

# A COVID-Safe Way of Returning to the Workplace

Software that supports a safe transition  
back to the workplace

SPACE CONNECT



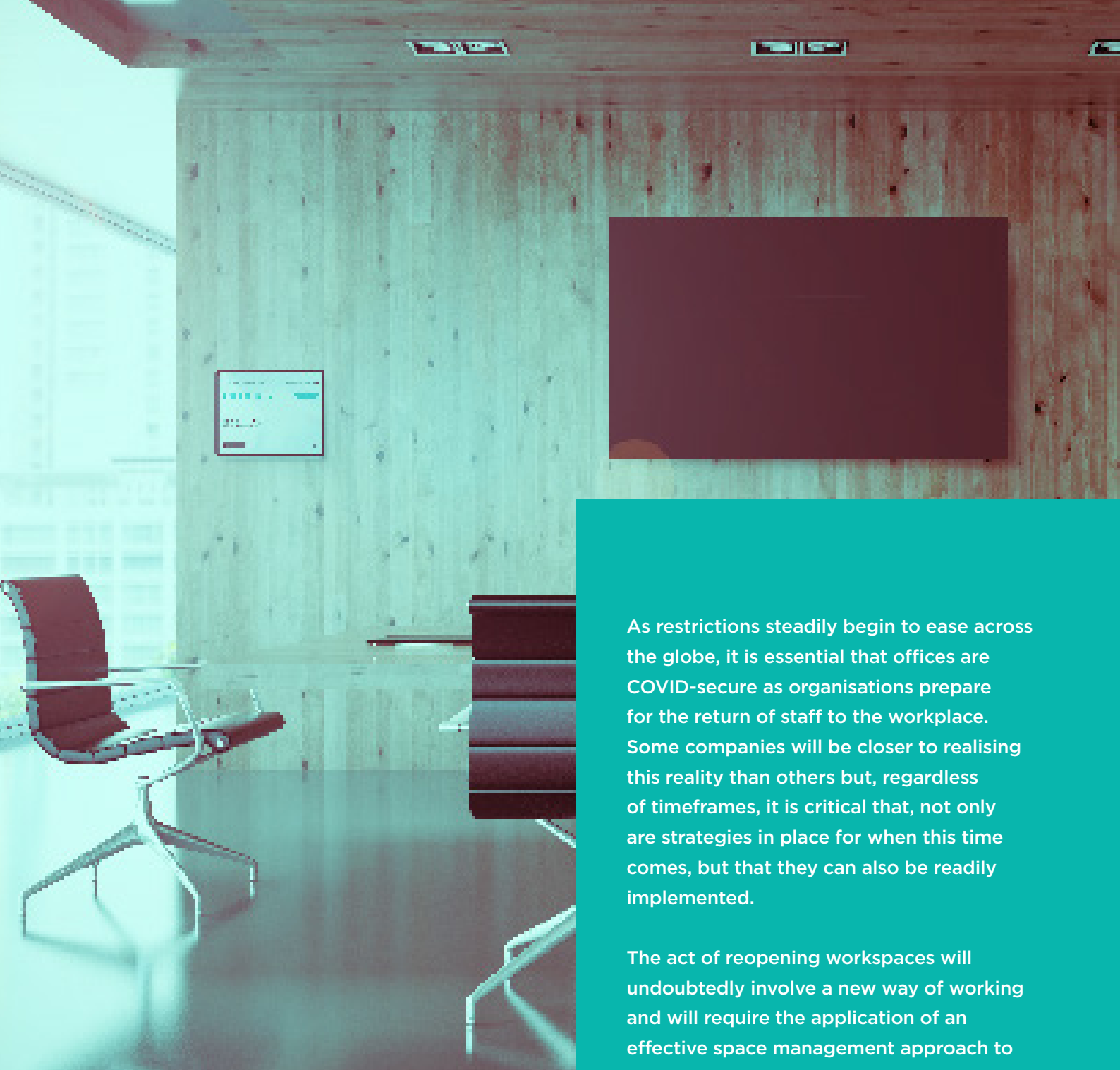
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## Space Connect Supporting a COVID-Safe Workplace



# Returning to the Workplace

As restrictions steadily begin to ease across the globe, it is essential that offices are COVID-secure as organisations prepare for the return of staff to the workplace. Some companies will be closer to realising this reality than others but, regardless of timeframes, it is critical that, not only are strategies in place for when this time comes, but that they can also be readily implemented.

The act of reopening workspaces will undoubtedly involve a new way of working and will require the application of an effective space management approach to ensure compliance with the latest legislation and guidelines. The overriding objective is, of course, to ensure that staff are provided with a safe and reassuring working environment, whilst not adversely impacting the ability to perform their duties. Further, it is essential that contingency plans are in place in the event of a COVID-19 risk, or outbreak, to safeguard the wellbeing of all staff and/or visitors.



# Embracing the 'New Normal'

A recent global study by JLL (2020) found that 74% of employees sought a return to the workplace, demonstrating the value of bringing staff back to a structured communal workspace. Several key points of consideration will be discussed throughout this whitepaper, explicitly: ensuring a safe working environment; encouraging employee confidence in returning to the office; risk identification and response; and future-proofing your business. Flexibility and the ability to make instant strategic adjustments is essential within the current climate, whether this be to comply with the ever-changing government restrictions or in response to a new COVID-19 risk. Taking advantage of a contemporary space management solution can profoundly support the process of phasing staff back into the workplace and effectively help with overcoming associated obstacles!

**74%** *of employees are seeking a return to the workplace.*

Preparing your business for the return of staff to the workplace may seem like a daunting prospect within the current climate, but it doesn't have to be. Understanding that things will be different when employees begin to filter back into the office, and proactively embracing this 'new normal', will give you a major advantage when putting strategies in place to ensure adherence to the latest laws, regulations, and guidelines. The safety of the returning employees is of the utmost importance and by planning effectively you will, not only, install confidence in your members of staff but safeguard the future of your company.





# Benefits of Returning to the Office

COVID-19 has markedly influenced the way in which people have worked over the past year, with enforced lockdowns and office closures considerably accelerating the number of employees working remotely.

It is widely accepted that working remotely and office-based working offer their own distinct benefits. With readily available internet access and video-conferencing software, remote workers can still efficiently complete their day-to-day tasks, whilst maintaining regular contact with colleagues and external stakeholders. That being said, there is no substitute for those 'water cooler' moments that naturally occur when physically present within the workplace.

JLL's global study of office workers (2020) supports the continued requirement of the shared workplace after concluding that the office was the preferred location for a number of fundamental occupational aspects, including: collaboration, issue resolution, learning and development, team-building, management, support, and the ability to complete complex tasks. In addition, it was found that 80% of high performers have missed the office during lockdown, suggesting that being physically present within the workplace can help certain individuals flourish.

Before the phasing of staff back into the office can occur it is essential that the workplace is COVID-secure.

## The office is the preferred location for:

- Collaboration
- Issue Resolution
- Learning & Development
- Team-Building
- Management
- Support
- Complex Tasks



# Social Distancing Made Easy

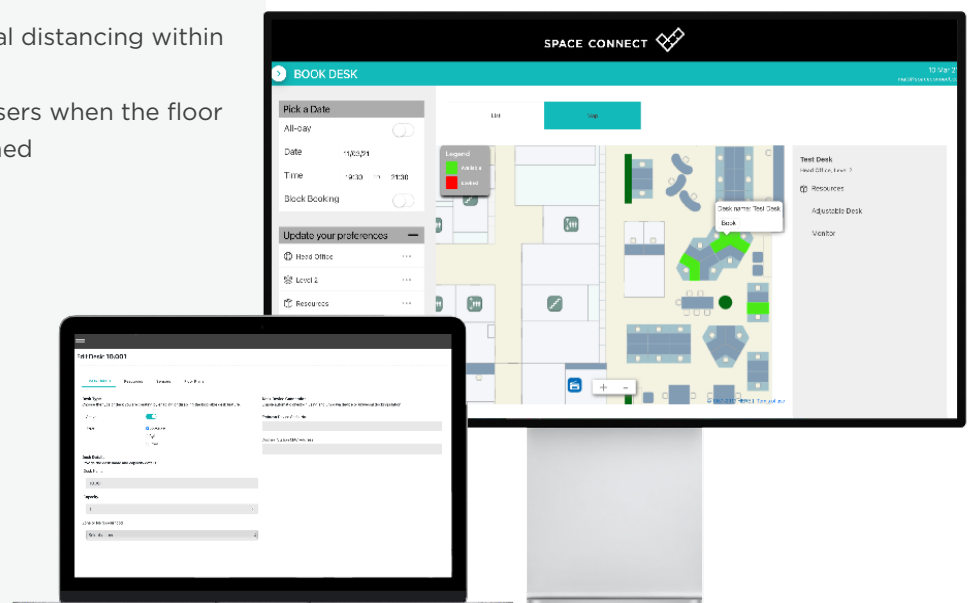
## Staff Confidence in Returning to the Office

It is understandable that, whilst the majority of employees feel positive about a return to the workplace, some may have reservations about doing so within the current climate. A recent survey by AVIVA (2020) found that UK workers reported risk of infection (32%) and social distancing (22%) as their top two concerns with returning to the workplace. Space Connect's solution aims to alleviate these concerns by providing clients with the ability to enforce social distancing; utilise touch-free check-in, and safely manage meeting rooms. This is supported by research from O.C. Tanner (2020) who reported that implementation of a sound and well communicated COVID-19 strategy helped to reduce workplace-related anxiety levels by 37%.

### Social Distancing Features:

- Real-time view of occupied desks through our interactive mapping
- Flag desks are unavailable at the click of a button to disable user booking access, ensuring your workspaces comply with social distancing guidelines
- Desks can be automatically made unavailable based on real-time occupancy and social distancing requirements when integrated with presence-detecting sensors
- Visitors are required to agree to terms & conditions upon arrival, including critical social distancing information
- Report on adherence to social distancing within our analytics module
- Alerts sent to facilities and users when the floor capacity limit has been reached

The application of a comprehensive and transparent space management solution can help to significantly increase staff confidence in returning to the office.



# Contactless Check-In

## Meeting Room Enhancements



### Limit Room Capacity

Dynamically change room capacity as required to adhere to social distancing



### Online Meetings as Default

Meetings created via the mobile app are set to online as default to encourage remote connectivity



### Poly Trio VC Automation

Video-conferences can be automatically initiated when the organiser is detected through presence-detection with Poly Trio devices (or via the mobile app)

Space Connect's presence-detection sensors support a variety of methods that allow passive check-in. The sensors can automatically determine which user has arrived at what workspace and check them in, reducing the need to touch surfaces.

### QR Codes

Placed on desks, outside meeting rooms, or at reception to enable booking, check-in, and check-out using a mobile device

### Docking Stations

Windows client application installed onto a user's device detects a docking station connection and automatically checks them in upon docking

### Presence-Detection Sensors

Placed under a desk or in the ceiling to enable the automatic detection of user

### Smart Sensors (RFID Card / Smartphone Tap)

Check-in and out using a smartphone or an RFID card through Bluetooth-detection or a card reader

### Manual Check-In

A low-cost and rapid deployment approach enabling manual check-in via our mobile app or web booking tool

### Facial Recognition

Space Connect's visitor management app can automatically check-in previous visitors through facial recognition technology



# COVID-19 Pre-Screening Questionnaire

## Quick and Easy to Complete

The questionnaire comprises a selection of 'yes' or 'no' questions that must be answered by all visitors or employees in advance of visiting or checking in. It only takes a minute or two to complete.

## Reduced Risk of Internal Virus Outbreak

Non-compliant answers are flagged and the individual will be asked to complete a pre-determined action (e.g., self-isolate and arrange for a test). This reduces the risk of space contamination early on, minimising the likelihood that the virus will be passed on to fellow members of staff. Health and safety representatives are also alerted and additional targeted cleaning can be arranged, if required.

## Customisable

Clients can customise questions and actions based on their own prerequisites, meaning that even when situations and legislation change, the questionnaire can mirror current requirements.

## Reportable

All data can be reported upon to ensure that any additional individuals who might be at risk can be informed (our contact tracing insights can be used to support this).

The screenshot shows the 'CHECK IN' screen of the app. At the top, there's a status bar with 'EE WiFiCall', '09:20', and '94%' battery. Below that, a header bar contains the email 'rwilliams@spaceconnect.co' and a 'Sign Out' link. The main heading is 'CHECK IN'. Below this, it says 'Please provide answers to the following questions.' The first question is 'Have you experienced any of the following symptoms in the past 48 hours: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea?'. There are 'NO' and 'YES' buttons. The second question is 'Have you experienced any of the following symptoms in the past 48 hours: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore sssssss'. There are 'NO' and 'YES' buttons. The third question is 'Do you feel chills or shivers (feel too cold)?'. There are 'NO' and 'YES' buttons. The fourth question is 'Do you have a fever or feel too hot?'. There are 'NO' and 'YES' buttons. The fifth question is 'Do you have a persistent cough (coughing up

The screenshot shows an error message in the app. At the top, there's a status bar with 'EE WiFiCall', '09:20', and '94%' battery. Below that, a header bar contains the email 'rwilliams@spaceconnect.co' and a 'Sign Out' link. The main heading is 'CHECK IN'. Below this, there's a red circle with the word 'STOP' in white. Below the circle, it says 'THIS IS NOT YOUR DESK' in red. Below that, it says 'You are trying to check in to a desk that has already been booked by somebody else.' in black. At the bottom, it says 'H&S representatives have been notified and will contact you shortly.' in black.

# Risk Prevention & Response

Risk prevention strategies are a fundamental aspect in ensuring that your workforce is adequately safeguarded against potential COVID-19 hazards. Just as important however, is the ability to act swiftly and efficiently in the event of a potential risk. It is vital that companies deal proactively with staff members who are potentially sick or exposed to the COVID-19 virus. Space Connect has released a number of functionality enhancements that, not only, help to reduce the risk of COVID-19 contamination within the workplace, but assist clients with the quick and accurate identification of potential at-risk employees.



## Hygiene and Cleaning Management

Routine cleaning and disinfecting is an activity that has become part and parcel of everyday life during the COVID-19 pandemic, and is integral in safeguarding your staff within the workplace. Space Connect's hygiene and cleaning enhancements, not only, ensure that cleaning is regularly completed, but, that the sanitisation is targeted



Hand cleaning reminders via in-app push notifications



Ability to restrict users to all day desk bookings



Inform facilities when a specific desk or room has been used and requires cleaning



Alert users to clean their desk upon check-out, using supplied cleaning materials at desk



Meeting room display panels and desk signs provide resource cleanliness status

## Contact Tracing Reporting Management

Even the most meticulous 'return to the workplace' strategies can't guarantee that an employee won't test positive for COVID-19 at some point. The contingency plan of an organisation is of paramount importance in this instance.

Space Connect's contact tracing feature is critical in reducing the risk of an internal COVID-19 outbreak. Clients are provided with the ability to drill down into their users' past bookings, to produce powerful and granular data that can be used to quickly, and effectively, pinpoint at-risk employees.

## Flexibility & Futureproofing

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a major change to the way people have been working throughout the past year or so. Government-imposed lockdowns and office shutdowns have led to the number of people working remotely skyrocketing. Remote work was on the rise even before the pandemic however, with a 400% increase reported in the US between 2010 and 2020. This is expected to increase by a further 77% from 2019 to 2022 (Get VoIP, 2020).

Research from JLL (2020) suggests that flexible working will become increasingly prominent as society evolves. It was reported that 72% of employees would favour a hybrid working model combining the ability to work remotely and book a desk within the office. This preference was even stronger among managers (77%) and young professionals (75%).

The mass rollout of vaccines across the world has certainly increased hope that things will return to normal sooner rather than later. It is impossible to predict the future however, and, for this reason, it is crucial that 'return to the workplace' strategies are flexible. The majority of organisations are preparing for a phased approach to bringing their staff back to the office, which is supported by Space Connect's solution.

## Space Connect Enables Scaling Up or Down as Required

Bookable desk totals can be instantly scaled up or down as required.

Room capacity limits can be easily edited to comply with the latest social distancing guidelines.

No need to raise support tickets; amendments can be made within the admin portal within just a couple of clicks.

In-depth Power BI analytics included as standard.

Changes represented real-time within the user environment.

Report on booking trends and space utilisation to assist with space optimisation strategies.

# References

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## **AVIVA (2020)**

‘Employee confidence in a safe return to the workplace drops’

[[aviva.com/newsroom/news-releases/2020/12/employee-confidence-in-a-safe-return-to-the-workplace-drops](https://www.aviva.com/newsroom/news-releases/2020/12/employee-confidence-in-a-safe-return-to-the-workplace-drops)]

## **Get VoIP (2020)**

‘The State of Video Conferencing in 2020’

[[getvoip.com/blog/2020/07/07/video-conferencing-stats](https://getvoip.com/blog/2020/07/07/video-conferencing-stats)]

## **JLL (2020)**

‘Reimagining Human Experience: How to embrace new work-life priorities and expectations of a liquid workforce’

[research report]

## **O.C. Tanner (2020)**

‘The Truth, the Whole Truth, and Notes About Transparency’

[research report]



# Your next steps

- #1. Get in touch and arrange a demo, online or at your office
- #2. We answer any queries you may have
- #3. Place an order
- #4. We provision your system within a few hours
- #5. You're ready to start configuring Space Connect
- #6. Or, if you'd prefer, we can implement or you can use one of our partners
- #7. Either way, you're up and running in little time

Call +44 (0)1784 487000

Email [sales@proav.com](mailto:sales@proav.com)

Or visit [proav.com](http://proav.com)

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