



PLAT4MATION

# Role of the office in a flexible workplace

How to optimize office spaces for the digital future

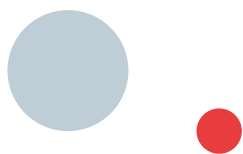
*in collaboration with Avison Young and ServiceNow*

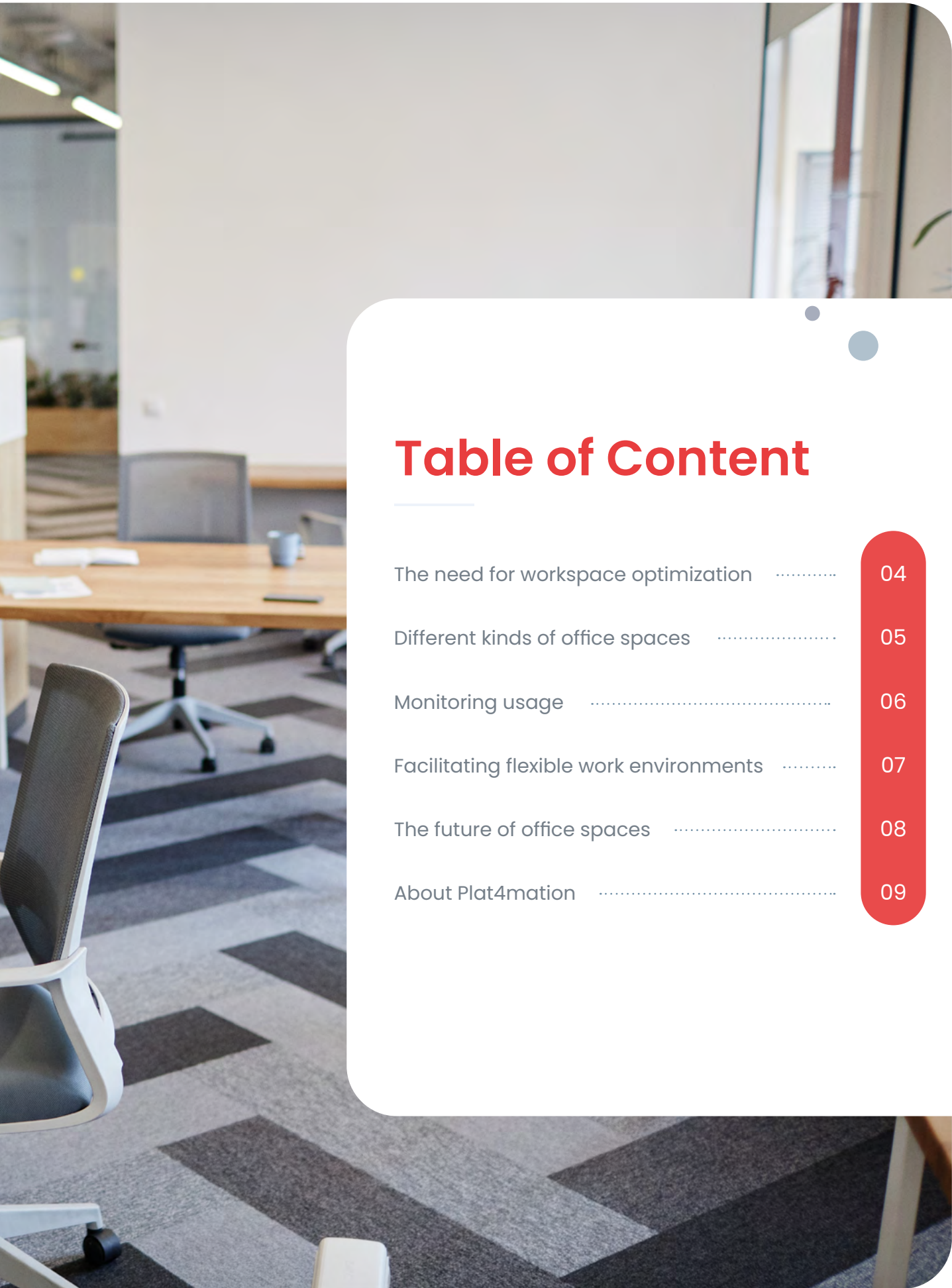
# Offices in the post-pandemic world

*According to a study by Avison Young, before Covid office seats were vacant 50% of the time. Additionally, in 2020 a report by Buffer found that 98% of employees prefer occasional remote work. Clearly, flexible work is here to stay.*

The way we work has evolved significantly over the years as employees try to find a better work-life balance. Before 2020, no one questioned the office's role because going to an office space was a long-standing ritual and societal norm. However, after the pandemic, there was a drastic transformation. Organizations swiftly adopted a flexible work model, blurring the lines between remote work and in-person collaboration. This raised many questions about the intricacies of the flexible working model, various strategies for office space allocation, the changing dynamics of desk-to-employee ratios, and the critical role of design considerations in shaping functional and engaging work environments.

This collaboration between Plat4mation, ServiceNow, and Avison Young gave us valuable insights into the changing office spaces. As a result, this whitepaper examines how workplaces adjust to changes and focuses on ways to optimize available spaces to improve the employee experience.





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# The need for workspace optimization

Rising real estate costs have forced companies to reduce their footprints and expenditures. Before the pandemic, 50% of the average seats were empty. The pre-pandemic reality, where half of the average office seats remained unoccupied, presents an opportunity to reduce excess expenditure and reimagine office spaces, ultimately elevating the overall employee experience. This enhanced workplace experience is vital for attracting employees back to the office.

Avison Young's insights reveal that many companies have reached a steady state in returning to the office. But the challenge is understanding how employees are using the space. This involves categorizing employees into three groups:



1.

## Every day on site

Employees who want or need to be at the office every day.

2.

## 100% remote

Off-shore employees or employees who can't or don't need to come to the office.

3.

## Hybrid/flexible

Employees who work from the office a few times a week and the rest remotely.

Every employee has unique requirements for their employer and workplace. This means, it's essential to understand key issues for an accurate workplace design. Spaces must stay flexible to readily adapt to changing requirements, ensuring an improved employee experience.

Companies that strategically invest in enhancing the employee experience witness a remarkable 4x increase in profitability, functionality, and engagement. Additionally, a workspace designed for adaptability is crucial and lets you make changes as needs evolve. That's why creating a dynamic work environment ensures being future-ready.

# Different kinds of office spaces

Moving from traditional office setups, organizations are now embracing an activity-based work environment. These environments offer a “townhall” like experience where employees can work in rooms and engage in tasks such as meetings, recreation, coffee breaks etc.



## Individual spaces

The areas designed for focused tasks, such as workstations, phone rooms, and private offices.



## Collaboration spaces

These include enclosed meeting rooms and open collaboration spaces which foster teamwork and brainstorming.



## Social spaces

These include various seating options and power connections through informal soft seating or lounge areas which facilitate casual interaction.

Combining these spaces requires careful consideration and ensuring that they cater to various work styles while promoting engagement and productivity. Individual spaces help with deep thinking, collaboration spaces boost creativity, and social spaces create a positive atmosphere. Therefore, getting the mix right is important. A well-designed office should also consider employee comfort, like comfortable chairs and natural light, to boost well-being. This design not only improves productivity but also makes employees happier and more connected to the workplace.

Setting up the number of seats in a workplace has become a complicated topic in the last 3-4 years. The evolution of remote work trends has added a new layer of complexity to workplace planning, emphasizing the need for even more adaptable and customized solutions. In a competitive job market, providing an attractive, flexible workspace not only attracts top talent but also fosters innovation and collaboration among the existing employees which contributes to long-term success.

# Monitoring usage

Remember it's not about overbuilding the seats or the space but rather using the available space in a smart and resourceful way.

Since technology is not perfect, we need Change management to educate people about how to make the most of the office spaces.

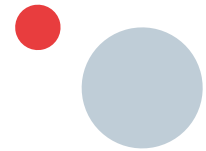
To efficiently manage office spaces, companies are using technology to monitor usage. Some employ card readers, correlating data with HR (Human Resources) records, while others rely on reservation software, providing insights into employee presence and activities.

Sensor-based systems with heatmaps provide a deeper level of understanding and reveal patterns in space usage. While advanced solutions exist, the majority of companies are still in the early stages of adoption, highlighting the room for growth in this domain.

In the absence of such technological resources, some companies have adopted an assigned-day methodology. This allows the same space to be used as a private area for individuals and a collaborative space for groups.

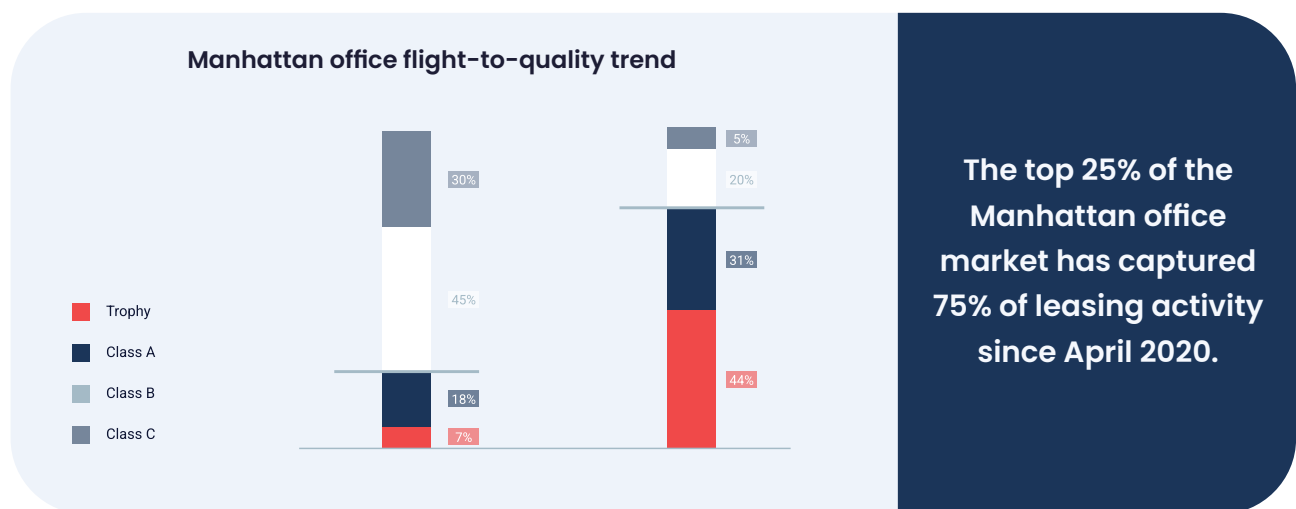


# Facilitating flexible work environments



Since one seat for every person no longer works, what do businesses do with the extra space? The answer depends on the company's mission, operational style, and the unique requirements of its employees. The most important thing to remember is your office has to work and provide a seamless physical and virtual experience.

Since the bar has been raised here are some tips:



1.

## Holistic Processes and Amenities

Ensure all the right processes and steps are working including amenities.

2.

## Indepth Implementation

Understand the different roles and responsibilities within an organization when introducing a new system or software.

3.

## Smart investments

Invest in change management and educate people about flexibility and the various ways of working.

Office spaces are no longer mere locations; they have evolved into strategic assets with a direct impact on an organization's success. The graph above proves the ongoing shifts in office space considerations, demonstrating an increased investment in enhancing the employee experience.





# The future of office spaces

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In the war for talent, the workspace plays a vital role. The traditional notion of a dull workspace no longer works for a dynamic workplace. Therefore, how you set up and use your office space will either enable or hinder your organization's goals. There are five things to consider while designing an office space:

## 01. Innovation and productivity

A well-designed workspace has the power to inspire employees and boost their creativity.

## 04. Flexibility and choice

Give your employees freedom to choose between virtual or in office experience.

## 02. ESG, health and wellness

Good work requires a fit mind and body. So, invest in facilities that improve their wellbeing.

## 05. Seamless technology

Erasing the boundary between home and office experiences is an essential goal in today's tech-driven world.

## 03. Diversity and inclusion

Embracing gender, cultural and technical diversity facilitates better ideas and promotes inclusivity.

The flexible working model represents a transformative shift in how we perceive and utilize office spaces. By embracing diverse strategies, drawing insights from data, and prioritizing thoughtful designs, organizations can craft environments that cater to the varied needs of employees.





# Contact us

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Plat4mation is an elite ServiceNow partner whose core business is focused on unleashing the potential of ServiceNow for enterprises to accomplish - and accelerate - their digital transformation objectives. Over the course of nearly 10 years, Plat4mation has established an extensive library of reusable assets, integrations and methodologies to deliver custom solutions that help companies maximize value from ServiceNow.

Named ServiceNow's Global App Development Partner of the Year 2021, our team possesses a deep level of Now platform expertise which enables us to efficiently design the best solutions.



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