

Smart Spaces: Select and Personalize the Day's Workspace from a Mobile Device



Cisco IT Insights

What

Cisco is moving toward a more flexible, personalized workspace. Our employees select their workspace for the day depending on the activities they have planned. To work this way, employees need a way to quickly find and reserve workspaces and personalize the IP phone. They need directions to the office or meeting room from their current location. And they need a way to find and communicate with coworkers who might be in a different space than they were in yesterday.

Our solution is called Smart Spaces. Employees use an application called Cisco Maps to *search* for people and resources, *locate* the resource on a map, and *take action*. For example, if an employee searches for an available conference room, the action might be to reserve it and sign into the IP phone. If the employee searches for a person, the action might be to call, email, or send an instant message. Smart Spaces also provides location-based services, such as showing the nearest available meeting room that has a Cisco TelePresence® system.

We use Smart Spaces to:

- **Find and interact with coworkers:** To reach a coworker, employees type the person's name and then simply click to call, email, or send an instant message. Clicking the coworker's name brings up that person's profile, including their manager.
- **Search for an available workspace:** Employees can search for vacant non-reservable audio privacy rooms (APRs) and for available reservable conference rooms for the right number of people and with the right equipment. The floor map of Building 14 at our San Jose, California, campus, for instance, might show that 40 of 247 APRs are vacant. Clicking a meeting room shows its capacity and equipment.
- **Check in:** Employees can check in to a workspace from a browser, a lobby kiosk, or by using their mobile device to scan the Quick Response (QR) code outside the room. They can check in privately or publish their location so that other employees can see where they are located.
- **Personalize equipment and room settings in the workspace:** The same click that reserves a workspace also personalizes the Cisco® Unified IP Phone in the space based on an employee's preferences. For example, by the time an employee arrives at the space, the right phone extension is already applied and room comfort settings such as temperature and light changes take effect. If the office has a Cisco TelePresence system, it automatically connects to prescheduled meetings at the right time.
- **Get directions to a building:** All global Cisco offices appear as dots on a Google Maps interface, including zoom in / out and directions.
- **See current location inside a building:** Employees can see their location on a building map, helping them find their way to an office or meeting. Indoor GPS has been a challenge, and we solved it by using Cisco Aironet™ 3700 Series Wireless Access Points with the Cisco Wireless Security Module. The access points can pinpoint the location of mobile devices within 5 meters. We expect to increase accuracy to within 1 meter when we start using new Cisco HALO modules in the wireless access points. These modules have 32 directional antennas. Some detect the signal earlier than others, indicating the direction the employee is moving.
- **Reserve conference rooms and schedule Cisco WebEx® meetings:** Booking a conference room brings up the Microsoft Exchange interface used to reserve rooms or schedule WebEx meetings.

- **Reserve space in a neighborhood:** Many Cisco teams prefer to work near each other. Therefore, we set up neighborhoods for certain teams.
- **Calendar:** Employees can view their calendar from within Cisco Maps.

We developed Cisco Maps using Cisco Smart+Connected™ Personalized Spaces and Cisco Smart+Connected Meeting Spaces.

Why

At Cisco, we historically had more office space than we needed. Only 50 percent of our offices were occupied at any given time. The others were vacant because employees were working from home or on the road, meeting with customers, or working unusual hours. Excess office space is expensive. There's the lease, furniture, IT devices such as phones and Cisco TelePresence units, and lighting, heating, and cooling.

We took the first step toward a flexible workspace years ago. In an open work environment, employees could choose from a variety of workspaces. They brought their laptop with them and signed into an available IP phone to customize it for the day with their own extension and speed dial numbers. Office utilization increased, and real-estate costs dropped.

The drawback was the time employees spent looking for meeting rooms, equipment such as Cisco TelePresence units, and coworkers who could be anywhere.

Smart Spaces solves that problem. It saves time for employees by letting them use their personal smartphone or tablet to:

- Find an available office or meeting room
- Personalize the IP phone with their extension and speed-dial numbers
- See where they are in relation to an office or meeting room
- Find and collaborate with coworkers quickly and efficiently

We already had ways to do all these things, but they had drawbacks. For example, employees could book conference rooms using Microsoft Exchange, but could not search for conference rooms based on date and capacity. They could see if coworkers were online using Cisco Jabber®, but they couldn't see if the coworker was in the office or working from home. Contractors and employees visiting from other offices could find their way to a building, but after they entered they couldn't see where they were in relation to the meeting room. Losing 5 minutes of a 30-minute meeting because you don't know how to get there is frustrating and inefficient.

Smart Spaces makes employees' personal devices more valuable. The smartphone or tablet taps into the Internet of Everything to become a room reservation tool. An indoor navigation tool. A phone personalization agent. A one-click connection to coworkers. For example, suppose an executive is visiting the San Jose campus from another state and wants to meet with a customer. The executive can use the Cisco Maps app on a smartphone to call or send a text message to a colleague, find the nearest available conference room, check which resources it has (such as telepresence), book the room, and get directions from the lobby. When each of tens of thousands of employees saves a few minutes several times a day, we've gained the equivalent of a larger workforce. At no cost.

For More Information

[Cisco Smart+Connected Personalized Spaces](#)

[Cisco Smart+Connected Meeting Spaces](#)

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