A COVID-Safe Way of Returning to the Workplace

Software that supports a safe transition back to the workplace

SPACE CONNECT

Who we are...

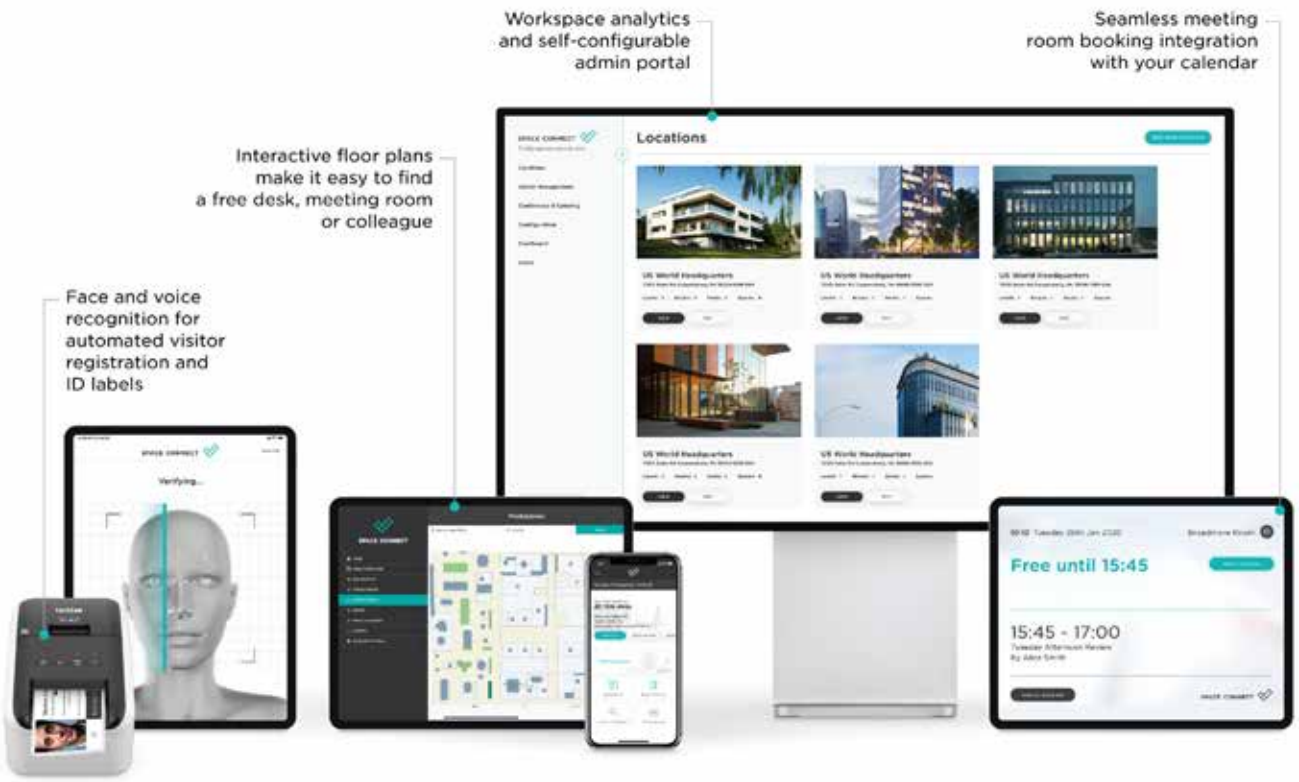
Space Connect is a suite of software applications in commercial real estate that enable business advantage from workplace optimisation. Our applications create an engaging and intuitive work environment for employees whilst delivering the data required to have complete transparency of property and asset usage within your organisation.

Desks

Visitors

Rooms

Analytics



Contents

Returning to the Workplace 03

Benefits of Returning to the Office 06

Staff Confidence in Returning to the Office 07

Social Distancing Made Easy 07

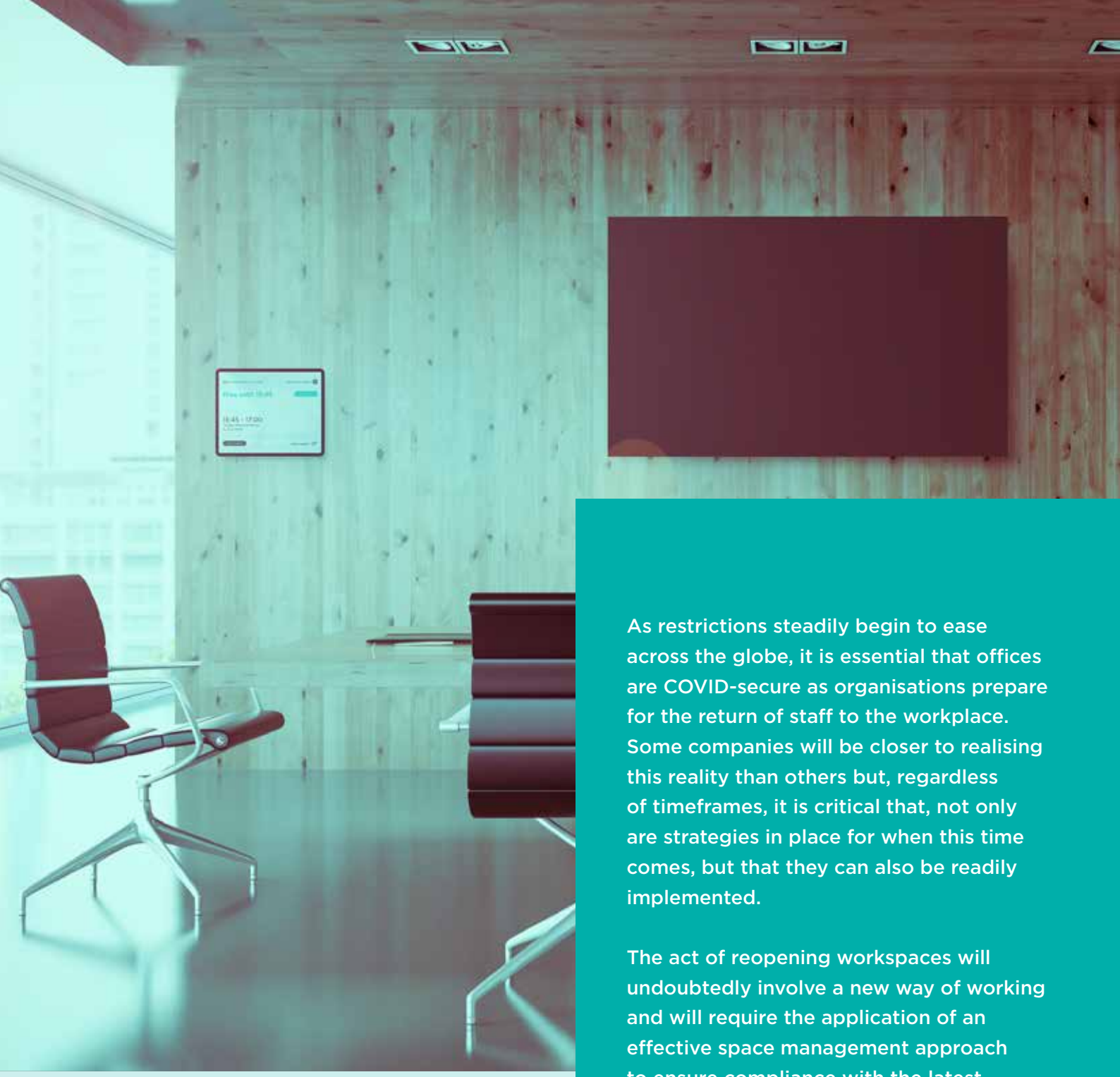
Contactless Check-in 08

Risk Preventation and Response 09

Flexibility and Futureproofing 11

References 12

Space Connect Supporting a COVID-Safe Workplace



Returning to the Workplace

As restrictions steadily begin to ease across the globe, it is essential that offices are COVID-secure as organisations prepare for the return of staff to the workplace. Some companies will be closer to realising this reality than others but, regardless of timeframes, it is critical that, not only are strategies in place for when this time comes, but that they can also be readily implemented.

The act of reopening workspaces will undoubtedly involve a new way of working and will require the application of an effective space management approach to ensure compliance with the latest legislation and guidelines. The overriding objective is, of course, to ensure that staff are provided with a safe and reassuring working environment, whilst not adversely impacting the ability to perform their duties. Further, it is essential that contingency plans are in place in the event of a COVID-19 risk, or outbreak, to safeguard the wellbeing of all staff and/or visitors.

Embracing the 'New Normal'

A recent global study by JLL (2020) found that 74% of employees sought a return to the workplace, demonstrating the value of bringing staff back to a structured communal workspace. Several key points of consideration will be discussed throughout this whitepaper, explicitly: ensuring a safe working environment; encouraging employee confidence in returning to the office; risk identification and response; and future-proofing your business. Flexibility and the ability to make instant strategic adjustments is essential within the current climate, whether this be to comply with the ever-changing government restrictions or in response to a new COVID-19 risk. Taking advantage of a contemporary space management solution can profoundly support the process of phasing staff back into the workplace and effectively help with overcoming associated obstacles!

***74%** of employees are seeking a return to the workplace.*

Preparing your business for the return of staff to the workplace may seem like a daunting prospect within the current climate, but it doesn't have to be. Understanding that things will be different when employees begin to filter back into the office, and proactively embracing this 'new normal', will give you a major advantage when putting strategies in place to ensure adherence to the latest laws, regulations, and guidelines. The safety of the returning employees is of the utmost importance and by planning effectively you will, not only, install confidence in your members of staff but safeguard the future of your company.

Benefits of Returning to the Office

COVID-19 has markedly influenced the way in which people have worked over the past year, with enforced lockdowns and office closures considerably accelerating the number of employees working remotely.

It is widely accepted that working remotely and office-based working offer their own distinct benefits. With readily available internet access and video-conferencing software, remote workers can still efficiently complete their day-to-day tasks, whilst maintaining regular contact with colleagues and external stakeholders. That being said, there is no substitute for those 'water cooler' moments that naturally occur when physically present within the workplace.

JLL's global study of office workers (2020) supports the continued requirement of the shared workplace after concluding that the office was the preferred location for a number of fundamental occupational aspects, including: collaboration, issue resolution, learning and development, team-building, management, support, and the ability to complete complex tasks. In addition, it was found that 80% of high performers have missed the office during lockdown, suggesting that being physically present within the workplace can help certain individuals flourish.

Before the phasing of staff back into the office can occur it is essential that the workplace is COVID-secure.

The office is the preferred location for:

- Collaboration
- Issue Resolution
- Learning & Development
- Team-Building
- Management
- Support
- Complex Tasks

* JLL (2020) global study

Social Distancing Made Easy

Staff Confidence in Returning to the Office

It is understandable that, whilst the majority of employees feel positive about a return to the workplace, some may have reservations about doing so within the current climate. A recent survey by AVIVA (2020) found that UK workers reported risk of infection (32%) and social distancing (22%) as their top two concerns with returning to the workplace. Space Connect's solution aims to alleviate these concerns by providing clients with the ability to enforce social distancing; utilise touch-free check-in, and safely manage meeting rooms. This is supported by research from O.C. Tanner (2020) who reported that implementation of a sound and well communicated COVID-19 strategy helped to reduce workplace-related anxiety levels by 37%.

The application of a comprehensive and transparent space management solution can help to significantly increase staff confidence in returning to the office.

Social Distancing Features:

- Real-time view of occupied desks through our interactive mapping
- Flag desks are unavailable at the click of a button to disable user booking access, ensuring your workspaces comply with social distancing guidelines
- Desks can be automatically made unavailable based on real-time occupancy and social distancing requirements when integrated with presence-detecting sensors
- Visitors are required to agree to terms & conditions upon arrival, including critical social distancing information
- Report on adherence to social distancing within our analytics module
- Alerts sent to facilities and users when the floor capacity limit has been reached

Contactless Check-In

Meeting Room Enhancements

Limit Room Capacity
Dynamically change room capacity as required to adhere to social distancing

Online Meetings as Default
Meetings created via the mobile app are set to online as default to encourage remote connectivity

Poly Trio VC Automation
Video-conferences can be automatically initiated when the organiser is detected through presence-detection with Poly Trio devices (or via the mobile app)

Space Connect's presence-detection sensors support a variety of methods that allow passive check-in. The sensors can automatically determine which user has arrived at what workspace and check them in, reducing the need to touch surfaces.

QR Codes
Placed on desks, outside meeting rooms, or at reception to enable booking, check-in, and check-out using a mobile device

Docking Stations
Windows client application installed onto a user's device detects a docking station connection and automatically checks them in upon docking

Presence-Detection Sensors
Placed under a desk or in the ceiling to enable the automatic detection of user

Smart Sensors (RFID Card / Smartphone Tap)
Check-in and out using a smartphone or an RFID card through Bluetooth-detection or a card reader

Manual Check-In
A low-cost and rapid deployment approach enabling manual check-in via our mobile app or web booking tool

Facial Recognition
Space Connect's visitor management app can automatically check-in previous visitors through facial recognition technology

Risk Prevention & Response

Risk prevention strategies are a fundamental aspect in ensuring that your workforce is adequately safeguarded against potential COVID-19 hazards. Just as important however, is the ability to act swiftly and efficiently in the event of a potential risk. It is vital that companies deal proactively with staff members who are potentially sick or exposed to the COVID-19 virus. Space Connect has released a number of functionality enhancements that, not only, help to reduce the risk of COVID-19 contamination within the workplace, but assist clients with the quick and accurate identification of potential at-risk employees.

COVID-19 Pre-Screening Questionnaire

Quick and Easy to Complete

The questionnaire comprises a selection of 'yes' or 'no' questions that must be answered by all visitors or employees in advance of visiting or checking in. It only takes a minute or two to complete.

Reduced Risk of Internal Virus Outbreak

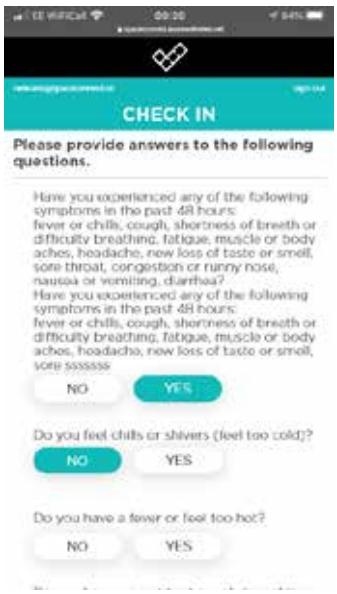
Non-compliant answers are flagged and the individual will be asked to complete a pre-determined action (e.g., self-isolate and arrange for a test). The reduces the risk of space contamination early on, minimising the likelihood that the virus will be passed on to fellow members of staff. Health and safety representatives are also alerted and additional targeted cleaning can be arranged, if required.

Customisable

Clients can customise questions and actions based on their own prerequisites, meaning that even when situations and legislation change, the questionnaire can mirror current requirements.

Reportable

All data can be reported upon to ensure that any additional individuals who might be at risk can be informed (our contact tracing insights can be used to support this).



Hygiene and Cleaning Management

Routine cleaning and disinfecting is an activity that has become part and parcel of everyday life during the COVID-19 pandemic, and is integral in safeguarding your staff within the workplace. Space Connect's hygiene and cleaning enhancements, not only, ensure that cleaning is regularly completed, but, that the sanitisation is targeted

- Hand cleaning reminders via in-app push notifications
- Ability to restrict users to all day desk bookings
- Inform facilities when a specific desk or room has been used and requires cleaning
- Alert users to clean their desk upon check-out, using supplied cleaning materials at desk
- Meeting room display panels and desk signs provide resource cleanliness status

Contact Tracing Reporting Management

Even the most meticulous 'return to the workplace' strategies can't guarantee that an employee won't test positive for COVID-19 at some point. The contingency plan of an organisation is of paramount importance in this instance.

Space Connect's contact tracing feature is critical in reducing the risk of an internal COVID-19 outbreak. Clients are provided with the ability to drill down into their users' past bookings, to produce powerful and granular data that can be used to quickly, and effectively, pinpoint at-risk employees.

Flexibility & Futureproofing

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a major change to the way people have been working throughout the past year or so. Government-imposed lockdowns and office shutdowns have led to the number of people working remotely skyrocketing. Remote work was on the rise even before the pandemic however, with a 400% increase reported in the US between 2010 and 2020. This is expected to increase by a further 77% from 2019 to 2022 (Get VoIP, 2020).

Research from JLL (2020) suggests that flexible working will become increasingly prominent as society evolves. It was reported that 72% of employees would favour a hybrid working model combining the ability to work remotely and book a desk within the office. This preference was even stronger among managers (77%) and young professionals (75%).

The mass rollout of vaccines across the world has certainly increased hope that things will return to normal sooner rather than later. It is impossible to predict the future however, and, for this reason, it is crucial that 'return to the workplace' strategies are flexible. The majority of organisations are preparing for a phased approach to bringing their staff back to the office, which is supported by Space Connect's solution.

Space Connect Enables Scaling Up or Down as Required

Bookable desk totals can be instantly scaled up or down as required.

Room capacity limits can be easily edited to comply with the latest social distancing guidelines.

No need to raise support tickets; amendments can be made within the admin portal within just a couple of clicks.

In-depth Power BI analytics included as standard.

Changes represented real-time within the user environment.

Report on booking trends and space utilisation to assists with space optimisation strategies.

References

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Get VoIP (2020)
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[getvoip.com/blog/2020/07/07/video-conferencing-stats]

JLL (2020)
'Reimaging Human Experience: How to embrace new work-life priorities and expectations of a liquid workforce'
[research report]

O.C. Tanner (2020)
'The Truth, the Whole Truth, and Notes About Transparency'
[research report]

Your next steps

#1. Get in touch and arrange a demo, online or at your office
#2. We answer any queries you may have
#3. Place an order
#4. We provision your system within a few hours
#5. You're ready to start configuring Space Connect
#6. Or, if you'd prefer, we can implement or you can use one of our partners
#7. Either way, you're up and running in little time

Get in touch

To discover more about how Space Connect can make it incredibly easy and affordable for you to deliver workspace transformation, contact us to arrange a demo, arrange a call or for further information:

Call +44 (0) 1638 510900
Email enquiries@spaceconnect.co
Or visit spaceconnect.co

Fast, affordable workspace transformation
www.spaceconnect.co