why it’s important to avoid over-investment in space utilization technology. Yet, it’s not unusual for a company to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on utilization tools and research, only to table the results because of “paralysis of analysis” or an inability to act on the resulting insights. The more cost-effective approach is to define the goal, start small, validate the approach and determine where a change in workplace strategy will have the greatest impact.

Wherever you may be in your workplace life cycle, your space utilization tools should be able to help you assess the financial effectiveness of your workplace and how your utilization ratios stack up. If your organization adopts free addressing and mobile working, for instance, a smart space utilization study will reveal the return on investment in the new approach.

**Utilization value outcomes**

- Reduce excess costs
- Improve occupier experience
- Eliminate the risk of overcrowding or underutilizing
- Provide a return on investment
- Indicate if your organization’s change management practice is effective
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In an era of rapid business change, you may feel increasing pressure to maximize the value of your workplace. The good news is that the journey from present to future may be easier than you might expect. With clearly defined goals and a flexible utilization toolset at your fingertips, you’ll be well on your way to your highest workplace utilization IQ.
About JLL

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About Digital Solutions

JLL Digital Solutions provides capabilities across the complete CRE technology spectrum – delivering solutions that retain and maximize your organization’s investment in technology, while helping you evolve towards actionable business intelligence and insights.

We provide value-driven services such as technology consulting and strategies, IoT technology platform guidance, and real-time utilization solutions. We are one of the largest and most successful Integrated Workplace Management (IWMS) implementers in the world with dedicated practices and expert certifications in the leading IWMS technologies: ARCHIBUS, IBM TRIRIGA, Trimble’s Manhattan and CenterStone, iOffice, and FM:Systems.

Our goal is to offer you greatly expanded flexibility and choice when it comes to your CRE technology portfolio. To learn more about the wide range of services that Digital Solutions brings to the table, click here.