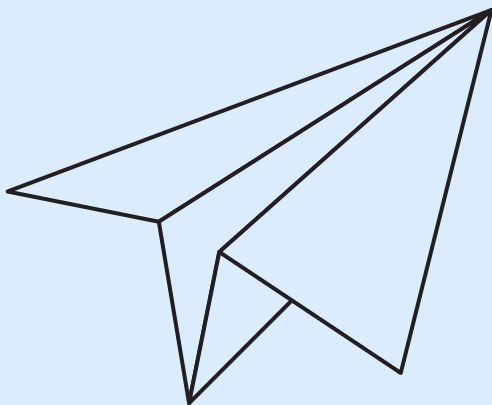




Whitepaper

Agility and innovation for a future-proof workplace



How smart technology is transforming
the workplace experience

The elements for a future-proof workplace: agility and innovation

Not so long ago, the office was a necessary precondition for any work taking place. But since the corona crisis, its very existence has been questioned. What is the role of the office, now that we have seen that almost everyone can work from home?

That is one of the main questions in this whitepaper. We will look at studies and arguments to set out why the office has a great future to look forward to as a social and productive hub. A key factor in this: offices designed to provide the ultimate experience for employees – made possible by smart technology – lead to greater well-being and maximum performance.

We will also address questions such as: what will work look like in the post-corona era? How can your business anticipate sudden changes? And what tools are available to realize future-proof work concepts?

Dive in and enjoy.

Sander Schutte

CEO of Mapiq



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Our work-life ecosystem

For decades, offices were our second home, where we had to go each day to do our jobs. The coronavirus pushed us back to (and locked us into) our first homes. By necessity, we discovered that in our homes – designed primarily for relaxation – we can also be productive.

However, our work-life consists of more than just emailing, video calling, and individual work. We also need face to face collaboration, spontaneous meetings and to be able to work in a variety of inspiring places.

This raises an important question. What will the future of work look like after a period during which work and private life and office and home became so intertwined?

If we want to be better prepared for the future of work, we must view our work life as an ecosystem. All the components in this ecosystem, such as social interaction, learning, development, and inspiration, interact with each other. In the coming decade, technology is going to help businesses to optimize this ecosystem, to create the ultimate office experience, and to achieve the perfect work-life balance.



A great future awaits the office as a social and productive hub, and it will become our primary source of happiness and well-being at work. So this is the perfect time to make innovative workplace changes. And to ensure that the workplace experience is so good that people will be proud of – and happy with – the organization they work for.

Why the office will remain indispensable

Thirty years ago, you couldn't do your work at all if you weren't in the office: all technology was location-specific. After the emergence of the New Way of Working, corona finally made us all understand once and for all: we can do office work just fine regardless of the location. Now that we can work anywhere, where will we end up in the near future?

Exactly at the location where we are most productive and have the best possible workplace experience.

Surely – at least for the next few decades – that will continue to be the office. Regardless of all the disasters, economic developments,

and new technologies, offices still appear to play a key role in our productivity. After all, an office is not just a collection of bricks with Wi-Fi and a coffee machine. No, it is also and above all a place where people come together and work together. Where we socialize.

Where we feel the corporate culture, training is provided and mentoring programs flourish.

Since corona, people have needed a good reason to come to the office. That may be the sense of belonging and autonomy they can't find anywhere else. Or the knowledge that they can follow through in the office: in fact, research shows that

– if the office is optimized in terms of productivity – employees would much rather work there than in a suboptimal home environment. And younger people prefer the office, because it is a richer learning environment and there are better opportunities for valuable social interactions.

A study by [McKinsey](#) has shown that the following tasks, which we did from home during the corona crisis, are much more effective when done face to face:



Giving feedback, coaching, and mentoring



Building relationships with customers and colleagues



Getting new employees up to speed within the company



Negotiating and making crucial decisions



Training



Work that benefits from collaboration, for example, in the areas of innovation, problem-solving, and creativity.

The four best reasons to come to the office are:



Collaboration

Nowhere do we work together more productively than at the office. What's more: those who often work face to face with colleagues solve complex problems more easily, develop better peer relationships, and feel more comfortable about their work.



Social interaction

A spontaneous chat at the coffee machine, speaking to inspiring colleagues over Friday afternoon drinks, a mentor inquiring how your vacation went: social interactions with colleagues make people feel engaged and happy. [Research](#) has also shown that colleagues who are friends with each other score higher in terms of job performance, work morale, and access to informal networks.



Sense of belonging

Research by [Leesman](#) has shown that 45% of employees do not feel a connection with colleagues while they are working remotely, even though such connection is essential for our happiness. If we have a sense of belonging to a team, we are not only happier but also healthier. As a result of which, we ultimately perform better.

“One of the reasons to go to the office is to meet with colleagues face to face. Brilliant ideas and innovative solutions to problems often come from real-life interactions. Cutting back on office costs may therefore block your long-term innovation efforts. Having teams brainstorm in the same space, inviting clients to discuss ideas and projects, coming together with the whole company: these are unique workplace experiences



Creativity

Collaboration at the office and spontaneous meetings stimulate creativity. And that is fertile ground for innovation: after all, new ideas, processes, products, or procedures require creativity.

that you can never achieve completely digitally.”

Gideon van der Burg

managing director Benelux at
Leesman



Employees' experience and well-being

The office makes a crucial contribution to employees' perception of work and well-being. Traditionally, three factors have been identified in terms of the employee experience: social (interactions with others), work (activities, tools, and social platforms), and the physical environment. Today, we are adding a fourth factor: technology, or the set of tools we need to do our jobs. This can include an online user environment, a laptop, and mobile devices.

Employees’ perception of work and well-being rest on the following pillars:



Office experience

Working, collaborating, and socializing in the office should feel simple and easy for employees. You have to make sure you are giving your employees the best possible office experience.

What does it ultimately come down to? When we have the autonomy to determine where and how we work, we achieve peak performance faster.

Leesman’s survey of 690,000 respondents in 90 countries shows that the following elements make for a great office experience:



Focused work



Planned meetings



Frequent breaks



Ad-hoc meetings



Collaboration



Autonomy

Greater autonomy leads to less employee turnover and increased job satisfaction, motivation, and happiness. Work environments that facilitate autonomy also lead to innovation, creativity, and higher productivity. No wonder the number of results-oriented work environments is growing rapidly. In these environments, people are allowed to work whenever and however they want, as long as the work gets done.

Technology can make us feel like we can tailor our workday to our needs and have control over our workday.

For example, the following options contribute to a sense of autonomy:



Booking meeting rooms



Connecting with colleagues at the office



Having an overview of office occupancy



Choosing from different types of workplaces



Ability to control the light and temperature



Having insight into who is at the office

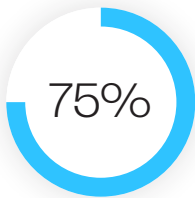


Being able to book rooms that offer the facilities you need at that time.

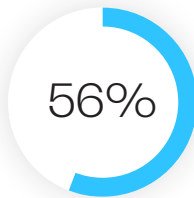


Engagement

Engagement is a consequence of (among other things) a good perception of work, and leads to increased employee well-being. For example, studies have shown that engaged employees call in sick 75% less often and perform 56% better.



**Is less
often sick**



**Performs
better**



Pride

Do you inspire your people, for example through a unique office experience or innovative technology that makes work-life simpler? Then they get a sense of pride. As a result, they feel more engaged with the organization and are willing to go the extra mile to exceed job expectations.



Privacy

A smart office involves increasing the amount of technology, so privacy concerns are growing among employees. In smart offices, for example, they wonder: am I being monitored all the time? What personal information is being stored? It is important that employees have control over their own data. Above all, be transparent: say what data you want to use and why. Finally, take conscious decisions. For example, when there are several technological solutions available, always choose the most privacy-friendly variant.

Optimize the workplace experience and increase well-being with smart offices

In smart offices, technology is used to optimize the office experience. Through an application, people can quickly book a room for an ad-hoc meeting, see who is in the office, easily find colleagues, workplaces, and facilities such as parking, coffee corners, and lockers.

By doing so, you create the optimal office experience and ensure that employees feel more autonomous, engaged, proud, and therefore happier. The result? Increased productivity, and reduced absenteeism and employee turnover.

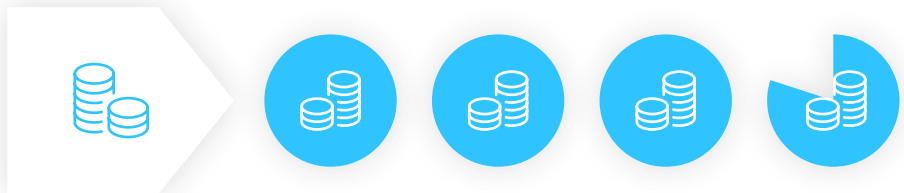
The ROI of happy employees

Is your business improving the workplace experience and well-being of employees? If so, that is a lucrative investment.

For example, a [U.S. study](#) found that employers get \$3.80 in return for every dollar they put into the well-being of their employees.

Are you neglecting the workplace experience and well-being? Then employees no longer feel engaged. And that's a costly matter. It is estimated that non-engaged

employees cost U.S. businesses about \$7 trillion (=7,000,000,000,000) each year, due in part to poor productivity, high employee turnover, and a poor image.



For every \$1.00 spent on the well-being of their people, employers got roughly \$3.80 in return.

Agility and innovation for a future-proof workplace

From cubicles to activity-based working



Activity-based working, which has been given a big boost since corona, is gradually becoming the most popular way of working. The idea of open-plan office spaces dates back to the 1960s, when office clerks, secretaries, and typists worked together in an open space. At the time, many American businesses were introducing another – now infamous – form of open office space: cubicles.

With the rise of digital working, laptops, and the internet, in particular, the realization came in the early 1990s that telecommuting was becoming possible. This led to spatial designs for open, flexible, virtual, and paperless offices without fixed workspaces. The first internationally known implementation of this new way of working was at the headquarters of the Dutch insurance company Interpolis, where a concept by Erik Veldhoen based on New Ways of Working was realized in 1995.

Instead of New Ways of Working, these days we refer more to

activity-based working. The idea is that different activities, such as focusing, collaborating, and socializing place different demands on the work environment. This agile work concept gives us the freedom and flexibility to determine where we do our work, for example, in meeting rooms, social zones, quiet rooms, or phone booths. A work environment that matches the activities increases connection, autonomy, trust, creativity, productivity, innovation, and inspiration.

Sharing the work environment

A crucial element in activity-based working is the sharing of workspaces and facilities. Physical resources no longer belong to one person, but are shared by all. People can easily find, schedule, and book the facilities, similar to sharing economy apps like Airbnb.

The reasons are well known by now: it is easier and much more economical. A matter of grab-and-go, in which you get all the benefits, but not the costs.

As with the sharing economy, the sharing office works because we trust each other. As a result, we see each other as equals, build constructive relationships, and create a sense of community. Shared spaces connect teams and

individuals, creating more opportunities to collaborate and share knowledge.

At Mapiq, we see this effect in every business we start working with: employees start using space differently. More focus is placed on the team and colleagues. Sharing the work environment also promotes a shared sense of ownership of the office.



New ways of working

While New Ways of Working was an evolution in the office world, the corona crisis was a true revolution. It was a radical change: people with office jobs around the world suddenly started working from home on a massive scale. In the post-corona era, according to research specialist [Anja Jamrozik](#), we will not simply be able to go back to the way things were. A tremendous amount has changed and we have become accustomed to countless new things.

She argues that it would be better to see this as a new beginning. How can we do things differently – *better*? Rather than thoughtlessly returning to the old situation, Jamrozik argues that it would be

better to start with a clean slate. Think carefully about what activities people do and then design a workspace and experience based on those tasks.

What will our work look like in the future? Jamrozik believes the following three elements will prevail:



1

Tech-enabled

We can modify our workspaces using technology, such as by adjusting light and temperature. A simple (smartphone) app allows everyone to choose where they work, and with whom. Technology gives us more autonomy and encourages collaboration. Resulting in a more enjoyable work experience.



2

Collaborative

In the last twenty years, the focus has been more than ever on collaboration; in the future, we will need to take collaboration to an even higher level. For example, you can book a high-tech meeting room to work on a project with your colleagues, or meet somewhere outside the office for a brainstorming session.



3

Thoughtful

The nature of our work will change significantly. Artificial intelligence is automating many easy tasks and, increasingly, more difficult tasks. As a result, we will be focusing more on activities that require creativity, empathy, and strategic thinking.

Step-by-step plan for a new workplace strategy

Will you be following Jamrozik's advice and going back to the drawing board in terms of your way of working? Then start by asking some basic questions. Why do we work? And how can we best work together? The answers to these questions form the core of a successful work experience.

Then follow these three steps to create a successful workplace strategy:



Understand what employees need

Ask what people need, what activities they want to do, and how they want to do them. How can you support your employees even better?

Radical turnaround: inspiring example

More than a decade before the corona crisis, the multinational tax consulting firm Ryan decided to change course entirely. Thanks to the radical flex work program MyRyan, people can work wherever and whenever they want, as long as they get their work done. They are not assessed in terms of “face time” at the office, but on results.

Not only did this earn the company a number of awards, it also brought about reduced employee turnover and huge increases in customer satisfaction and sales.



Use data insights

Discover how employees work. How much time do they spend in meetings? Who do they work with? And what facilities do they use?

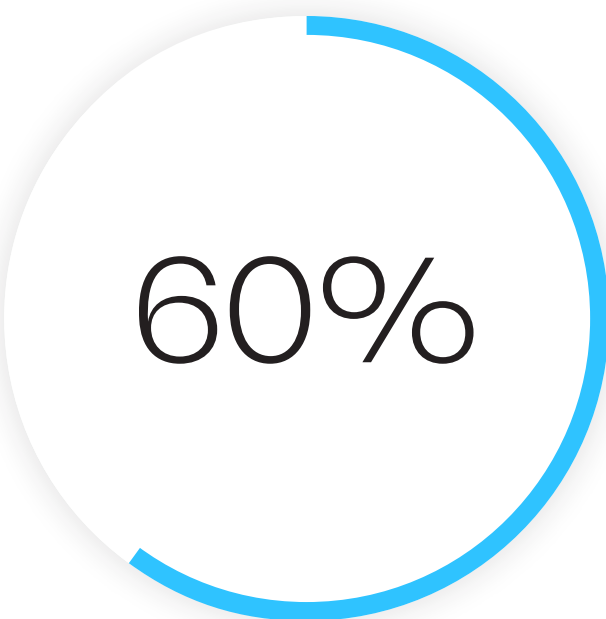


Adapt your workplace

Work patterns, reservation behavior, and building data can help you figure out what people need for their work. How will you facilitate this?

Hybrid work models

Most experts expect businesses to embrace hybrid models on a large scale in the post-corona era, with employees working partly in the office and partly at home. A [Forrester survey](#) revealed that 60% of businesses said they are moving toward a hybrid concept.



60%



“Work is something you do at home”

Hybrid working combines the best of both worlds: collaborating and socializing with colleagues in the office, and having focus time at home. It's all about finding the right balance. While some people might want to work entirely from home, others prefer to spend office hours in the office as much as possible. When setting up the office, it is good to realize that our way of communicating has become much more informal as a result of corona. Leaders would do well to look at how they can personalize the work experience, to make employees happier. In the long run, this brings with it a competitive advantage.

The Dutch software company AFAS has a clear vision: the office is primarily not intended for work. Half of the complex consists of office space, while the rest is made up of a yoga studio, café, gymnasium and climbing wall, among other things. CEO Bas van der Veldt was asked: shouldn't employees be working instead of playing basketball?

His answer: “They can work at home. Here they have the extras. The extras of colleagues, of fraternizing, of being inspired and giving inspiration.”

How do you anticipate change?

“Prediction is very difficult, especially if it’s about the future,” the brilliant physicist Niels Bohr famously said. The corona crisis has underlined this yet again. Predicting the future is not an option, but agility is. Agile organizations are able to quickly and successfully deal with change and new situations. They also enable people to get the best out of themselves by working cross-functionally and giving them autonomy.

A lot of businesses understand this. They make adaptive capability a spearhead and identify agility and innovation as core values. And that translates into competitive advantage, talent retention, and better business performance, among other things.

See change as the new normal: in your workplace strategy, assume

that nothing in the office is permanent or fixed. Designs need to be fully flexible, so you can easily implement new ways of working. This will prevent you from going off the rails during the next crisis or office revolution; all you need to do from now on is make some small adjustments.



Adapt your workplace with data insights

Technology is the most important tool when anticipating new situations and the changed needs of employees. In a smart office, sensors and data give you insight into almost all the different aspects of the office and allow you to measure their use.

Data and employee feedback allow you to adjust workspaces in real-time to meet needs. By giving employees a voice in this, you also increase the sense of ownership of the space.

With data insights, you can understand how employees use the space and make better decisions about workplace changes. Thanks to technology and data, you create the ultimate harmony between employee needs, space, and facilities. In this way, you give employees the workplace in which they perform best and work most enjoyably.

Tools for a future-proof work concept

Are you integrating smart technology into the workplace? Then you can make data-driven decisions about optimizing the space and avoid responding to employee needs too late. It is important that the tools feel intuitive and provide more convenience than stress. Technology used properly gives users a sense of freedom and control over the work environment.

From scheduling office shifts through locating colleagues to algorithms that pair you with a random colleague to socialize: there are lots of tools that can make daily work life more productive, easier, and more fun. You use technology

to steer employees in the use of the space. You can encourage teams to sit together and work together as a group, for example by having the marketing department flex work but giving IT a permanent place.

Trending tools for office environments:



Smart office apps

Employees can book and coordinate shifts in the office with colleagues, book desks and (meeting) rooms, and quickly find colleagues.



Smart office admin portal

Among other things, businesses can calculate safe office capacity and use analytics to see how people are using the office.

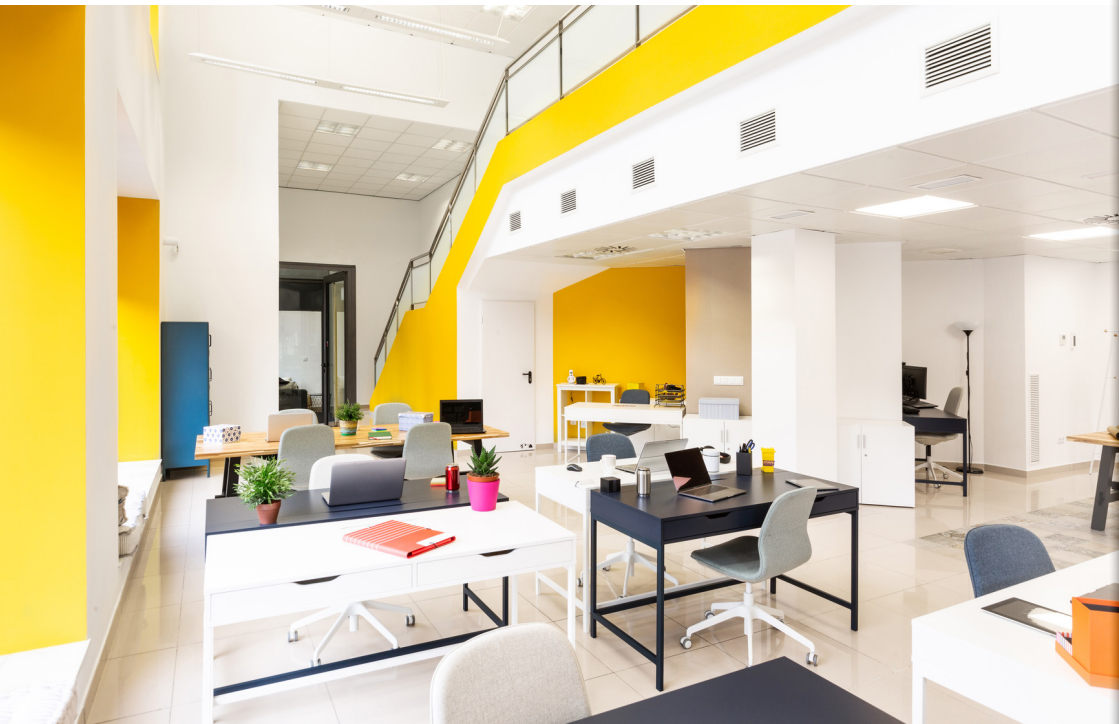


Hardware

- Desk sensors detect motion and share desk availability in a smart office app.
- Room sensors record the availability of meeting rooms and share the availability in an app.
- Room displays show availability of meeting rooms in real time.

The role of technology in the post-corona era

In the post-corona era, when it is expected that most employees will work from home some of the time, technology is going to serve three important functions, according to research specialist Anja Jamrozik:





1

Communication

Technologies such as video calling allow distributed workspaces (including home offices) to be seamlessly integrated with other digital workspaces.



2

Bringing people together

Not everyone is always in the office, even though we want to collaborate regularly face to face with team members or other colleagues. Smart office tools facilitate that people can be in the office at the same time.



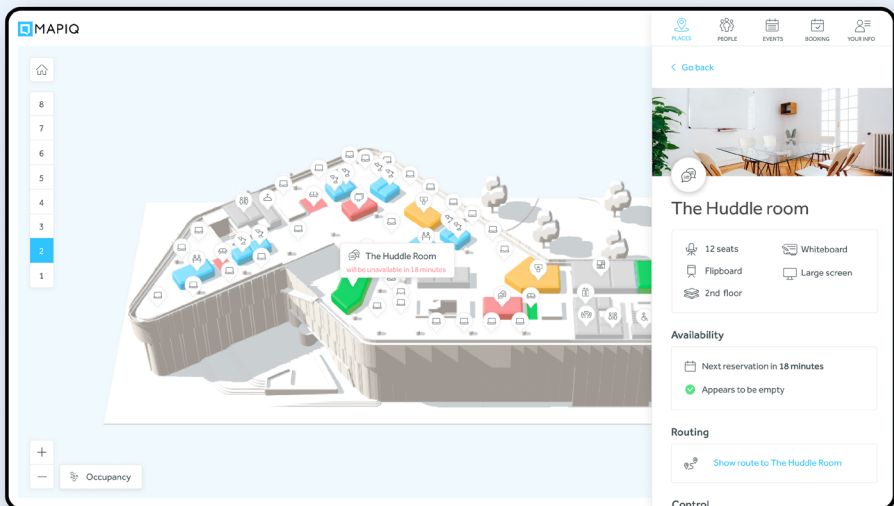
3

A personalized experience

Technology allows employees to book desks and meeting rooms, to find colleagues quickly, and to adjust environmental factors such as light and temperature themselves.

Predicting the future is always difficult, but one thing is certain. Wherever or however we will be working, technology will continue to play a central role. In encouraging collaboration, creativity, autonomy, and social interactions. In creating the right work-life balance and an optimum office experience. And in achieving agility and innovation.

The smart office technology of Mapiq



Simple, smart, social: these are the three pillars of Mapiq's smart office platform, which enables you to get the most out of your office. A 3D map of your office building forms the heart of your platform; from there employees and managers have access to functionalities including:



Setting maximum office capacity



Booking shifts in the office in advance



Seeing where there is space available to work



Instant booking of desks and meeting rooms



Selecting meeting rooms that match activities



Seeing when colleagues plan to work in the office



Seeing where colleagues are located



Finding workplace facilities



Heatmaps: pinpointing busy and quiet areas



Temperature and light control per room

Technology such as sensors allows you to monitor real-time occupancy data in your analytics dashboard and make data-based decisions, anticipating employee needs.

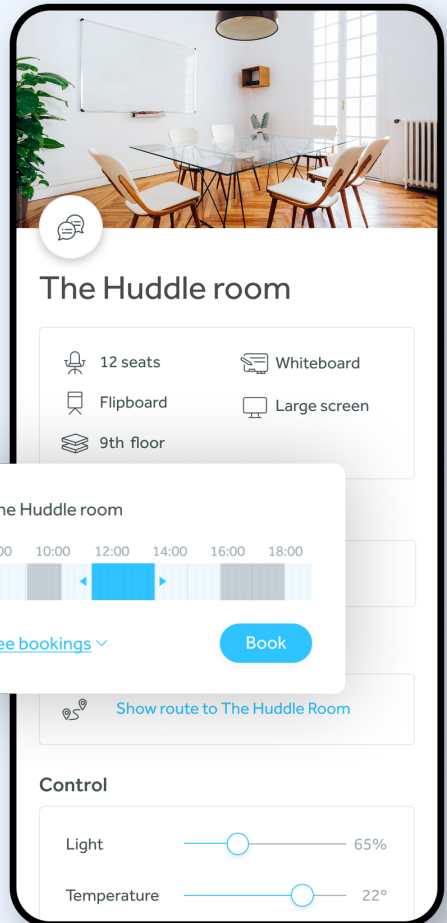
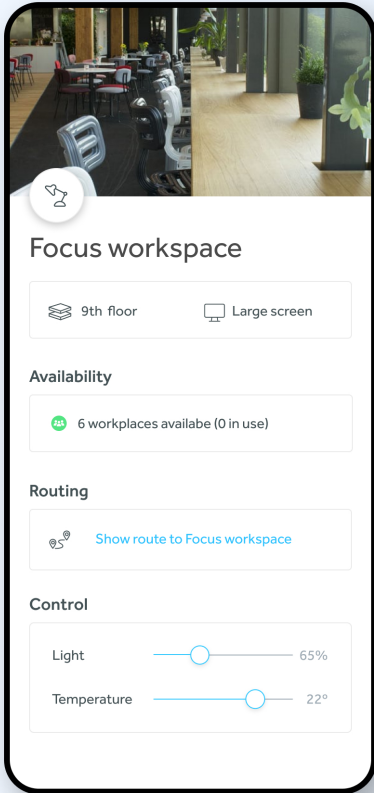
The Mapiq platform can be integrated with numerous building management systems, devices, applications, and sensors. Because Mapiq is Software-as-a-Service, updates take place automatically

and you don't have to worry about local servers. Our platform is used by such well-known businesses as [Deloitte](#), [Danone](#), and [Unilever](#).

If you would like to discuss the possibilities of a smart office platform within your organization, please feel free to contact us. Our smart office advisors are always happy to help.



Mapiq helps The Edge in Amsterdam be one of the most innovative buildings in the world.



Get in touch

Find out how you can build the smart office of the future with Mapiq's simple, smart, and social tools.

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