

VERGE
SENSE

Transforming Professional Services Workplaces with Occupancy Intelligence

Introduction

Professional services firms are in the business of quickly adapting to meet client demands. Recently, this flexibility has evolved to include how they approach balancing in-office collaboration with hybrid work. Leading firms like [PwC](#), [IBM Consulting](#) and [EY](#) recently announced shifts to in-office policies, blending structured in-person mandates with flexible remote work options to ensure employees spend at least part of the week on-site. As [Deltek](#) reports, North American consulting firms increased in-office work to nearly 40% of total activity in 2024, up from around 30% in recent years. Globally, this shift is even more pronounced: EMEA leads with nearly 60% of consulting work completed on-site, and APAC follows at 50%.

A recent [KPMG survey](#) revealed that 83% of CEOs across the globe anticipate a full return to in-office work for employees within the next three years, a significant rise from 64% in the previous year. This prediction resonates across a wide array of professional services fields, including

management consulting firms, IT services & consulting, law firms, and accounting firms, all of which depend on close client relationships and robust team collaboration to deliver high-quality services.

Occupancy intelligence offers professional services firms insight into space utilization across office portfolios, enabling data-driven workplace design that boosts efficiency and meets employee needs. Despite efforts to increase in-office presence, data from the latest [Occupancy Intelligence Index](#) reveals that Financial and Professional Services firms maintained an average capacity usage of just 12% in the first half of 2024, indicating significant potential for more efficient space utilization. To rise to these challenges, workplace leaders in these sectors are rethinking their approach to office design and management. Achieving [workplace effectiveness](#) now requires strategic decision-making to optimize real estate portfolios, reduce costs, ensure sustainability, and enhance employee satisfaction.

As the professional services industry shifts its in-office work expectations while competing for top talent, the pressure to optimize resources, real estate, and office design is mounting. Creating adaptable environments with both physical and digital tools that employees prefer, professional services firms can foster collaboration, improve employee satisfaction, and remain competitive in a dynamic market.

By focusing on high-quality, adaptable work environments that promote flexibility, sustainability, and AI-powered technologies, professional services firms can enhance operational efficiency, improve employee satisfaction, and remain competitive in a dynamic market.

Here are five ways VergeSense can help professional services real estate and workplace leaders reach their workplace goals.

#1

PORTFOLIO EVALUATION

Optimize Office Footprint

Optimize Office Footprint

Professional services firms now face challenges with efficiently utilizing their office spaces due to fluctuating in-person attendance patterns. The shift to hybrid work has reduced the need for space that can accommodate constant full-time occupancy, yet firms still require enough space to accommodate in-person collaboration, client meetings, and team-based projects on days when more employees are present. This often results in underutilized offices, leading to [increased per-employee costs](#) to maintain these spaces.

For example, law firms and consulting firms, which frequently operate in prime urban locations with high real estate costs, are actively seeking solutions to optimize their office footprints. A recent survey by [Cushman & Wakefield](#) found that around 10% to 30% of U.S. law firms are planning to reduce their real estate needs, with some considering reductions as high as 40% to 50% reduction of their footprint to better accommodate hybrid work models and reduce expenses.

The challenge is finding the right balance between downsizing office space to reduce overhead and ensuring enough capacity for flexible, collaborative work environments. According to research from [JLL](#), meeting the increasing demand for low-carbon, sustainable buildings, which now command a premium for green-certified spaces, is becoming increasingly important to professional services organizations.

Occupancy intelligence offers a strategic advantage in this landscape. By providing accurate insights into space utilization, professional services firms can make data-driven decisions to expand, reduce, or adapt their office portfolios. This approach enables firms to balance cost management with the need to maintain a dynamic, collaborative workplace that supports hybrid work and meets sustainability targets.



Occupancy intelligence enables professional services workplace leaders to:

Understand the true capacity of their offices to find ways to **support more employees without impacting experience.**

Make portfolio rightsizing decisions and adjustments to workplace strategies/policies based on accurate and comprehensive space usage data at the building and floor level.

Eliminate excess capacity or identify expansion opportunities by understanding occupancy trends, peaks, and averages over time.

Optimize Office Footprint

REAL WORLD EXAMPLE

VergeSense customer Mark Bell, VP of Corporate Real Estate and Mobility at [Raymond James](#), leveraged occupancy intelligence to address space utilization challenges after consolidating four smaller NYC offices into four floors on Park Ave. Leveraging data from VergeSense area sensors and analytics insights from the Occupancy Intelligence Platform, Bell and his team realized they needed to add another floor to accommodate team needs and resolve space shortages.



Mark Bell
VP of Corporate
Real Estate & Mobility
RAYMOND JAMES

Analytics insights that can help professional services leaders understand occupancy trends across their portfolios:



People Count

By tracking the number of people in the building and at the floor level within a given timeframe, it's possible to compare actual usage to capacity and stated office policies. This helps to identify and eliminate any underutilized spaces or make necessary updates to office policies.

Peak & Average Person Count

By understanding the average person count compared to the total number of spaces and capacity, leaders can make informed decisions about expanding or shrinking the portfolio footprint based on actual space usage.

#2

SPACE AVAILABILITY

Measure Office Space Utilization

Measure Office Space Utilization

As the professional services industry adjusts to the demands of a hybrid work model, optimizing space utilization remains a focus. Recent data from the [4th Occupancy Intelligence Index](#) shows an average capacity usage of only 12% in professional services offices, which is only slightly higher than the average global capacity usage of 11%. This low utilization rate presents an opportunity to optimize space for evolving hybrid work patterns and future needs. These findings align with data from [McKinsey](#), which reports that employees in professional services work in the office an average of 3.2 to 3.3 days per week, among the lowest rates across industries.

To address these gaps in space availability and to optimize utilization, professional services workplace leaders rely on occupancy intelligence to understand how their spaces are being used and make data-driven adjustments.

By shifting some of the space mix towards more collaborative and flexible environments, such as innovation hubs and open collaboration zones, firms can better meet the demands of today's hybrid workforce. Additionally, adopting flexible seating and "[hot desking](#)" allows firms to maximize available space and provide employees with the resources they need, regardless of whether they're engaging in focus work or collaborative projects.

By gaining a precise understanding of space utilization and availability, professional services firms can create adaptable office environments that support a blend of focus and teamwork. Occupancy intelligence empowers workplace leaders to make strategic real estate decisions that optimize both productivity and employee satisfaction, ensuring that office spaces remain efficient, effective, and aligned with the needs of the modern professional.



Occupancy intelligence enables professional services workplace leaders to:

Optimize spaces via design, policy, or amenities changes and increase availability by viewing historical and real-time space usage, understand availability trends, space type popularity, and space shortage patterns.

Increase availability through space booking automation to improve employee experience and reduce friction in finding available space; **eliminate costs associated with wasted meeting space.**

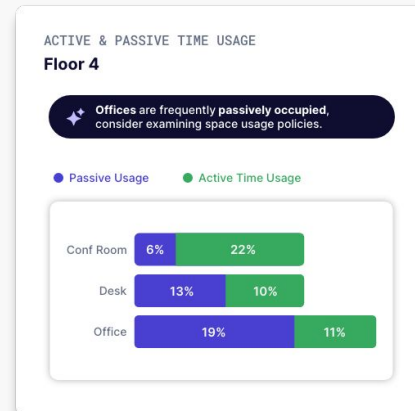
Measure Office Space Utilization

REAL WORLD EXAMPLE

Boston Consulting Group (BCG) partnered with VergeSense to address meeting room shortages at their Hudson Yards office. The VergeSense team analyzed booking data and discovered that 40% of meetings were “ghosted” – reserved but left unused – primarily by senior leaders with frequent travel commitments. To solve this, BCG made their existing conference rooms more efficient by integrating Vergesense Space Booking Automation, which automatically released unused rooms that were booked but left empty. This solution allowed the firm to avoid leasing additional space, ultimately saving \$50,000 per month while maximizing the efficiency of existing meeting rooms.

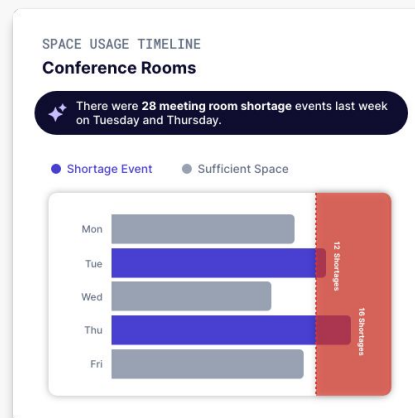


Analytics insights that can help professional services leaders understand and improve space availability across buildings in their portfolio:



Passive Time Analytics

By understanding both active and passive occupancy and real-time and historical space utilization, workplace leaders can implement design or policy changes to increase space availability and improve employee experience.



Space Usage by Timeline

By identifying availability trends and shortage events by location, time, and space type, workplace leaders can make informed adjustments to design, policies, or amenities to optimize space availability.

Gain Insight into Office Space Utilization

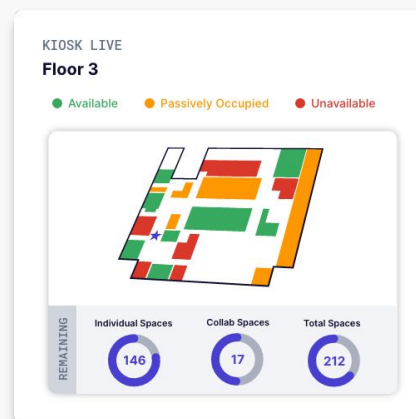
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Analytics insights that can help professional services leaders understand and improve space availability across buildings in their portfolio:



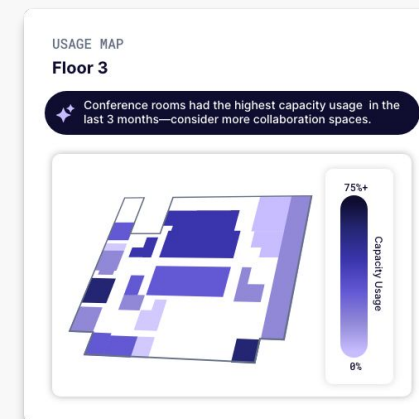
Space Booking Automation

By integrating with leading booking systems, space can be automatically booked or released based on the presence or absence of people or objects detected. This can eliminate costs associated with wasted meeting space and improve employee experience through increased space availability.



Real-time Availability via Kiosk

By combining real-time availability data with booking applications and wayfinding apps, workplace leaders can make it easier for employees to find available spaces on-the-fly.



Usage Map

Understand space utilization within the context of floorplan to understand usage compared to capacity and make adjustments to underutilized or overutilized spaces.

#3

INTELLIGENT SPACE DESIGN

Design Spaces that Enhance Collaboration, Productivity, and Employee Satisfaction

Design Spaces that Enhance Collaboration, Productivity, and Employee Satisfaction



Professional services firms are reimagining office spaces to support the flexibility and collaborative needs of a hybrid workforce. A trend known as [“flight to quality”](#) is driving many firms to upgrade their offices with advanced technology and modern amenities to support hybrid work and attract employees back on-site. These upgrades often include retrofitting spaces with collaboration hubs, flexible seating, and digital tools that seamlessly connect remote and in-office team members.

Data from the [3rd Occupancy Intelligence Index](#) reveals that professional services offices are primarily designed with individual desks, which make up approximately 72.5% of the office space mix, yet desks have an active time usage of only 8.4%. In contrast, collaborative spaces, such as conference rooms, open

collaboration areas, and team rooms, account for a smaller share of the space mix but see a combined active time usage of 20.6%. This discrepancy highlights the need for office layouts that better align with employees' increasing focus on teamwork and cross-functional collaboration.

[Attendance monitoring](#) is essential for measuring occupancy and space utilization, with firms using data sources such as badge swipes, occupancy sensors, and WiFi analytics to track office presence and understand usage patterns. However, [reliance on badge data alone](#) has limitations, as employees may check in briefly and then leave, underscoring the need for more comprehensive data collection.

To accurately address these gaps, professional services workplace leaders can rely on

Design Spaces that Enhance Collaboration, Productivity, and Employee Satisfaction

occupancy intelligence to optimize their space design for diverse workstyles. With real-time insight into space utilization, professional services firms can make data-driven adjustments that maximize efficiency. Integrating flexible design, advanced technology, and occupancy analytics enables these firms to create dynamic work environments that enhance employee satisfaction, foster collaboration, and remain adaptable to evolving workplace needs.

As the workplace landscape shifts for professional services firms, companies are reimagining their office spaces to align with hybrid work demands and diverse employee needs. Professional services firms are increasingly adopting [flexible, data-informed office designs](#) that cater to hybrid schedules and diverse work styles.



Occupancy intelligence enables professional services workplace leaders to:

Make data-driven space design decisions and adjustments to ratios, characteristics, and amenities by understanding how space supply aligns to demands across space type.

Reduce underutilized space and optimize space allocation with insights derived from accurate historical and real-time usage data.

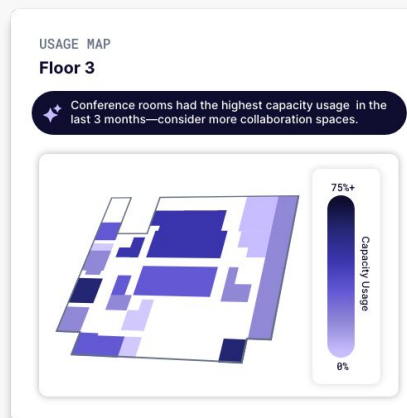
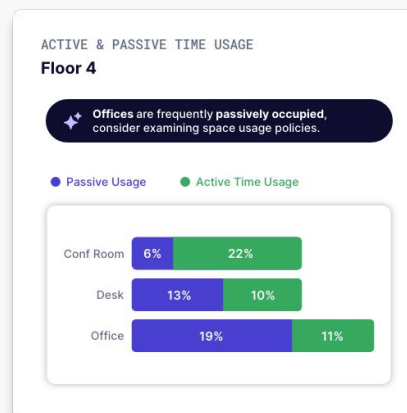
Improve global design standards through better understanding of space usage across job functions, regions, and facilities types.

Design Spaces that Enhance Collaboration, Productivity, and Employee Satisfaction

REAL WORLD EXAMPLE

A leading global professional services network is constantly innovating to enhance its workplace strategy and align with modern, hybrid work patterns. After the pandemic, they sought to reimagine their office spaces to support activity-based working (ABW), a model that encourages flexibility and provides employees with a variety of spaces for focused, collaborative, and social activities. The goal was to create an environment that fostered productivity, adaptability, and community while optimizing space utilization across multiple locations. The firm's workplace team obtained data that informed key adjustments, such as resizing large meeting rooms to smaller ones and situating collaboration areas in quieter, less disruptive locations. These changes were integral to aligning office design with ABW principles, ensuring that spaces supported productivity and collaboration effectively. By leveraging occupancy intelligence, the team optimized space usage and improved employee satisfaction, creating a flexible, productivity-focused environment for its hybrid workforce.

Analytics insights that can help professional services workplace leaders understand and improve intelligent space design:



Passive Time Analytics

By understanding active and passive occupancy, along with real-time and historical space utilization, workplace leaders can implement design or policy changes to increase space availability and improve employee experience.

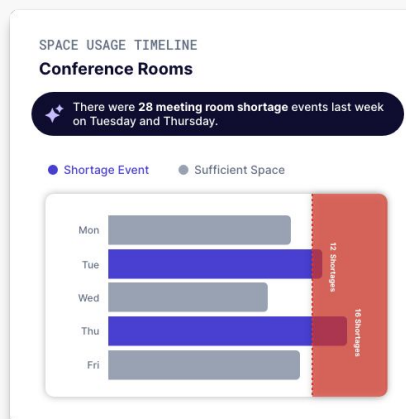
Usage Maps

By analyzing space utilization within the context of the floor plan, leaders can compare usage to capacity and make necessary adjustments to underutilized or overutilized spaces.

Design Spaces that Enhance Collaboration, Productivity, and Employee Satisfaction

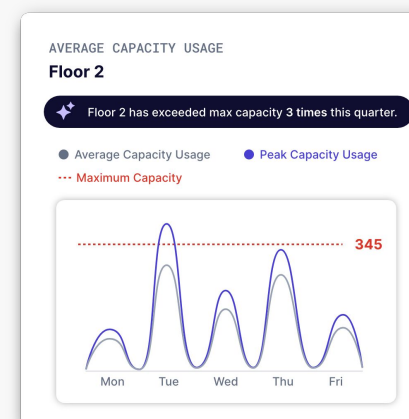


Analytics insights that can help professional services workplace leaders understand and improve intelligent space design:



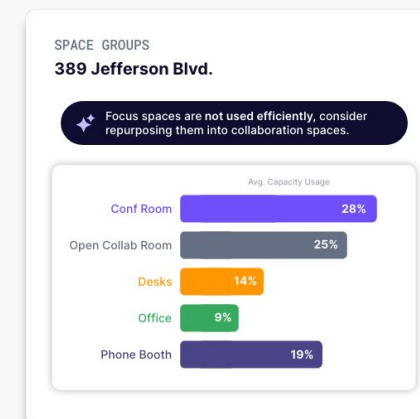
Space Usage Timeline

Track which space types are running out and when to understand where more of a space type might be needed and make design adjustments.



Capacity Usage

Understand inefficient space usage to inform space redesign decisions.



Space Groups

By assigning spaces to business units, neighborhoods, or other segmentations, companies can track utilization and decommission unused spaces.

#4

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING

Create Spaces that Foster Culture and Engagement

Create Spaces that Foster Culture and Engagement

In professional services, where collaboration, mentorship and client interactions are foundational to success, the shift to hybrid work presents unique challenges to maintaining a cohesive company culture. The office traditionally fosters these connections, yet with employees spending fewer days on-site, firms are reimagining spaces to support in-person interactions and create environments that draw people back.

The [Gensler 2024 Design Forecast](#) underscores the growing demand for flexible, hybrid-friendly layouts. According to Gensler, employees in the professional services industry increasingly seek collaborative spaces tailored for activities like team-based work and spontaneous interaction. While individual desks still dominate the space mix, data shows that adaptable, multifunctional spaces are essential for supporting both focused work and team-based collaboration, aligning with employees' diverse workstyles and evolving expectations.

Mentorship is also evolving within these hybrid environments. A recent [Charter and Qualtrics study](#) found that successful mentoring was just as likely to occur whether mentor-mentee pairs interacted remotely, in person, or through a mix of both. The research further shows that more than 50% of mentees in hybrid setups express intentions to stay with their organization for five years or more, showing that effective mentorship contributes to retention even when done remotely.

By creating flexible, adaptable spaces that cater to a mix of collaboration and focused work, professional services firms can address the cultural and operational needs of their teams. Designing spaces that accommodate different types of work – such as designated zones for team collaboration, quiet areas for focused tasks, and technology-equipped rooms for seamless remote interaction – ensures that the office environment aligns with both on-site and remote work demands.

Occupancy intelligence allows firms to easily adjust layouts, ensuring space usage aligns with employee needs and organizational goals. This approach helps professional services workplace leaders maintain a vibrant, cohesive culture that supports different working styles, while also fostering the mentorship and spontaneous interactions crucial to furthering positive employee experience.



Occupancy intelligence enables professional services workplace leaders to:

Make data-driven decisions when responding to space change requests.

Conduct proactive neighborhood planning with real usage data to align with your headcount planning, sharing ratios, and team needs.

Create Spaces that Foster Culture and Engagement

REAL WORLD EXAMPLE

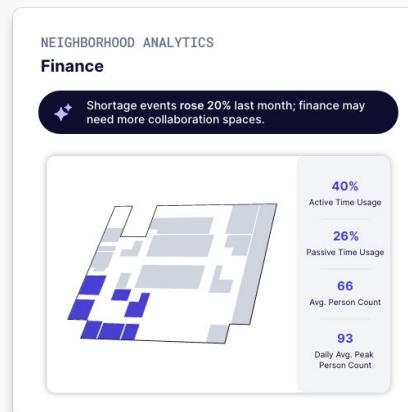
VergeSense customer Jason Finneran, Workplace Experience Specialist at [Bread Financial](#) used VergeSense occupancy sensors to build different neighborhoods and spaces tailored to employees' needs. Initially, these neighborhoods were developed with input from team leaders and feedback from employees, aiming to support various workflows and foster team collaboration. Finneran leveraged the Occupancy Intelligence Platform to understand actual space usage and the days teams were in the office. This data-driven approach allowed Finneran to continuously refine office layouts, ensuring they remained functional and aligned with employees' evolving needs, thereby enhancing collaboration, promoting a strong company culture, and improving overall efficiency.



Jason Finneran

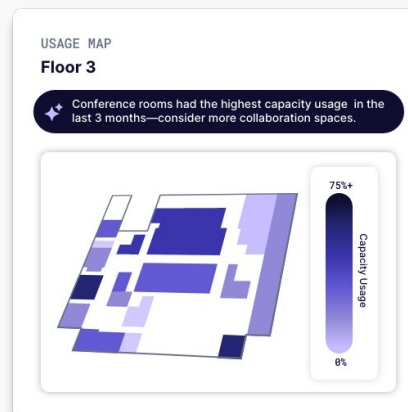
Workplace Experience Specialist
BREAD FINANCIAL

Analytics insights that can help professional services workplace leaders understand and improve neighborhood planning:



Neighborhoods

By assigning spaces to neighborhoods and measuring utilization, companies can understand how attendance and usage align with policies, facilitating data-driven discussions for space changes.



Usage Maps

By understanding how a group utilizes space within the context of a floor plan, companies can make data-driven decisions regarding space, amenities, policy changes, headcount planning, sharing ratios, and overall team needs.

#5

DYNAMIC OPERATIONS

Create Efficient, Sustainable Offices



Create Efficient, Sustainable Offices

As operational costs rise, professional services firms are focused on creating efficient, sustainable office environments that balance quality with cost-effectiveness. Facilities management costs in the U.S. grew by 7.6% in 2022, according to [CBRE](#), highlighting the growing importance of strategic resource management. Occupancy intelligence enables firms to optimize cleaning and HVAC and lighting schedules based on real-time space usage, reducing waste and energy consumption. The [2023 Carrier Environmental Social and Government report](#) notes that such adjustments can lower energy use by up to 30%, helping firms meet ESG goals while cutting operations costs. By aligning operations with occupancy trends and pursuing green-certified spaces, firms can meet sustainability goals while simultaneously improving employee experience and reducing operational expenses.

Occupancy intelligence empowers professional

services leaders to optimize workplace management and operations strategies to support sustainability goals. By securing sustainable office spaces and aligning operations with occupancy trends to reduce waste, insurers can compete more effectively for premium, green-certified spaces, which are [expected to be in high demand and low supply in major U.S. cities by 2030](#). Through these efforts, workplace leaders can enhance sustainability, cut operational costs, and improve the employee experience.



Occupancy intelligence enables professional services workplace leaders to:

Renegotiate cleaning contracts and reduce resource requirements based on real space usage data.

Automate cleaning routes, tasks, and schedules by **integrating space usage data into smart cleaning applications.**

Decommission floors on the days they're not heavily used to **reduce facilities costs and carbon impact.**

Analyze additional workplace sensor data (HVAC, energy consumption, etc.) to **centralize office data management and analysis and automate workplace operations.**

Create Efficient, Sustainable Offices

REAL WORLD EXAMPLE

The facilities management team at a global financial services firm used VergeSense occupancy sensors to enhance cleaning efficiency. They integrated occupancy intelligence with their building operations platform to update cleaning protocols based on actual occupancy, eliminating the cleaning of unused spaces. This approach enabled them to negotiate a 50% fee reduction with their cleaning contractor, significantly increasing operational efficiency and reducing costs by \$2M annually.

Analytics insights that can help professional services workplace leaders understand and improve dynamic operations:

ACTIVE & PASSIVE TIME USAGE

Floor 4

Offices are frequently passively occupied, consider examining space usage policies.

Passive Usage Active Time Usage



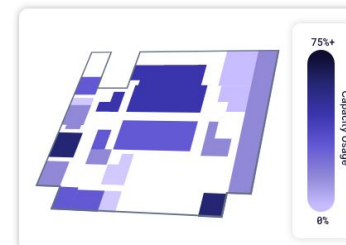
Passive Occupancy

By collecting comprehensive, accurate real-time and historical data on how people are using (or not using) space, companies can identify potential opportunities for operations efficiencies.

USAGE MAP

Floor 3

Conference rooms had the highest capacity usage in the last 3 months—consider more collaboration spaces.



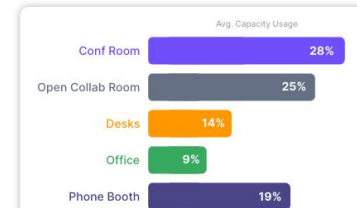
Usage Maps

By sharing usage maps with facilities teams, companies can inform and optimize cleaning processes.

SPACE GROUPS

389 Jefferson Blvd.

Focus spaces are not used efficiently, consider repurposing them into collaboration spaces.



Space Groups

By assigning spaces to business units, neighborhoods, or other segmentations, companies can track utilization and decommission unused spaces.

SPACE USAGE TIMELINE

Conference Rooms

There were 28 meeting room shortage events last week on Tuesday and Thursday.



Space Usage Timeline

Daily usage summary to understand which spaces were used and for how long to drive operational efficiencies.

#6

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

AI for Strategic Workplace Operations and Planning

AI for Strategic Workplace Operations and Planning



AI is rapidly transforming core operations across the professional services sector. [McKinsey's recent survey](#) found that 37% of companies in business, legal, and professional services have adopted AI to transform how they operate in at least one business function. Generative AI, in particular, has been embraced for its potential to streamline operations and enhance client-facing activities, a trend especially pronounced among high-performing firms, which are integrating AI across multiple business functions for improved efficiency and client services.

Leading firms like [Deloitte](#) and [PwC](#) have invested heavily in AI to improve audit processes. Similarly, companies like [Accenture](#) are using AI to analyze large datasets more efficiently, reducing manual data analysis and allowing consultants to focus on higher-level strategic thinking.

AI also presents a great opportunity for professional services workplace leaders, automating manual data analysis and accelerating how they make portfolio right-sizing and space optimization decisions. Solutions like [Workplace Assistant](#) can uncover occupancy trends and recommendations for optimizations, allowing workplace leaders to spend more time experimenting with changes, and less time on manual data analysis. By leveraging these cutting edge solutions, professional services companies can make the most out of their real estate investments and better adapt to the evolving hybrid work model.

Occupancy intelligence enables professional services workplace leaders to utilize AI operations to reduce costs, ensure sustainability, and improve employee experience.

AI for Strategic Workplace Operations and Planning

REAL WORLD EXAMPLE

VergeSense customer Jamie Kinch, VP of Real Estate and Corporate Facilities at Moderna, uses Workplace Assistant to optimize workspace efficiency. By leveraging sensor data, Kinch's team systematically examines conference room usage, enabling his team to analyze usage patterns and refine space design. This AI-driven approach has not only streamlined decision-making but also empowered Moderna to adapt their workspace dynamically, creating a more agile and efficient environment. [Learn more.](#)



Jamie Kinch

VP of Real Estate &
Corporate Facilities
MODERNA

Occupancy intelligence enables workplace leaders in the professional services industry to:



Accelerate Decision-Making Speed

Capitalize on optimization opportunities through an intuitive, natural language interface. Using generative AI, Workplace Assistant analyzes occupancy data to identify trends and provide strategic suggestions to enhance workspace efficiency.



Feel Confident in Decisions

You're supported by AI-powered analysis of comprehensive occupancy and space usage data. Think of Workplace Assistant as a personal real estate, strategy & occupancy analyst.



Streamline Decision-Making

You will receive recommendations integrated with VergeSense analytics dashboards.



Enterprise-Grade Security & Privacy

With a strong emphasis on privacy and security, Workplace Assistant ensures that all data remains protected, giving users peace of mind.

VERGE
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Optimize Your Workplace With VergeSense

The professional services industry's shift towards more in-office work presents an opportunity for leaders to innovate and optimize their office spaces while remaining competitive in attracting top talent and maintaining employee satisfaction. With occupancy intelligence, professional services firms can enhance collaboration, boost productivity, and improve employee satisfaction – all while optimizing real estate spending to support long-term business goals.

Whether optimizing the office footprint, better understanding space availability, designing spaces for collaboration, or streamlining workplace management, the professional services industry must continue to innovate and adapt. Creating dynamic, responsive, and efficient work environments is essential to supporting both current needs and future success.

Want to learn more about using VergeSense to build an effective workplace?

[BOOK A CONSULTATION TODAY](#)

