

The Essential Guide to Creating an Optimal Office

Your guide to creating an office ready for the digital age, tailored to your workforces' unique needs and agile enough to respond to new processes and technology.



Introduction

The essential guide to
creating an Optimal Office

Do you struggle with the following workplace challenges?

People

- Understanding your workforces' IT needs and preferred ways of working
- Encouraging staff to adopt new processes or technologies
- Finding new ways to attract, retain and upskill your staff
- Enabling staff to work remotely, on the move and on a range of devices
- Filling skills or resource gaps with temporary or specialist resource

Process

- Cutting down on hard copy documents in your key business processes (e.g. delivery notes, expenses, invoicing)
- Streamlining on-site print and mailroom operations
- Using intelligent, rules-based workflows to minimise human intervention
- Creating business process dashboards and real-time analytics

Workspace

- Gathering hard data on how your workplace is used
- Designing spaces that facilitate modern and agile workstyles
- Reducing wasted meeting time

Technology

- Supplying devices that empower people to work how and where they feel most productive
- Equipping meeting spaces with technology that fosters collaboration
- Ensuring 24/7 uptime, support, backups and security
- Giving your teams access to best-of-breed collaboration solutions



If so, then this guide is here to help.

In this guide you will find leadership and guidance from Ricoh experts – from quick wins to long term strategies – to help you optimise every aspect of your workplace.

Transformation projects can be daunting. To make it easier, we've broken it down into four sections:

- **Empowering people**
- **Optimising workspace**
- **Streamlining**
- **Simplifying technology**

If you want more information on the Optimal Office, just email ukinfo@ricoh.co.uk and one of our team will be in touch.

And to access exclusive content around the topics covered in this guide, please visit insights.ricoh.co.uk

Thanks for reading.

Five reasons why digital workplace transformation projects are more important than ever

1. Increased pace of change requires agile, scalable solutions
2. Attracting and retaining top talent is highly competitive
3. Widespread disruption by new technologies is happening in almost every industry
4. Customer expectations for speed of response and quality service are higher than ever
5. Technology infrastructure needs to support advancing software, systems and applications



What is the optimal office?

and what impact can it have on building
a productive and agile way of working?



What is the Optimal Office – and what impact can it have on building a productive and agile way of working?

The Optimal Office is a people-centred approach to digital transformation, first appearing as a concept in our report, The Economy of People.

We believe that only through a deep understanding of your people and the way they work can you create workplace strategies that unlock their potential.

Ask yourself:

- Is your workplace designed to function and inspire?
- Are processes designed with purpose and productivity in mind?
- Is the full value of all available resource, space and technology being realised?

Many leaders rush into aesthetic considerations when planning workplace transformation projects. What will the meeting rooms look like? Will we paint a mural on the wall?

By contrast, the Optimal Office explores how the workplace functions as an interconnected system of individuals, processes and technologies. And uses this data to make smarter, better-informed decisions.

//

A lot of companies use workplace transformation projects as a shortcut for changing company culture. It's easy to think that if we look like an innovative tech company then we will behave like one. Sadly, this is the wrong way round. First, analyse how your business behaves. Then, design a workplace that enhances the good parts and remedies the bad.

Mike Baddeley, Head of Strategy and Innovation, Ricoh UK

[t](#) [in](#) [f](#)

Our research has shown

- An optimal office environment could potentially raise UK and Irish GDP by 1.8% and 1.0% respectively (£39.8 bn)
- 74% of executives are pleased with the positive returns on their workplace investments in the last 2 years
- 82% plan to invest in office improvements in the next two years
- Executives report that they are investing on average 5% of operating costs next year on office improvements

"This is my number one piece of advice to any and all clients who are about to undertake a workplace transformation project:

Do your research.

And by that, I don't mean research what new technology is out there, or what the latest trends are, or what furniture you can get.

Analyse your own people, your own processes, the physical space available and your whole technology stack. Understand each of them in detail. And then, understand how they converge. Then, and only then, can you see what is working and what needs to be fixed"

Glenn Griggs - Board Director, Ricoh UK



How do you empower people within your organisation to change behaviour and support collaboration?

How do you empower people within your organisation to change behaviour and support collaboration?

1. By understanding their needs and preferences

The first step to empowering your staff is listening to them. Without understanding the challenges they face and how the workplace contributes to or helps them overcome those challenges, it's hard to design solutions that help them work more productively. Early involvement in the change process also creates a sense of participation. If staff feel that their point-of-view is being taken into consideration, they are far more likely to support the process and adapt to new processes and technology.

2. By providing change management support

The success or failure of digital transformation is down to people and their ability to cope with change. For this reason, change management is crucial. If you introduce new processes, technology or workplace solutions you have to ensure your employees understand:

- Why they've been introduced
- How to use them
- What the benefits will be
- Who to ask for help

//

Change management in the red thread that runs through every transformation project. Without it, there's little chance that the changes will stick or be properly applied day-to-day.

Rebekah Wallis - Director of People & Corporate Responsibility, Ricoh UK

[t](#) [in](#) [f](#)

Our research has shown

- 93% of employees said they were most productive in a fixed office location. However, given the right tools and technology, 78% believe they could be more productive when working remotely
- 98% of employees are enthusiastic or excited about the introduction of new technologies. However, one third don't feel equipped to get the most out of traditional software – like Microsoft Office, Printers and PCs – let alone newer technologies such as AI

3. By providing an ongoing programme of training and development

In order to encourage and empower staff to adopt new processes, training may be required to help them adapt to unfamiliar ways of working. For instance, a manager who used to manage her team in-person now has specialists in other parts of the country. A short course in managing remote workers will help them to get used to this new way of working and help others to do the same.

The availability of a broad range of different courses can also instil a culture of continuous improvement and help to unlock a 'growth mindset'.

4. By adapting processes and technology to enable them to work remotely

The definition of mobile and flexible working has evolved over the years. It's no longer about the ability to work from home. But giving employees the tools and technology to work how and where they will be most productive. It also means leadership styles and approaches need to adapt to meet the management requirements of a varied, flexible workforce.

It may also require new collaboration technology, such as video conferencing services and interactive whiteboards, so that teams who are in different locations can collaborate seamlessly and effectively

5. By filling skills or resource gaps with temporary or specialist resource

As the world of work becomes more specialised, businesses are less likely to be able to do everything themselves. And, those that try to, often end up spending more on wasted time than they would have with a specialist.

Empowering your staff can mean giving them access to specialists who can help them overcome their own knowledge gaps and upskill them for the future.

It also allows managers to scale teams up or down according to need, making headcount more agile.

The 'Treacle Layer' - are your middle-managers resisting change?

Business leaders are often hungry for change, to achieve reduced costs and greater productivity. Junior employees, who are younger, eager to learn and comfortable with change, are also comfortable for transformation. However, middle-managers, who are usually a bit older and can be set in their ways, are more likely to resist.

Change management projects need to pay close attention to this group and give them the support they need.



Case Study

"Ricoh UK have given IEMA a clear sense of the possible. What really impressed me about Ricoh was showing it was possible, in an affordable way to transform an organisation physically, functionally and culturally. Ricoh demonstrated it could be done in bite-size chunks; and enabled us to realise how we could make simple internal changes that would make a big impact. That is a powerful thing"

Neil Fray - Finance & Performance Director, IEMA

Name: Agrovista UK Limited

Location: Nottingham, Midlands

Size: 310 staff

Activity: Agronomy services

Challenges

- Growth and expansion driving need for business change
- Lack of resources and experience to enable systems and organisational improvement
- Under investment in IT hindering change

Solution

- Ricoh Business Change and Transformation consultancy
- Underpinned by Ricoh services and solutions:

- Workplace Services
- IT Infrastructure Services
- Communication and Application Services

- Managed Print and Document Services

- Five-year IT managed service

Benefits

- Transforms business processes, practices and environment
- Establishes an IT platform to support modern, flexible, agile business systems
- Delivers efficient, cost-effective, less wasteful office services
- Enables modern, integrated, cloud applications and services
- HQ perception changed from 'unloved' to valued resource

How can you reduce costs and improve employee engagement by optimising your workspace?

How can you reduce costs and improve employee engagement by optimising your workspace?

1. By gathering hard data on how your workplace is used

Examine workplace efficiency from every angle - office configuration, lighting, furniture, AV equipment and collaboration technology.

Sensors can also be used to track space utilisation. This will give you real-time insights into how your meeting spaces are used hourly, daily or annually, to help you maximise usage and minimise costs.



The first step in any workplace refresh should be quantitative and qualitative research. Without this, you're flying blind

Paul Twitchell - Director of Workplace Services, Ricoh UK

2. By designing spaces that facilitate modern and agile workstyles

Work is less siloed, less solitary and more fast-paced than it used to be. As a result, workspaces need to adapt to encourage creativity, flexibility and mobility. Legacy office environments need to be converted into a whole range of different spaces. From collaborative huddle spaces, breakout areas and meeting rooms, to individual workstations and quiet areas.

A balance needs to be struck between public and private working and decisions need to be very intentional. When you're designing a space you should be clear on whether it's intended to be used for:

- Collaboration
- Communication
- Concentration
- Contemplation



The simple things

If you're designing spaces for contemplation or concentration, maximising the amount of natural light and plant life has been proven to have a calming effect.

Our research has shown:

- Meeting rooms are empty 50% of the time
- Offices are the second largest cost after people
- 89% of employees state that the office environment could make the biggest improvement to productivity in the workplace, followed by their workstation (85%)

3. By providing solutions that reduce wasted meeting time and enhance productivity

As work has become more collaborative, the amount of time spent scheduling or preparing for meetings has increased. Your staff need solutions that help them maximise the value of that time. If you're still booking rooms and checking calendars via your inbox you're wasting valuable time.

There are a range of solutions to improve meeting room occupancy, reduce no-shows and control costs. This is done by streamlining every aspect of managing a meeting, from booking rooms, to sending invites, to sharing materials, to following up. But, if you're going to invest in such a platform, it's essential that everyone in your organisation buys in (see chapter one for more guidance on change management and adoption).

Don't rush into hot desking

Taking someone's desk away and moving to hot desking can be risky. For many people, their desk is their home away from home. It's where they keep their belongings and where they hang pictures of their families. That process needs to be carefully managed and staff consulted before a decision is made. Additional technology, such as smart lockers to keep personal belongings in, may need to be provided.





Dacorum Borough Council is taking a more digital approach both for internal operations and externally with a shift in our channels to the community. The modern, purpose-built headquarters is ideal for more digital working. The Ricoh Workplace Services solution is a key part of that digital transformation and we're already seeing significant productivity and efficiency benefits

Andrew Linden - Team leader, Dacorum Borough Council

Name: Dacorum Borough Council

Location: Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire

Size: 700 staff

Activity: Local Government

Challenges

- Support a corporate digital transformation strategy
- Reduce staff and process inefficiencies

Solution

- Ricoh Workplace Services including Managed Print Service, Digital Print and Mail Room Service, Meeting Room Service

Benefits

- Acts as a key enabler to digital transformation
- Helps increase staff productivity, removes wasteful, mundane jobs
- Makes workplace processes more efficient, increases resource utilisation
- Reduces print estate by over 60% without impacting quality of service
- Provides a scalable, adaptable platform for increasing digital delivery

What to look for in a managed services provider



What to look for in a managed services provider

1. In-depth understanding and a wealth of experience
2. Able to use data and analytics to predict and prevent issues
3. Compliant and aligned with industry best practices (eg. ITIL)
4. Able to provide real-time analytics dashboards on performance
5. A strong network of partners, vendors and a vendor-neutral mindset
6. Consistent service delivery in all markets
7. Happy to commit contractually to project KPIs
8. Has a range of managed services that align with your business needs (e.g. Managed Print Services, IT Managed Services, Business Process Outsourcing, on and off Site capabilities)
9. Able to capitalise on new technologies
10. Strong reputation in the market and healthy finances



How can you streamline business processes in a way that embeds security and sustainability?

How can you streamline business processes in a way that embeds security and sustainability?

1. By understanding your current processes and identifying inefficiencies

Modern businesses can be extremely complex. An array of different processes built up over many years can be hard to disentangle, so it is vital to understand existing processes before you try and improve them. A great first step is to follow the paper trail. Paper is a sign that a process is not yet digitised. Paper also tends to require manual intervention, which is something that should be reduced as much as possible. As well as paper processes, locate all areas where hard copy documentation is stored. Paper-light, people-light processes are the end goal for most process improvement projects. Before processes can be digitised, automated or streamlined they need to be understood.

2. By improving upon existing processes - starting with those that will add the most value

Begin by streamlining those processes which require are most fundamental to the business. Automated, digital workflows can remove the need for paper and human intervention, turning slow processes into automatic ones.

Hardcopy documents that are stored on site - especially those required for processes which are to be digitised - should be scanned, indexed and uploaded to a document management system to free up the storage space and speed up document retrieval.

//

As the world of work becomes more specialised, it's less likely that businesses will be able to do everything themselves. When we come in and take over a client's print and mail room operations, we allow them to focus on their number one priority - serving their clients.

Richard Ash, Director of Business Process Services, Ricoh UK

 [in](#) [f](#)

Sensitive processes

Not all processes can or should be digitised. Important processes such as holiday requests, new hires or pay rises may not be suitable for digitisation, as the need for oversight is high.

3. By transforming on-site print and mailroom operations

Digitising mail by scanning it upon arrival cuts out the accumulation of paper within the business and speeds up delivery of the message to its recipient. It also makes archiving more effective, as incoming communications can be indexed for easy retrieval and the risk of document loss reduced.

If you have an in-house print room, consider working with an expert provider to transform this often underutilized operation into a modern and efficient resource for the business. A managed enterprise output strategy can bring more print work in-house, controlling costs and security around business-critical documents.

4. By governing processes using intelligent, rules-based workflows to minimise human intervention

Once your print and mailroom functions have been transformed, intelligent rules-based processes can be created, to streamline delivery, reduce human intervention and maximise cost-efficiency. For instance, if a run of 200 brochures needed to be printed at the same time as multiple smaller jobs, the system could process the smaller jobs first, saving the run of brochures until after office hours.

5. By optimising usage and regularly reviewing analytics

Gather data on usage and cost-efficiency to make sure that your partner or their internal team are meeting targets. Real-time analytics dashboards can be created to give senior management and ops a real-time overview of business process efficiencies and to resolve inefficiencies before they impact on service delivery.

Optimise processes before you digitise them

If you digitise a bad process it's still going to be a bad process. It's better to identify what's not working and why, then fix it and then introduce digitisation at the points in the process where it makes sense to.

Did you know?

62% of important documents are still archived in paper form.

What impact do employees think improved process technology will have on their job?

- 43% - immediate access to data
- 40% - fewer repetitive tasks
- 36% - automate more of their admin tasks



Name: Westminster City Council

Location: London

Size: 4,800 staff

Activity: Local Government

Westminster has got some tough financial challenges, especially making savings in excess of a £100 million. Our digital transformation and Ricoh's support is helping us meet those targets. But it's also about the council becoming more efficient and effective in how it delivers services. Ricoh is helping us achieve significant cost savings and efficiency improvements in our parking and planning departments. Technologies, like Ricoh's **pull** print, means a more agile workforce that can work from anywhere, whether from floor to floor or building to building."

Anthony Oliver - Chief Procurement Office at Westminster City Council

Challenges

- Support the need for more efficient operations and services
- Contribute to meeting tough cost saving and financial control challenges
- Help the council deliver its internal 'Digital by Default' strategy

Solution

- Designed a council-specific Framework agreement with Ricoh
- Ricoh Business Process services for digital transformation
- Production & Managed Print Solution
- Document Management Services
- Inbound & outbound digital mailroom services
- Scanning and archiving

Benefits

- Helps the council achieve its aim of £100m in cost savings
- Fundamental to WCC's digital transformation strategy
- Reduces print device numbers by 50%, cuts paper use across the council
- Delivers savings, efficiency improvements for print and document management
- Speeds up planning application process, substantial cut in paper volumes
- Parking services delivering better user satisfaction, fewer complaints, faster case processing

How can you simplify technology while optimising the value of IT investments and infrastructure?

How can you simplify technology while optimising the value of IT investments and infrastructure?

1. By supplying devices that empower people to work how and where they feel most productive

Every employee's device needs are different. Within each business, there are a range of different end-user personas that need to be equipped with technology that helps them work more productively. For instance, execs who spend a lot of time in meetings might prefer using tablets for portability. Whereas designers or programmers who work at a fixed location might prefer desktop.

2. By equipping meeting spaces with technology that fosters collaboration

Over 55% of communication is nonverbal. We instantly feel a greater sense of connection to a person once we've seen them. Video conferencing can enhance the productivity of meetings and create a greater sense of cohesion among teams that work remote. There are now a range of interactive whiteboard solutions that allow teams in different countries to collaborate in real-time.

Optimise the value of technology and IT infrastructure with a managed service model

Is your technology stack growing and becoming harder to manage? Is the technology infrastructure hindering mobile and flexible working? Consider using a managed service model. Not only is it more cost effective – you just pay for what you need – it's scalable to match the natural peaks and troughs in business.

Cloud computing

Myth

Cloud solutions are unsecure.

Reality

Choose the right cloud provider and data is safer than being stored on your own premises.

Why?

All data is backed up regularly and protected against environmental disasters, such as flooding.

3. By ensuring 24/7 uptime, support, backups and security

Businesses are more reliant than ever on their IT operations. For many businesses, if their IT estate goes offline, the entire business goes offline. For this reason, most opt to outsource their infrastructure management to a remote provider, guaranteeing security, stability, backup and disaster recovery. In an ideal world, their IT becomes so robust that they become self-healing and able to predict and resolve security or capacity issues far in advance.

4. By giving your teams access to best-of-breed collaboration solutions

Microsoft Office is the default productivity suite for almost all enterprises. Office 365 builds upon the strengths of the Microsoft Office suite with collaborative, cloud versions of Excel, Word, PowerPoint and the rest of the suite, allowing teams to collaborate on the same documents in real-time.

Don't fill your boardroom with the best equipment

Is your technology stack growing and becoming harder to manage? Is the technology infrastructure hindering mobile and flexible working? Consider using a managed service model. Not only is it more cost effective – you just pay for what you need – it's scalable to match the natural peaks and troughs in business.

Quick win

Find out what software and platform licenses every department in the business has. By consolidating this and managing it centrally you can achieve significant cost savings.

Did you know?

Microsoft is ending support for Windows 7 in January 2020. What's your strategy for dealing with this? Talk to a Ricoh expert to decide whether a cloud solution like Microsoft 365 or a full upgrade to Windows 10 is best for you.



Ricoh became an extension of our IT team... You know you can pick up the phone and know that nothing is too much trouble. Having a single point of contact has been a huge benefit and now that the framework agreement is in place, the contracting of new projects and equipment is a lot less painful. Recently Ricoh has won the largest, single IT project that Utilita has ever done and now Ricoh is taking about 80 percent of our IT budget. I would not give a partner that if I didn't trust them.

Phil Roberts - Utilita IT Director

Name: Utilita Energy

Location: Eastleigh, Hampshire

Size: 2000 Staff, 500,000 customers

Activity: Energy Utility

Challenges

- Rapidly expanding and changing business
- Existing IT infrastructure unable to support growth

Benefits

- Transforms 90-staff SME to a large 2,000-strong corporate
- Delivers new IT infrastructure, business systems and HQ in 3 years during rapid business growth
- Cuts 38 suppliers to 5, with Ricoh handling 80% of IT budget

Solution

- Ricoh Business Services & Solutions
 - Business & IT consultancy
 - IT infrastructure design and build
 - Associated business systems & services

About Ricoh





For further insights on Empowering Digital Workplaces, please visit:

insights.ricoh.co.uk

© RICOH COMPANY, LTD. All rights reserved.
All referenced product names are the trademarks of their respective companies.

About Ricoh

Ricoh is empowering digital workplaces using innovative technologies and services enabling individuals to work smarter. For more than 80 years, Ricoh has been driving innovation and is a leading provider of document management solutions, IT services, commercial and industrial printing, digital cameras, and industrial systems.

Headquartered in Tokyo, Ricoh Group operates in approximately 200 countries and regions. In the financial year ended March 2018, Ricoh Group had worldwide sales of 2,063 billion yen (approx. 19.4 billion USD). For further information, please visit

www.ricoh.co.uk

Thank you for reading

The Essential Guide to Creating an Optimal Office

