

The Ultimate Hybrid Work Playbook

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Building Flexible, Productive, and Employee-Centric Workplaces

Introduction

Welcome to The Ultimate Hybrid Work Playbook, a comprehensive guide designed to help workplaces successfully implement and manage a hybrid workforce.

The way we work has changed forever. Hybrid working isn't a trend—it's a necessity. Employees demand flexibility, businesses need productivity, and organisations want to create thriving, connected workplaces. So, how do you balance it all?

This playbook is your guide to navigating the hybrid work era offering practical steps, insights, and tools to help you design a strategy that works for everyone. Whether you're reimagining office spaces, optimising resources, or enhancing employee experience, we've got you covered.

The hybrid work revolution is here to stay—let's make it work for everyone.



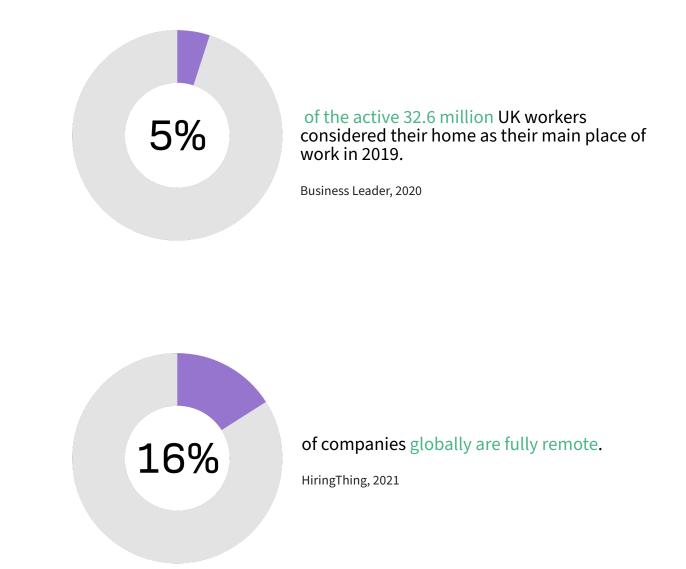
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Pre-Hybrid

Before the hybrid work model became the norm, the traditional 9-to-5 office setup was the standard for most businesses. Everyone was expected to be physically present in the office each day, which often meant long commutes and rigid routines. This expectation was largely due to the fact that computer systems and workplace software were immobile and tied to on-site infrastructure. This setup worked for a time but didn't allow for the kind of flexibility and adaptability we now know is so important in the modern workplace.

However, with the advent of the internet and the rise of cloud-based software, work is no longer confined to a specific physical location. These technological advancements paved the way for more flexible work arrangements, changing the way we view productivity and presence. This shift not only empowered employees to achieve a better work-life balance but also enabled businesses to operate more efficiently, tapping into global talent and reducing overhead costs.





A New Era of Work

Hybrid work is no longer a temporary response to a global crisis; it has become the foundation of the modern workplace. What began as a necessity during the COVID-19 pandemic has evolved into a strategic approach that reshapes how we think about productivity, collaboration, and employee well-being.

WHY IT'S HERE TO STAY

- Employees value flexibility and are more productive when they can choose where they work.
- Organisations recognise that hybrid work reduces costs, from real estate to employee turnover.
- Technology now enables seamless collaboration and real-time data insights, making hybrid work sustainable and scalable.

WHAT IS HYBRID WORK?

A flexible working model that combines at home and in-office days. It's designed to provide the best of both worlds: the productivity and focus of remote work and the collaboration and connection of being in the office.

In a hybrid setup, employees might have designated office days for team meetings and brainstorming sessions while working remotely on tasks that require deep focus or flexibility. This model empowers individuals to balance their professional and personal lives while fostering a culture of trust, autonomy, and adaptability.

The Hybrid Work Evolution

PRE 2020

Some hybrid work opportunities available but 5 days in the office most common.



2020

The global pandemic forced organisations to adapt quickly, shifting millions to remote work overnight.

2021

Companies began exploring hybrid models as a way to balance flexibility with business continuity.

2

2022-2023

Data-driven strategies emerged to optimise hybrid work, focusing on space usage and employee satisfaction.

2024

Hybrid work became the new normal, with businesses investing heavily in tools to support long-term flexibility.





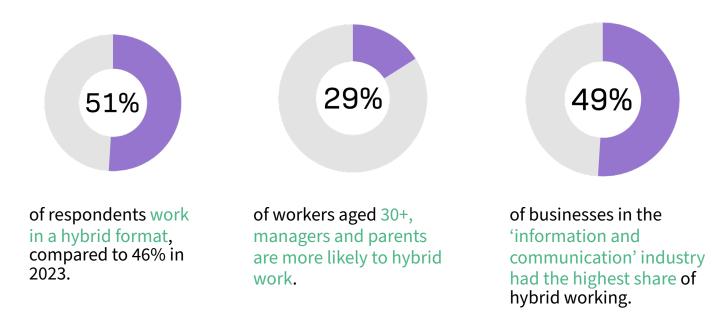
2025

Return-to-office mandates became more common, with many organisations implementing policies requiring employees to work in the office three days a week.



Hybrid Work Today

As hybrid work continues to define the future of work, businesses are actively adapting their strategies to provide employees with flexibility, while maintaining collaboration and productivity. The key challenge for companies is to design a hybrid work strategy that fosters a balanced, efficient, and engaging work environment, both remotely and in-office.





Centre for Cities' 2024 Report



Why Do People Want Hybrid Work

Hybrid work bridges the gap between remote and in-office working, offering the best of both worlds. But what are the real benefits for employees and employers?

REMOTE vs IN-OFFICE vs HYBRID

| Aspect | Why Employers Prefer In-Office Work | Why Employees Prefer Remote Work | How Hybrid Work Balances Both |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|
| Collaboration | Encourages spontaneous discussions, meetings and brainstorming sessions. | Allows focused, distraction- free work in a comfortable environment. | Combines in-office brainstorming with remote focus time for maximum productivity. |
| Company Culture | Builds a unified workplace culture through face-to- face interactions. | Offers more autonomy and reduces the stress of office politics. | Uses in-office days for team-building while respecting employees' need for autonomy. |
| Productivity Monitoring | Provides better oversight of employees' work and immediate feedback. | Enables self-management and reduces micro- management stress. | Balances oversight during in-office days with trust in employees' remote work capabilities. |
| Flexibility | Ensures consistent availability and teamwork within the office. | Allows better management of personal and professional responsibilities. | Provides structured office days for collaboration and remote days for flexibility. |
| Cost Efficiency | Optimises office space usage and justifies real estate investments. | Saves employees commuting costs and time. | Reduces overhead costs for employers while maintaining a productive and satisfied workforce. |
| Employee Well-being | Facilitates immediate access to wellness programs and HR support. | Promotes better mental and physical health through reduced commuting and stress. | Combines in-office resources with remote work's health benefits to support overall well-being. |



| Work Type | Daily Cost | Weekly Cost |
|--|------------|-------------|
| Remote: 0 days in-office, 5 days from home | £9.41 | £47.07 |
| Hybrid: 3 days in-office, 2 days from home | £15.22 | £76.12 |
| Full time in-office: 5 days in-office | £19.10 | £95.48 |

Bionic UK's WFH vs Work from Office Study

Adopting a hybrid work model is a cost-effective solution that provides significant advantages for both employers and employees. By reducing the need for full-time office space and associated overheads, businesses can lower operational costs, while employees save on commuting expenses, meals, and other in-office costs.

For employees, the flexibility to work remotely part of the time allows them to better manage their personal responsibilities, making hybrid work particularly beneficial for parents juggling childcare or school schedules. It also alleviates the strain of long commutes, giving workers more time and energy to focus on their tasks, leading to improved productivity and well-being.

Hybrid work maintains opportunities for collaboration, innovation, and team bonding during office days. As a result, the hybrid model not only helps keep costs down but also enhances employee satisfaction and engagement.



Current Hybrid Work Strategies

FLEXIBLE WORK POLICIES

Many businesses are offering employees the option to choose when and where they work, rather than imposing fixed office days. This flexibility allows employees to tailor their work environment to their preferences, improving work-life balance and increasing overall satisfaction.

REDESIGNED WORKSPACES:

Offices are being designed with purpose-driven spaces. These office layouts allow employees to select the best environment for the specific task they are working on, whether that's a quiet space for focused work, a collaborative area for team meetings, or a comfortable lounge for casual brainstorming. This dynamic use of office space encourages autonomy while maintaining opportunities for in-person collaboration.

TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENTS

Tools like desk booking systems, project management platforms, and video conferencing software help businesses manage office capacity efficiently while supporting employee autonomy and flexibility.

CLEAR HYBRID WORK POLICIES

Companies are developing clear hybrid work policies that define expectations for in-office and remote work, ensuring consistency and fairness in how hybrid arrangements are implemented.



How Do I Introduce Hybrid Working To My Business?

The hybrid work strategy focuses on implementing and optimising the chosen hybrid work model. It includes policies, tools, and practices that ensure the model functions effectively and aligns with organisational goals.

COMPONENTS OF A HYBRID WORK STRATEGY

- Policies: Clear guidelines for remote and in-office work expectations.
- Technology: Collaboration tools, workplace booking systems, and analytics platforms.
- Workplace Design: Create office environments that support hybrid workers.
- Open Communication: Communicate expectations, company goals, and any changes in the hybrid work model.
- Employee Engagement: Initiatives to maintain morale, culture, and connection.



Part 1: The People

UNDERSTAND EMPLOYEE ROLES AND PREFERENCES:

- Survey employees to assess their desire for flexibility, remote work, and their ideal balance of in-office and remote days.
- Consider different employee needs, such as caregiving responsibilities, work-life balance, and wellness.
- Evaluate the types of roles that must be in the office versus those that can work remotely.

DEFINE EXPECTATIONS:

- Decide on a flexible, fixed, or remote-first hybrid model based on your needs and workforce preferences.
- Define office attendance, working hours, and availability for employees.



TYPES OF HYBRID WORK MODELS

FIXED ONSITE DAYS

Employees work a set number of days in the office and the rest remotely. For example, employees are required to be in the office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.



2 OFFICE MANDATES

Leadership decides which days everyone will work in the office and the days that are remote. This becomes standard policy for everyone to follow.



3 FULL AUTONOMY

Employee gets to decide which days they come into the office, working without any restrictions.



ASYNCHRONOUS SCHEDULES

Employees do not need to work simultaneously or be available at the same time. Instead, they can complete tasks at times that suits them.



5 REMOTE-FIRST

Remote work is the default, with the office serving as a resource for collaboration, meetings, or specific tasks.



6 OFFICE-FIRST

The office remains the primary workspace, with employees working remotely on an occasional or asneeded basis.



ROLE-BASED

The nature of the role dictates whether an employee works primarily in-office or remotely.



SHIFT-BASED

Employees alternate shifts between in-office and remote work to manage office capacity and ensure equitable access to resources.

Part 2: The Office

REDESIGN OFFICE SPACE:

- Adapt office layouts for hybrid work, incorporating flexible seating arrangements, shared desks, and collaboration areas.
- Establish clear rules for booking desks, meeting rooms, and collaboration spaces.
- Regularly assessing how the space is being used can help determine whether a smaller building, consolidating operations to a single floor, or selling and renting office space would better align with reduced in-office demand.

REDESIGN OFFICE SPACE





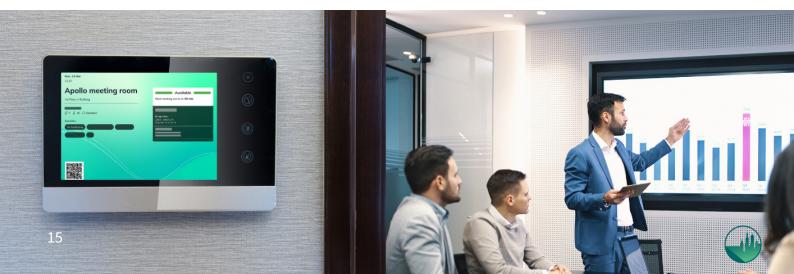
Part 3: The Tech

SMART OFFICE TECH

- Workplace booking system to enable employees to reserve desks, meeting rooms, and parking spaces in advance, ensuring efficient use of office resources.
- Space utilisation tools can provide insights into how office spaces are being used.
- IoT and occupancy sensors to optimise space allocation, and understand traffic patterns.

COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION TOOLS:

- Invest in collaboration platforms (e.g., Slack, Microsoft Teams) to facilitate communication, file-sharing, and real-time collaboration.
- Standardise tools for remote and in-office teams to ensure smooth workflows.
- Regularly assessing how the space is being used can help determine whether a smaller building, consolidating operations to a single floor, or selling and renting office space would better align with reduced inoffice demand.

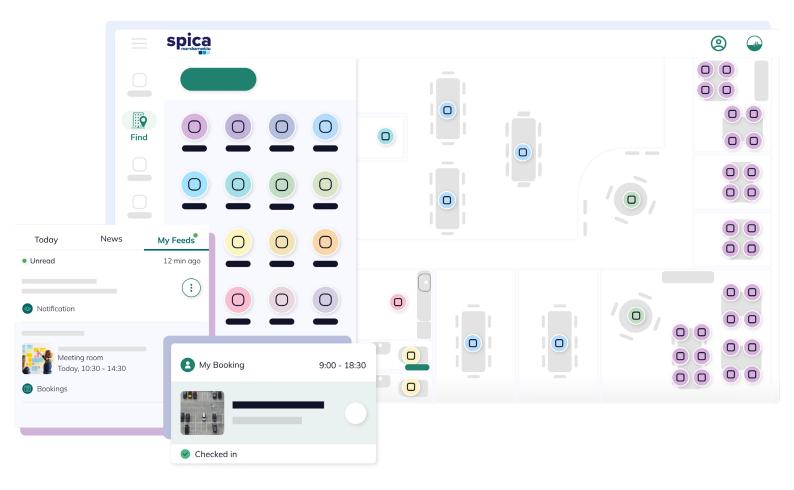


PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOLS

- Implement project management tools (e.g., Trello, Asana) for task tracking, timelines, and deliverables across both remote and in-office teams.
- Establish clear rules for booking desks, meeting rooms, and collaboration spaces.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND WELL-BEING TOOLS:

- Provide access to tools that promote employee engagement and well-being, including virtual team-building platforms and wellness apps.
- Conduct regular surveys and feedback sessions to assess how the hybrid model is working for employees. Look for issues such as communication challenges, work-life balance concerns, or technology limitations.





Smart Office Tech

Smart office technology leverages IoT (Internet of Things), AI, and cloud-based systems to create efficient, connected, and adaptive work environments. These tools enhance employee experiences and optimise resource management.

TYPES OF SMART OFFICE TECH

- IoT Sensors: Monitor occupancy, air quality, and temperature for optimisation, comfort and energy efficiency.
- Desk and Room Booking Software: Allow employees to reserve workspaces in advance, ensuring they have a place to work in the office.
- Visitor Management Systems: Streamline check-ins and improve security, creating a safer, more organised environment.
- Analytics Dashboards: Analyse occupancy data, space utilisation, and employee preferences to make informed decisions
- Access Control Systems: Smart locks and facial recognition for security and convenience.
- Energy Management Solutions: Automate lighting and HVAC systems to reduce costs and carbon footprints.



Benefits



1

Better Space Usage

Effectively manage and optimise your office space by identifying underutilised areas and repurposing them into practical, employee-focused spaces.

Improvement in Maintenance

Early detection of faults helps prevent costly downtime, ensures smoother operations, and extends the lifespan of equipment.

3

Improved Employee Experience

Provides flexible tools like desk booking, climate control, and personalised settings for comfort.

Attract and Retain Staff

Smart tech streamlines the transition between work and home. This fosters a welcoming and comfortable workplace environment, enhancing employee retention and attracting top talent.

5

Data-Driven Decisions

Offers real-time insights to optimise workplace strategies and resource allocation.

6

2

4

Reduce Energy Costs

Reduces energy consumption and operational costs through smart energy management.



Spica's Workplace Offerings

Spica is at the forefront of workplace transformation, offering innovative workplace solutions that cater to the demands of the hybrid work era. With a focus on flexibility, efficiency, and employee well-being, Spica provides tools that empower organisations to thrive in a hybrid work environment.

GemEx is an intuitive workplace experience app and management platform made by Spica, we help companies around the world to create the future of work... now.



WORKPLACE BOOKING SYSTEM

Coordinate your people, resources, and spaces with ease.



MOBILE APP

GemEx App for collaboration, and productivity, anytime, anywhere.



WORKPLACE ANALYTICS

Data-driven decision making for smarter spaces and happier teams.



EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Facilitates co-working and communication effectively.



Workplace Booking System

DESK BOOKING

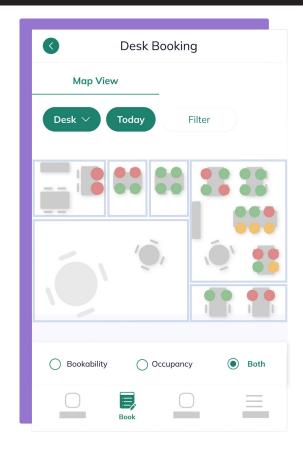
From cosy work pods to energising standing desks, find the perfect space to boost productivity and creativity.

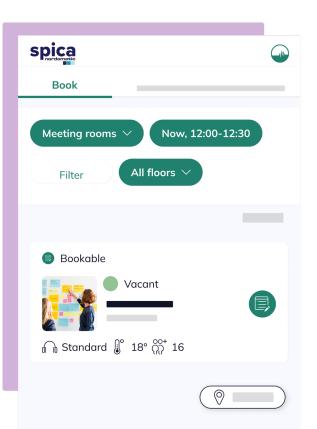
REAL-TIME RESOURCE AVAILABILITY

Reserve workstations in advance or ondemand.

NEIGHBOURHOODS

Set up various neighbourhoods and manage access to different zones, enabling users to view and book authorised desks only.





MEETING ROOM BOOKING

Whether you prefer a formal boardroom setting or a casual collaborative environment, find the perfect space to inspire creativity for your next meeting.

INTEGRATE WITH OUTLOOK & MS365

Book from your familiar outlook window for smooth employee usability and simplified booking journey.

MULTI-RESOURCE BOOKING

Employees have the option to book multiple resources or services in one reservation.



Employee Workplace App

EMPLOYEE APP

Enhance connectivity and employee satisfaction through:

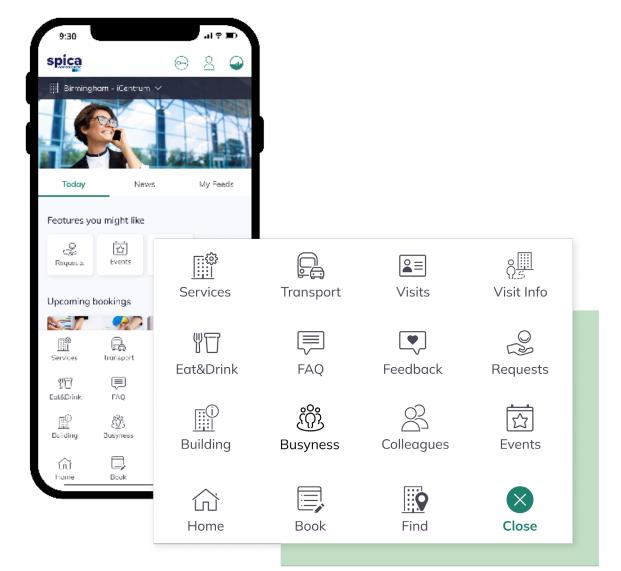
- Personalised dashboards for booking, feedback, and updates.
- Push notifications for company news, events, and reminders.
- Integrate with local transport facilities to see live timetables for updates and delays.



Employee Engagament

Take advantage of our pre-packaged GemEx data or combine it with your own datasets, from occupancy and leasing data to any other data within your system. gain a deeper understanding of how your employees or tenants are behaving and what factors are driving their booking decisions.

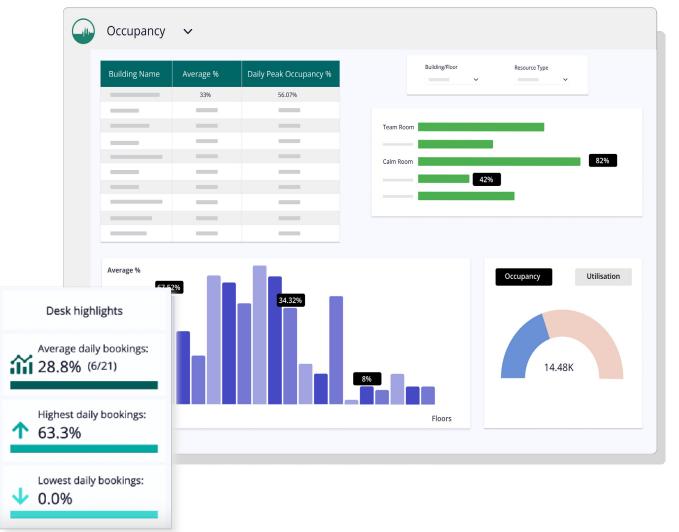
- Indoor positioning system technology to be directed to your booked area or chosen amenity.
- Gauges office activity levels for decisionmaking.
- Personalised news feed keeps employees informed and engaged.
- Showing you availability, amenities, and environmental conditions based on IoT sensors.



Workplace Analytics

Take advantage of our pre-packaged GemEx data or combine it with your own datasets, from occupancy and leasing data to any other data within your system. gain a deeper understanding of how your employees or tenants are behaving and what factors are driving their booking decisions.

- Data on the number of bookings for different spaces.
- Data on the length of time that spaces are booked for.
- Data on the utilisation rate of your workplace overall.



Case Study



CHALLENGE

An Australian branch of a global professional services company faced complaints from employees about insufficient phone booth availability, leading to productivity disruptions and frustration. Facing this challenge, they contemplated purchasing additional phone booths as the sole solution.

SOLUTION

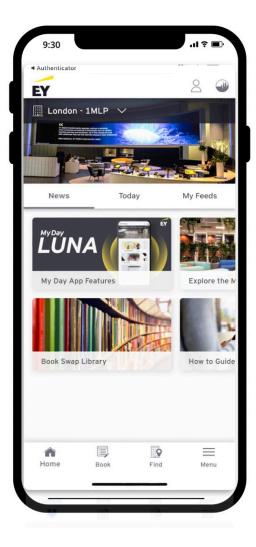
Using GemEx's Workplace Insights, the company analysed data to determine peak usage hours, identify underutilised areas, and strategically deploy resources. They uncovered that floor 2 had a surplus of phone booths with low usage, while those on floor 5 were consistently occupied, indicating high demand.

RESULTS

- Armed with actionable insights, the company avoided unnecessary expenses of purchasing more phone booths. Instead, they strategically redeployed resources, relocating some booths from floor 2 to floor 5 to meet demand effectively.
- Employees experienced improved access to phone booths, leading to enhanced productivity and satisfaction.



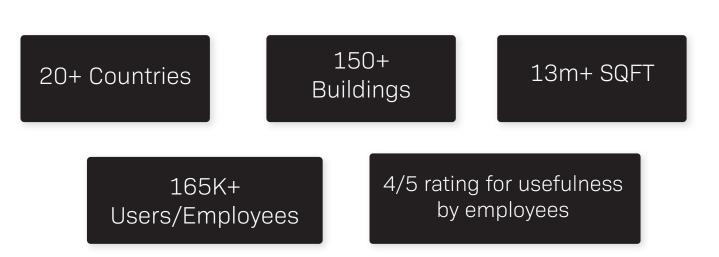
Spica's Smart Customer





"The digital workplace transformation journey with Spica through the last 5 years have been extraordinary. The team was able to rise to the challenge and provide industry leading smart building capabilities tailored to the unique requirements that we had."

Clament Lijoy, Global Digital Workplace Leader, Real Estate Technology & Innovation at EY





Spica doesn't just provide tools; it offers a partnership. From consultation to implementation and ongoing support, Spica ensures organisations achieve their hybrid work goals with ease and efficiency.

Spica's team of developers and digital workplace consultants will guide you through the steps involved in getting your workplace experience app configured, optimised and launched. Once live your dedicated Account Manager and Customer Success team will be there to support your journey.

Hybrid Work 2025 and Beyond

In 2025 and beyond, hybrid working will likely evolve further as businesses continue to adapt to the changing demands of the workforce, technological advancements, and global trends. Here are some key aspects of hybrid working in the future:

RETURN TO OFFICE MANDATES

The debate over Return to Office (RTO) versus hybrid work isn't going anywhere anytime soon. Big names like Amazon, Starbucks, Boots, and PwC have already announced plans to bring employees back to the office three to five days a week starting in January. Some organisations may be motivated to follow the lead of these high-profile companies and instated a similar policy.

- Amazon has ordered its staff to be full-time, five days a week in-office starting January 2025.
- Starbucks is telling its staff a minimum of three days a week in-office and non-compliance could lead to "consequences."
- Boots from September 2024 expects employees to make the office their primary workplace, aiming for at least 60% attendance.
- Ericsson have increased their in office policy attendance from 50% office attendance to 60%.

Companies like Spotify remain fully flexible and remote-friendly. Spotify have also said it has noticed no impact on productivity or efficiency since moving to a more flexible way of working.



AI WILL CONTINUE TO RESHAPE THE WORKPLACE

Mixed reality applications and AI-powered tools will take significant strides in transforming the workplace experience. Imagine stepping into a virtual meeting room where you can interact with 3D models, digital whiteboards, or holographic teammates as though they were right beside you.

Mixed reality will bridge the gap between physical and virtual workspaces, reducing the isolation of remote work and creating opportunities for more natural, collaborative problem-solving. As hybrid work becomes the norm, these applications will ensure teams can innovate, ideate, and engage seamlessly, no matter where they are.

AI LEGISLATION

Over the past few years, AI has been implemented at lightning speed, often without clear oversight, leading to concerns about data privacy, bias, and ethical use. In response, we can expect stricter regulations aimed at ensuring transparency, accountability, and fairness in AI-driven tools and systems.

Companies using AI will need to demonstrate how their algorithms make decisions, especially in areas like recruitment, performance monitoring, and workplace surveillance. This shift will help address fears of invasive technologies, such as employee tracking, and build trust in AI-powered workplace solutions.





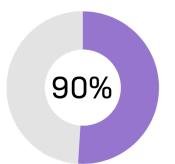
EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE TAKES CENTER STAGE

As remote and hybrid work models become more permanent, businesses will prioritise mental health initiatives, including remote wellness programs, virtual mental health support, and tools for managing stress and burnout. Some organisations will use AI-driven insights to personalise employee journeys, from onboarding to career development or to analyse employee feedback to identify areas for improvement.

Offices will adapt to employee needs with IoT devices, offering features like desk booking, climate control, and customised environments based on preferences. Companies that invest in flexibility, well-being, and meaningful engagement will attract and retain top talent, driving innovation and success in a rapidly evolving workplace.

RESULTS-ORIENTED WORK ENVIRONMENT

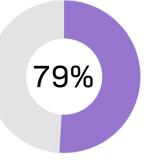
A shift from presenteeism to a more results-driven work environment is expected to gain traction. Instead of mandating when and where employees need to work, companies may focus on meeting goals and performance metrics. This means that employees who deliver results may have more leeway in terms of work location and hours.



of employees who feel their companies use employee feedback to drive change are more satisfied (90% vs. 69%) and engaged (89% vs. 73%) compared to those who believe their companies don't drive change.



of employees believe that working with AI tech will enhance their performance and job satisfaction.



of UK workers have experienced burnout with 77% of people stating that feeling isolated causes burnout.



CONSOLIDATE TECH

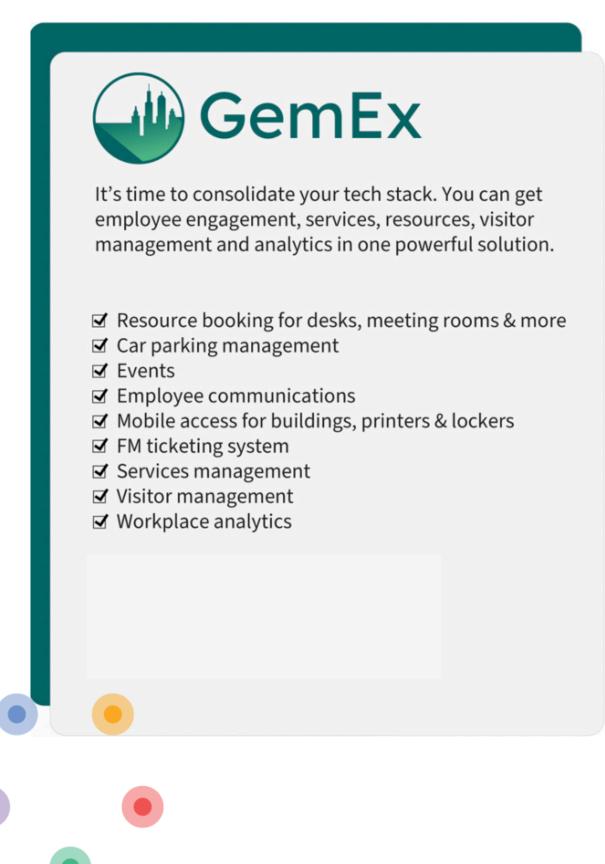
A major change we'll see in 2025 is the end of legacy systems put in place during the COVID pandemic. Many businesses are moving away from the fragmented, piecemeal tech solutions they had to implement in a hurry and are looking to integrate multiple services and platforms into one consolidated ecosystem to reduce costs and improve efficiency.

The urgent need to address data silos is the primary catalyst for the shift from tech adoption to integration and optimisation of SaaS software. The fragmentation of data across tools has emerged as a significant barrier to efficiency, decision-making, and scalability. Data silos reduce the accuracy and reliability of analytics, making it harder for organisations to make informed decisions. This trend could lead to the emergence of more comprehensive, "super-app" style SaaS solutions that offer a wide range of functionalities on a single platform.

 \$18 million was wasted on "inefficient SaaS management".

- Approximately one-third of spend on IT (e.g., for desktop software, SaaS and data center software) is wasted.
- The average company has 15 duplicative online training apps, 11 project management tools, and 10 team collaboration apps.







Hybrid Work Checklist

ASSESS EMPLOYEE SENTIMENT



Run company-wide pulse surveys to collect employee feedback.

Ask employees how often they would like to come to the office, which tasks would be better suited to remote work and if they prefer hot desking or a fixed desk.

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES



Choose your hybrid work model (remote-first/flexible/majority in-office) based on survery feedback.



Create a clear hybrid working policy, including attendance expectations and the reason behind these decisions.

Communicate the policy to all employees, have a dedicated person or team to answer any questions about the new working model and ensure everyone is aware of the change.



Develop guidelines for data security, confidentiality and health and safety policies for office work.



Consult your legal team about hybrid work laws.



UPGRADE TECHNOLOGY



Provide employees with the necessary tools and equipment (e.g., laptops, monitors, headphones).

Implement a centralised communication platform (e.g., Teams, Slack, or Zoom).

Use cloud-based file storage and collaboration tools (e.g., Google Workspace, SharePoint).



Ensure cybersecurity measures are in place.

Implement a workplace booking system which has desk booking, meeting room booking, the ability to book workspace in advance, the visibility of employees in the office on a given day and more to suit your needs.

CREATE A WORSPACE THAT WORKS

Install IoT senors like occupancy sensors to gain data on foot traffic, desk bookings, and meeting room bookings to optimise the office for employees.

Allocate quiet zones for focused work and collaboration areas for teamwork.

Ensure there are areas for recreation and relaxation like kitchens, cafes, or lounges.



Look at office pods and acoustic wall panels to boost productivity and privacy in the workplace.





EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

Offer mental health support and resources.

Encourage work-life balance by setting boundaries around working hours.

Regularly check in on employee well-being through surveys or meetings.

Recognise and reward performance equitably for remote and in-office employees.

Provide leadership training for managing hybrid teams and skill development for employees through online courses or workshops.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Regularly assess the effectiveness of hybrid work arrangements by gathering employee feedback through surveys, conducting performance reviews, and analysing productivity metrics.

 \square

Adapt policies and technology based on feedback and evolving needs.

Stay updated on hybrid work trends and best practices by following Spica and other industry leaders, subscribing to relevant newsletters, and engaging with professional communities.

Communicate changes clearly and in a timely manner through emails, all-hands meetings, and team briefings, ensuring transparency and alignment.

Define clear goals, deliverables, and KPIs for hybrid teams by collaborating with team members to align expectations, using project management tools for tracking progress, and revisiting objectives as needed.



Find out what GemEx solution can do for you

Download GemEx Brochure

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The future of work: now

www.spicatech.co.uk Workplace Experience SaaS Solution



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