

The Intelligent Workplace

Data, digitisation and the future of workplace transformation

Insights from the Business Moves Group thought leadership roundtable

Foreword

The workplace has always played a central role in how organisations collaborate, innovate and perform. Yet for many years the way we planned and managed workplaces remained relatively unchanged. Decisions were often driven by property cycles, lease events or simple space ratios.



Rachel Houghton, managing director, Business Moves Group

Today that is changing rapidly.

Organisations are beginning to recognise that the workplace is not simply a physical environment. It is a strategic platform that shapes how people work together, how knowledge flows through a business and how culture is experienced day to day.

At Business Moves Group, we see this transformation first-hand. Through our work with organisations across both the private and public sectors, we are increasingly asked the same question: how can workplaces evolve to support modern organisations and the people within them?

This question sits at the heart of our Workplace Transformation roundtable series.

These sessions bring together leaders from across the workplace ecosystem including occupiers responsible for major estates, workplace strategists, designers, technology specialists and operational delivery partners. The aim is simple: create a forum where people can share experiences openly and explore how workplace strategies are evolving.



What became clear during our latest discussion is that we are entering a new phase in workplace strategy. Data, digitisation and integrated systems are providing organisations with insights into how their workplaces function in ways that were simply not possible in the past.

At the same time, the workplace ecosystem has become more complex. Strategy, design, technology and operational delivery are often managed by different teams and partners. The opportunity now lies in bringing these elements together to create intelligent workplaces that evolve alongside the organisations they support.

This paper captures some of the key insights from that discussion.

Executive summary

The modern workplace is undergoing a significant transformation.

Where workplace strategy was once driven primarily by real estate considerations, organisations are increasingly recognising the workplace as a strategic asset that influences collaboration, productivity, talent attraction and organisational culture.

During the Business Moves Group Workplace Transformation Roundtable, leaders from across the workplace ecosystem explored how organisations are navigating this shift.

Three themes emerged:



1

Data is becoming the foundation of workplace strategy. Organisations now generate vast quantities of workplace information through access systems, HR data, occupancy analytics and employee engagement tools. The challenge is not collecting data, but connecting it to create meaningful insight.

2

Digitisation is reshaping how workplaces function. Digital platforms are enabling organisations to manage assets, space and employee experience in new ways while also improving accessibility to information.

3

The workplace lifecycle has become increasingly fragmented. Strategy, design, technology and operational delivery are often delivered by different partners, creating a need for stronger coordination and integrated leadership.

Together, these trends are driving the emergence of what can be described as the Intelligent Workplace: an environment where data, digital infrastructure and strategic leadership combine to create workplaces that evolve continuously alongside organisational needs.

Five strategic insights from the roundtable

The discussion revealed five consistent themes shaping the future of workplace strategy.

1

Data is becoming the foundation of workplace strategy

Workplace decisions are increasingly informed by operational data rather than assumptions or traditional benchmarks.

Access control systems, utilisation analytics and organisational data provide powerful insight into how workplaces are actually used.

2

Digitisation is enabling more agile workplaces

Digitising information and workplace systems allows organisations to operate more flexibly while improving governance, accessibility and operational efficiency.

3

The workplace lifecycle has become more fragmented

Workplace strategy, design, technology and operational delivery are often managed by separate teams or providers. Greater integration is required to ensure alignment.

4

The workplace is evolving into a platform for collaboration and culture

Rather than acting as a default location for individual work, offices are increasingly valued as environments where teams connect, innovate and learn together.

5

Workplace transformation is becoming continuous

The availability of workplace data allows organisations to refine and evolve environments continuously rather than relying on large, infrequent transformation projects.



A new era of workplace strategy

For decades, workplace planning was largely driven by property considerations.



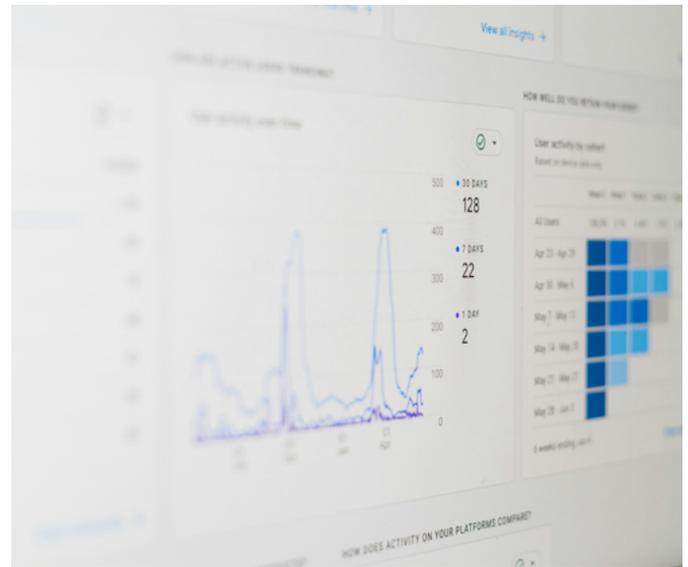
Lease cycles, portfolio consolidation and cost efficiency were often the primary drivers behind workplace decision-making.

Now, that model is being replaced by something more sophisticated. Organisations are beginning to recognise that the workplace plays a far broader role in shaping how people collaborate, innovate and perform.

As a result, workplace leaders are asking different questions. Instead of focusing purely on how much space is required, organisations are seeking to understand:

- how employees interact with space
- how teams collaborate within the workplace
- how environments influence productivity and wellbeing

This shift marks the transition from property management to workplace intelligence.



Data as the foundation of the Intelligent Workplace

One of the strongest themes emerging from the roundtable was the growing importance of workplace data.

Many organisations already collect large volumes of information through systems such as:

- access control systems
- desk booking platforms
- occupancy sensors
- HR data
- employee sentiment surveys
- asset management systems

However, while the data exists, it is often fragmented across multiple systems. The challenge, therefore, lies not in data availability but in data orchestration.

When these datasets are integrated, organisations gain valuable insights into how workplaces actually function. This includes understanding:

- how teams interact with space
- when collaboration environments are most valuable
- which workplace settings support productivity
- how estate portfolios can be optimised

Organisations that successfully connect these insights can move from reactive workplace management towards continuous workplace optimisation.

Digitisation and the Workplace Lifecycle

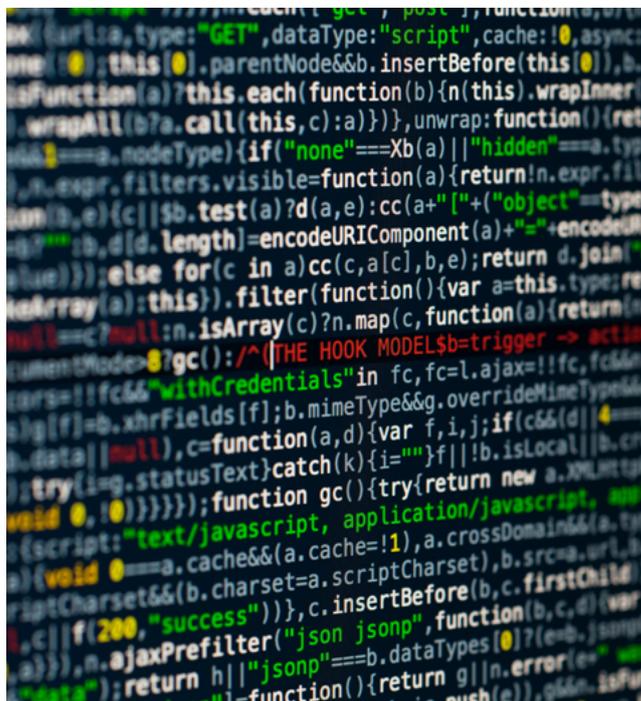
Alongside the growth of workplace data, organisations are increasingly digitising the systems used to manage their estates.

Digital platforms now support many aspects of the workplace lifecycle including:

- workplace analytics
- asset lifecycle management
- space planning
- employee experience platforms
- integrated property data systems

These technologies allow organisations to manage workplaces more dynamically. However, many organisations have implemented these platforms independently.

Without integration, digital systems can create new data silos rather than delivering strategic insight. The real opportunity lies in connecting these tools within a single workplace intelligence framework.



Fragmentation across the workplace ecosystem

Another theme explored during the roundtable was the increasing fragmentation of workplace responsibilities.

Historically, many organisations maintained large internal property teams responsible for strategy, delivery and operations. Today the workplace ecosystem often includes a network of specialist providers such as:

- workplace strategists
- architects and designers
- technology providers
- facilities management partners
- relocation and operational delivery specialists

While this model provides access to deep expertise, it can also create disconnects between strategy and delivery.

Successful workplace transformation increasingly depends on organisations being able to orchestrate these disciplines around a unified workplace strategy.



The convergence of physical and digital workplaces

One of the most significant shifts discussed during the roundtable was the growing convergence between physical and digital workplaces.

Historically these environments were managed separately: real estate teams focused on buildings and space planning, while technology teams managed collaboration tools and digital infrastructure.

Today these two worlds are inseparable. The effectiveness of a workplace is shaped not only by its physical design but also by the digital systems that support communication, collaboration and information access.

Many workplace frustrations arise not from the physical environment itself, but from the disconnect between physical and digital systems.

The future workplace must therefore function as a hybrid platform where physical and digital environments operate seamlessly together.



From projects to continuous workplace transformation

Workplace change has traditionally been associated with large and infrequent transformation programmes.

These typically included relocations, major refurbishments or portfolio consolidations. However, organisations today operate in far more dynamic environments.

Businesses evolve rapidly in response to market pressures, technological change and workforce expectations. As a result, workplaces must also evolve more fluidly.

Participants suggested that organisations are moving towards a model of continuous workplace transformation, where environments are refined incrementally rather than through occasional large-scale projects.

Enabled by workplace data and digital platforms, organisations can now adapt workplaces based on how people actually use them.

The Intelligent Workplace framework

The Intelligent Workplace model can be understood through four interconnected pillars:

- **Data:**
Workplace insight generated through utilisation analytics, behavioural data and organisational information.
- **Digitisation:**
Digital platforms that support asset management, workplace analytics and operational visibility.
- **Information Access:**
Digitised knowledge environments that enable employees to access critical information regardless of location.
- **Operational Delivery:**
Integrated workplace services that connect strategy, change management and operational execution.

Together these elements create workplaces that are responsive, data-led and continuously evolving.



Business Moves Group: Convening the industry conversation

At Business Moves Group, we believe the workplace industry is at a pivotal moment.

Organisations are facing increasingly complex workplace challenges that require collaboration across multiple disciplines. Our roundtable series brings together leaders from across the sector to share insight, challenge assumptions and explore new approaches to workplace transformation.

By facilitating these conversations, we aim to contribute to the development of more and integrated workplaces.

Closing statement

Workplace transformation is no longer defined simply by office relocations or redesign projects. It is about creating intelligent environments that adapt continuously to the evolving needs of organisations and their people.

Data and digitisation will play a central role in this evolution, enabling organisations to understand how workplaces function and how they can be continuously improved.

However, technology alone is not the answer. The organisations that succeed will be those that combine data insight, strategic leadership and cross-industry collaboration.

The workplace is no longer simply real estate. It is a powerful platform for organisational performance.



Read insight from our previous [fiscal workplace change](#) roundtable here, and our previous briefing paper, "[Fiscal implications of workplace change.](#)"