

# Cisco Connected Workplace: More Productivity and Satisfaction, Less Office Space and CO2

New workspace design and policies make employees happier and more productive. We've also shed 7.5 million square feet of office space.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
<b>CHALLENGE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aging workplaces</li><li>• Attracting top talent</li><li>• Reducing global real estate costs</li></ul>
<b>SOLUTION: CISCO CONNECTED WORKPLACE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Created different types of spaces to support diverse work styles</li><li>• Provided pervasive wireless so employees could move freely throughout the day</li><li>• Provided a variety of collaboration endpoints and applications</li><li>• Gave managers the latitude to set remote work policies depending on the job</li><li>• Wirelessly sensed occupancy patterns to continually improve space planning</li></ul>
<b>RESULTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 19% increase in employee engagement</li><li>• 14% increase in productivity, worth \$811 million annually</li><li>• Recruitment advantage: 66% of new hires say workplace influenced their decision to join Cisco</li><li>• Retention advantage: 73% of employees say they are satisfied with their work-life balance</li><li>• 59K tons of CO2 emissions avoided annually</li><li>• 26% drop in global real estate costs despite 7% increase in workforce</li></ul>

## Challenge

To understand how people work, take a look at the workspace. In the '60s, managers worked behind closed doors, their secretaries standing guard. Think the US television show *Mad Men*. The cubicles of the '90s democratized office space but had the unintended consequence of isolating people. It wasn't uncommon to email the person in the next cubicle.

In 2011, we decided to redesign our workspace to match new work styles. Many Cisco buildings had been put up in the '90s. Since then our workforce has become much more distributed: 50% of employees collaborate with people in other time zones. "We have less need for enclosed offices and cubicles today," says Alan McGinty, senior director of Cisco's Global Workspace Innovation Group. "It's better to provide a variety of space types to support different work styles."

Redesigning the workplace also gave us an opportunity to consolidate our real estate portfolio. When we launched the workspace redesign project in 2011, more than 70% of employees worked from home at least one day a week and more than 25,000 worked from home three days a week. This meant that on any given day, only 50% of our office space was occupied. We were paying for 12.5 million square feet of space we didn't use.

"We have less need for enclosed offices and cubicles today. It's better to provide a variety of space types to support different work styles."

—Alan McGinty, Senior Director, Cisco Global Workspace Innovation Group

## Solution

In 2012, we started the transformation to what we call Cisco Connected Workplace. The three elements are

activity-based workspace, technology, and flexible workplace policies based on agreements between employees and their managers. As of the end of 2018, 90% of our buildings have been transformed to Connected Workplaces.

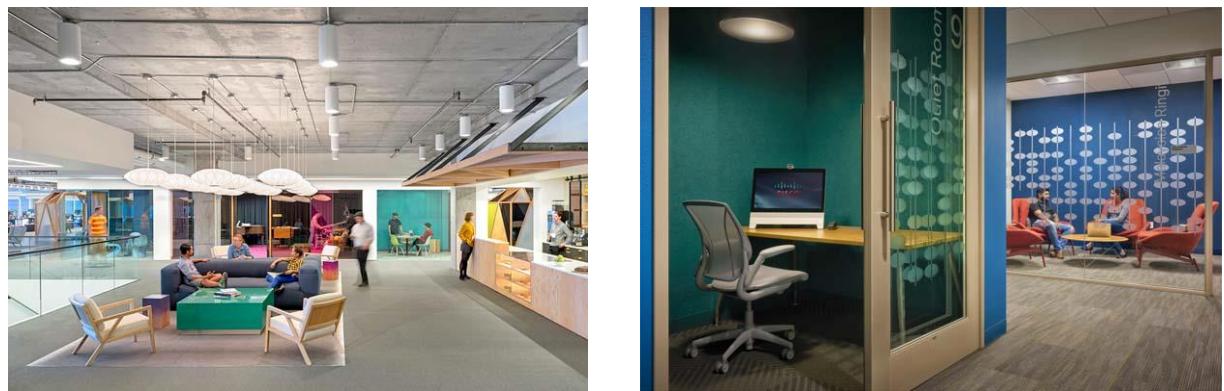
### Activity-based workspace

To determine the types of spaces we needed and how many of each, our Workplace Resources (WPR) group surveyed different work styles. “Our strategy is to design collaborative spaces that support the way people work today—and also accommodate the way they want to work in the future,” says David Wagner, vice president of WPR. To that end, his team identified with five personas:

- Highly mobile: salespeople, account managers, systems engineers
- Campus mobile: business development managers, executives, WPR, manufacturing and logistics
- Remote/distance collaborator: Analysts, customer service and support, some support engineers, HR, legal, marketing, training, program and product managers
- Neighborhood collaborator: engineers, finance staff, many managers
- Workstation anchored: administrative staff, software and network engineers, some IT and support engineers, non-engineering technical staff (IT, technical writers, etc.)

After studying how each type persona spends the work day, the team designed a variety of types of spaces for concentrating, collaborating, learning, and socializing. Every space is created with standard building blocks, including a variety of desk styles, meeting rooms (huddle rooms, different-sized conference rooms, audio privacy room), and socializing spaces. We put those building blocks together to create “neighborhoods” for sales, marketing, customer service, engineering, etc. Neighborhoods vary based on the work function: engineering neighborhoods tend to have a lot of standard desks, for example, while sales neighborhoods have more huddle rooms. Neighborhoods that interact frequently—for example, sales and marketing—are placed nearby.

**Figure 1 Different workspaces for different activities**



### Integrated technology to collaborate from anywhere in the space

We integrate technology into the workplace to give employees choice and freedom in how and where they work. “You can’t separate the technology from the workplace itself,” says Chuck Robbins, Cisco CEO. “Between the two you have an incredible experience.”

“You can’t separate the technology from the workplace itself. Between the two you have an incredible experience.”

—**Chuck Robbins, Cisco CEO**

Cisco IT is “customer zero” for some of the technologies in Connected Workplace, meaning that we bring them into our business before customers do so that we can measure the value of different use cases and develop best practices to share.

**Pervasive wireless.** High-quality Wi-Fi is everywhere, making it easy to access whatever data we need at the moment, watch a live Cisco TV broadcast from a casual area, start a video call with a team member in another time zone, or share documents in a huddle room. Our devices automatically connect to the right network (guest, production, or engineering) according to policy about our role and the device. Not having to add wired networks and connectors in Cisco Connected Workplaces saves money. And not having to hunt for a wired port helps us get right to work when we set up in a new space.

**Collaboration applications.** We provide a variety of applications to collaborate with partners, customers, and coworkers both inside and outside the workplace. Our catchphrase is “Apps for users, and devices for spaces.” Webex Teams is becoming a favorite app for distributed teams because it’s easy to quickly start meetings, share files, use the whiteboard, and review text conversations. “The end of my day might be the beginning of someone else’s,” McGinty says. “With Webex Teams spaces, someone in another time zone can see everything that happened while they were asleep and take up where the others left off.”

**Collaboration endpoints.** Employees can use any personal device registered with IT, including laptops and mobile devices. To decide which endpoints to provide in different types of spaces, we look at how people use the space. In touchdown areas, where people drop in for a short time, we provide IP phones. In audio privacy rooms we provide an IP phone or Cisco Webex DX80. In face-to-face meeting rooms, where people often want to share content from a laptop, we provide a display and Cisco Webex Share, a palm-sized dongle that fits into the display’s HDMI port. In spaces that people use for remote meetings, we provide a video system, whiteboard, or both.

“We have employees around the globe, so having the technology to collaborate, share, and feel part of one team—often via video—is how we live and it’s how we prefer to work,” says Francine Katsoudas, senior vice president and Chief Talent Officer.

“We have employees around the globe, so having the technology to collaborate, share, and feel part of one team—often via video—is how we live and it’s how we prefer to work.”

—**Francine Katsoudas, Cisco Senior Vice President and Chief Talent Officer**

**Figure 2 Webex Board in a huddle room**



**Smart building technology.** In new buildings—including Bangalore, Singapore, and Toronto—smart building technologies make the environment comfortable and the building sustainable. For example, when we choose our workspace, we can adjust personal comfort settings for lighting and temperature. When we book a meeting room, the room automatically adjusts temperature and lighting for the number of participants. Meeting participants can vote on room temperature from their mobile devices. Network-connected lights are powered by low-voltage Ethernet cables with intelligent sensors that monitor temperature, light, and occupancy. The settings are continuously adjusted based on sensor readings—anticipating rather than reacting to demand. The WPR team can even monitor and manage each individual light because each has its own IP address. More on lighting [here](#).

**Workplace analytics.** We use analytics to understand how people use workspaces and technology and how they interact. For example, to discover how people move about the workspace, we monitor the location of their wireless devices using Cisco Workplace Analytics, part of Cisco Connected Mobile Experiences (CMX). “We’re looking for the sweet spot—the balance between fitting the most people into a space but not making it crowded or noisy so that people can’t do their best work,” McGinty says. We’re using Workplace Analytics to track usage versus seat capacity, underused and congested spaces, space needs for different types of roles and workgroups, and the potential for different workgroups to share space.

#### Flexible workplace policies

We have flexible policies about where employees work. An account manager who spends just 20% of her time in the office doesn’t need an assigned desk, for example. Shared space makes more sense in this case. Giving managers and employees the freedom to decide where work is done increases space utilization, and people like the flexibility to move around during the day.

#### Results

As of December 2018 we had converted 90% of our global portfolio to Cisco Connected Workplace. We’re measuring the value in terms of engagement and productivity, environmental sustainability, and real estate costs.

## Employees are more engaged and productive

Employee engagement has increased by 19% and workplace productivity increased by 14%.<sup>1</sup> One reason is that employees in renovated buildings say they can complete tasks with less effort: customer effort scores (CES) are 6% better than they are in traditional buildings. “No matter what office I step into, anywhere in the world, I know what to expect,” says Mark Miller, a Cisco business development manager who travels frequently. “There is a consistent look and feel and the same technology, which means I can get right to work.” We estimate that the incremental productivity is worth \$811 million annually.

## We've increased our edge for recruiting and retaining top talent

Seventy percent of new hires say that Cisco Connected Workplace influenced their decision to join Cisco. And current employees are 12% more likely to recommend Cisco based on its workspace than they were in 2016.

## Employees report higher well being

From 2010 to 2018, employees self-reported satisfaction with the balance between work and non-work rose to 73%—a historic high. During the same period, employees in Connected Workplaces submitted 10% fewer reports about “high discomfort” than employees in traditional workspace. Reasons include improved workspace choice and movement, ergonomic chairs, adjustable furniture and displays, and sit-stand desks. We estimate that the reduction in lost work time translates to \$43 million annual savings.

## Our workspace is more environmentally sustainable

Employees in Connected Workplaces commute 1.5 fewer times per week on average than employees in our traditional buildings. Fewer trips translate to 59,000 fewer tons of carbon dioxide emissions (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) annually. Since 2011 we've avoided 553,000 tCO<sub>2</sub>e—the equivalent of 27,650 gallons of auto fuel burned.

## Real estate costs dropped

Our global real estate costs decreased by 26% from 2012 to 2017—despite a 7% increase in the workforce.

Highlights:

- We've closed 241 buildings. In San Jose alone we consolidated from 60 to 39 buildings.
- The sale of buildings yielded \$294 million.
- Building operational expense dropped by \$196 million annually.

## Next steps

We're continuing to learn from the data—surveys and sensing—to make our people happier, more productive, and more engaged. “Connected Workplace is a living laboratory for Cisco technology and products,” McGinty says. “We're committed to being customer zero: if something new comes out, we pilot it so that we can share our experiences with customers to help them get more value, faster.”

## For more information

[Cisco Connected Workplace](#)

[Cisco Workplace Analytics](#)

[Cisco Webex Share](#)

[Cisco Webex Teams](#)

---

<sup>1</sup> Attitude measurements come from a 2018 Cisco Workplace Resources (WPR) survey of almost 19,000 Cisco employees.

**Press about Connected Workspace**

Watch [Working in the Smartest Office Building in the World](#)

Read [Cisco's Workplace of the Future in Toronto](#)

To read additional Cisco IT case studies on a variety of business solutions, visit Cisco on Cisco: Inside Cisco IT

[www.cisco.com/go/ciscoit](#)

**Note**

This publication describes how Cisco has benefited from the deployment of its own products. Many factors may have contributed to the results and benefits described; Cisco does not guarantee comparable results elsewhere.

CISCO PROVIDES THIS PUBLICATION AS IS WITHOUT WARRANTY OF ANY KIND, EITHER EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING THE IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE.

Some jurisdictions do not allow disclaimer of express or implied warranties, therefore this disclaimer may not apply to you.



---

**Americas Headquarters**  
Cisco Systems, Inc.  
San Jose, CA

**Asia Pacific Headquarters**  
Cisco Systems (USA) Pte. Ltd.  
Singapore

**Europe Headquarters**  
Cisco Systems International BV Amsterdam,  
The Netherlands

Cisco has more than 200 offices worldwide. Addresses, phone numbers, and fax numbers are listed on the Cisco Website at [www.cisco.com/go/offices](#).

---

Cisco and the Cisco logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Cisco and/or its affiliates in the U.S. and other countries. To view a list of Cisco trademarks, go to this URL: [www.cisco.com/go/trademarks](#). Third party trademarks mentioned are the property of their respective owners. The use of the word partner does not imply a partnership relationship between Cisco and any other company. (1110R)