

Older Buildings, Younger Occupants

How to attract
(and retain) Millennials
with a facility upgrade



Introduction



Expected to account for 75% of the country's workforce by 2025, Millennials are the new target audience for facility managers looking to stay competitive.¹ With a younger generation of occupants comes a new set of standards for buildings to meet. Having grown up in a time with rapid technological, social, and economic change, Millennials have a different set of expectations, beliefs, and priorities than older generations.

Without making updates, your facility could face a noticeable reduction in occupants, resulting in wasted space, low workplace morale, and decreased building revenue. In fact, most offices are already around 50% under-utilized on any given day, due to changing work styles (which were accelerated by the pandemic).² Taking measures to upgrade building operations to meet the increasing needs and desires of younger tenants can ensure your older building stays relevant.

Here are 6 ways you can retrofit your building to appeal to younger occupants:

SUSTAINABILITY

AMENITIES

SENSOR TECHNOLOGY

GREEN CLEANING

LIGHTING

IAQ ENHANCEMENTS

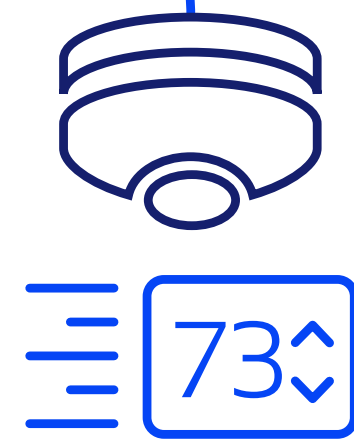
01 Sustainability

Today, 80% of the Millennial demographic seeks to work for companies that care about their environmental impact.³

Sustainable features like solar energy panels, a green roof, or electric vehicle chargers are ways you can retrofit an older building to cater to new demands—and cut costs in the process. With more than half of Millennials wanting to make the switch to solar power, investing in solar panels could play a key role in creating an attractive sustainability image.⁴ For a green roof alone, an estimated lifespan of 40 years would save about \$200,000, of which, nearly two-thirds would come from reduced energy costs.⁵ With Millennials dubbed as the fastest-growing segment of EV owners, installing EV chargers in your facility is a major selling point when it comes to luring occupants back to buildings.⁶

02

Sensor Technology

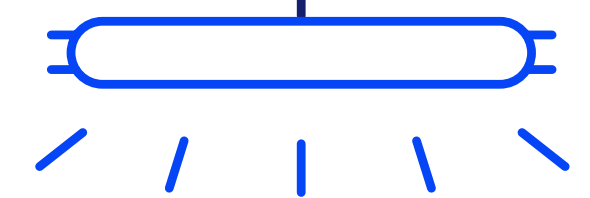


As the most technologically advanced generations, Millennials (and Gen-Z) have lower tolerance for outdated building features.

In fact, more than 80% of Millennials say workplace tech would have an influence when deciding to take a job.⁷ Utilizing sensor technology is a great way to modernize your facility operations without a massive overhaul. From temperature and humidity sensors to motion and occupancy sensors, there are dozens of ways to seamlessly implement automated technology into your building operations. Installing sensor technology can create a win-win situation: ensuring effortlessly comfortable environments for occupants while conserving resources and saving money on energy bills.

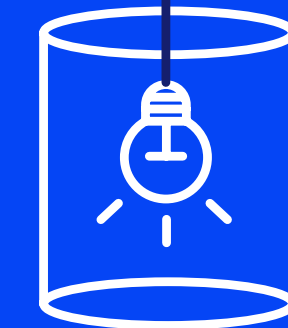
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Lighting



41% of Millennials say natural light is the feature they would most like to have in their office environment.⁸

While natural light is not always an option, opting for naturalistic light fixtures, like daylight-imitating blue light bulbs, can be a promising alternative. Investing in a circadian lighting system that features intensity, color, and stimulus tuning to shift lighting hues throughout the day can increase productivity. According to a study on employee health in work environments, occupants working under circadian lighting found a 12% increase in task performance in addition to increased happiness and energy levels.⁹



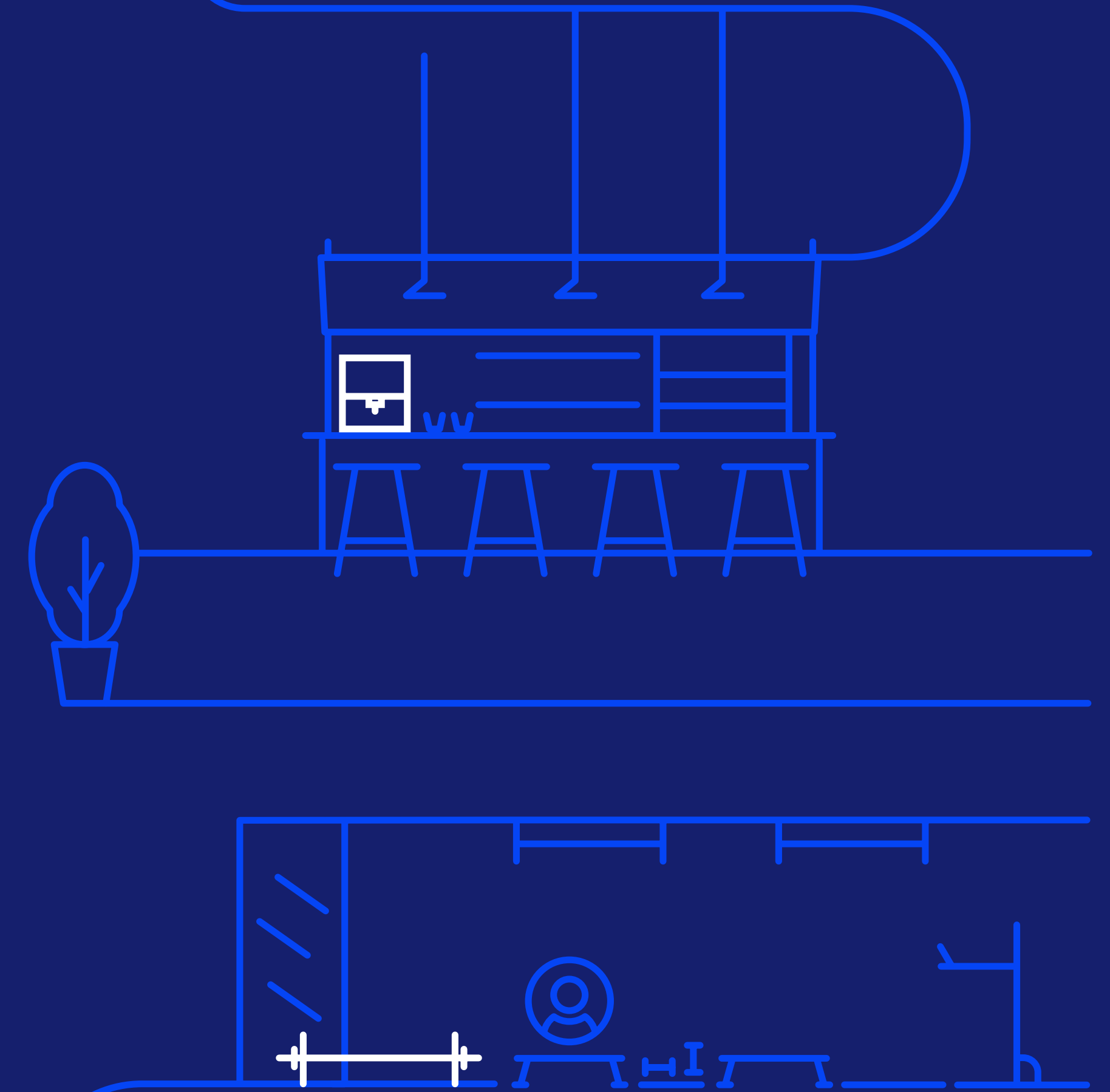
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Amenities

Today, simply offering a clean, productive place to work is not quite enough to entice Millennials to happily leave the comfort of their own homes.

Offering competitive amenities can help attract younger people who might not otherwise find reason to occupy your building. 36% of Millennial workers want an on-site gym due to the hefty cost of gym memberships (yet only 15% of building offer them).¹⁰ Adding greenery to encourage relaxation could also prove to be a major selling point, with about 30% of Millennial employees wanting a green space in their facility.¹⁰

Additionally, research shows that coffee consumption among younger generations is at an all-time high, with daily consumption among 18- to 24-years-olds rising to 48% from 34% in recent years (and climbing to 60% from 51% among those aged 25 to 39).¹¹ Therefore, including a coffee bar or updated kitchen amenities like a state-of-the-art espresso machine (and a day porter to help maintain it all) could help sway caffeinated Millennials.



05

Green cleaning

When it comes to eco-friendly practices, the difference between younger and older generations is stark.

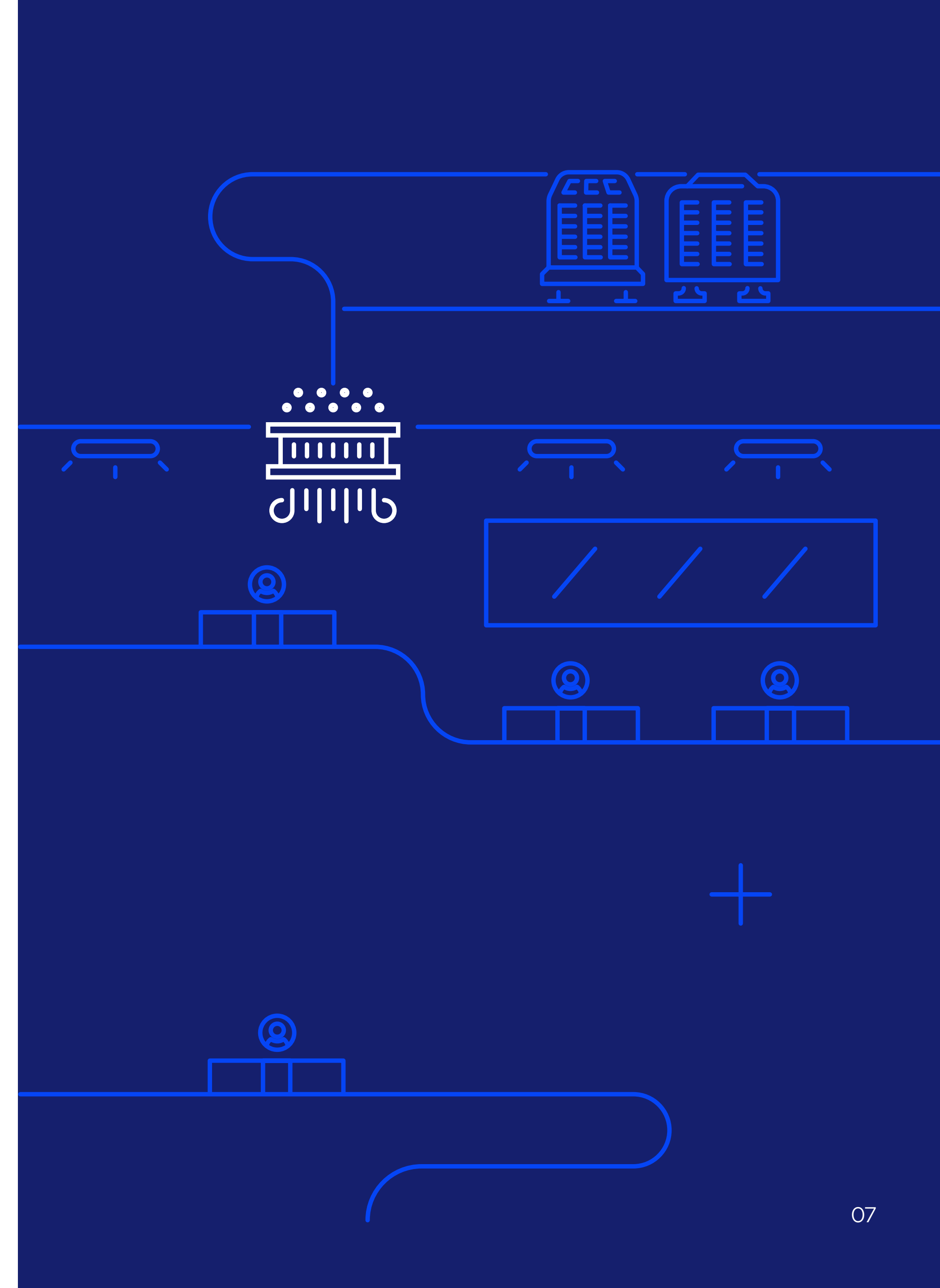
64% of Millennials say that “to them it is worth paying more for eco-friendly products,” compared to just 38% of Baby Boomers.¹² According to a report conducted by the National Coalition on Millennial Health, COPD and asthma (which can be exacerbated by volatile organic compounds) are the second-most frequent conditions for which young adults receive medical care.¹³ These respiratory concerns can lead to heightened sensitivity to harsh chemicals often used in building cleaning processes. Switching to bio-based cleaning alternatives can help avoid health concerns due to toxic chemicals like ammonia, butyl cellosolve, and hydrochloric acid.

06

IAQ enhancements

IAQ is becoming an increasing concern for younger generations returning to the workplace—and for good reason.

Along with viral pathogens, up to 72 trillion microscopic irritants, or allergens, find their way into offices every day.¹⁴ Today, 82% of Millennials say having access to their building's IAQ information would make them feel safer about being in the office.¹⁵ Installing UV lighting, bipolar ionization technology, or highly efficient particle filtration (HEPA) HVAC filters can help create a healthier building environment while giving occupants peace of mind.



When it comes to facility management, staying competitive means prioritizing the changing needs and desires of your occupants. If your facilities are aging and a total building revamp isn't in the budget, gradually implementing innovative upgrades can make a big impact when it comes to attracting younger, more progressive occupants.

Occupant demands change. So should your facility plan. Visit [ABM.com](https://www.abm.com) or call 866.624.1520 to learn more.

Sources

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