



2023 WORKPLACE PREDICTIONS

HED Workplace Leaders Discuss 2023 Workplace Trends, Strategies and Lessons Learned

WHAT ARE WORKPLACE DESIGN TRENDS THAT YOU EXPECT TO SEE MORE OF IN 2023?

Many of the trends that emerged from the pandemic - dots on the floor to maintain distance, barriers, movement policies - have not made a lasting impact. One thing did carry over from the pandemic: hybrid schedules. Because of this, spaces built to enhance hybrid and flexible work have outperformed more traditional spaces, and we're seeing most organizations doubling down on flexibility and planning for hybrid as a strategic recruiting benefit. Hybrid, or at a minimum, highly flexible workplaces, are going to continue to be leading options in design.

We see companies continuing to evolve their workplace policies to adapt to the change of hybrid schedules. One of the largest investments is going to be in office technology that will help their in-office and virtual interactions blend more seamlessly.

The demand for data will also increase dramatically. Organizations will demand more data on productivity and effectiveness in and out of the office.

Companies will be seeking answers to questions like: "What type of space are we using? What is the quality level? What's effective?"

Data driven design and real estate utilization studies, already common for some organizations, will become truly essential. Until now, some organizations approached facilities with assumptions or trial and error. The pandemic has shaken those beliefs and created a demand for evidence-based approaches. Analysis, user-feedback and prototype use and space concept testing will be on the rise.

We also predict downsizing of overall square footage across the board. This could take on a variety of forms including keeping and mixing space types - which proposes the chance for increased or enhanced amenity spaces.

There is a possibility that urban office spaces will struggle to get employees back into the office due to expensive metros, parking prices and traffic. In some geographies, we expect to see a suburban over urban shift: smaller, suburban satellite offices verses one large urban office.



WHAT WILL BE THE TOP INTERIOR DESIGN TRENDS OF COMMERCIAL OFFICE SPACES IN THE NEW YEAR?

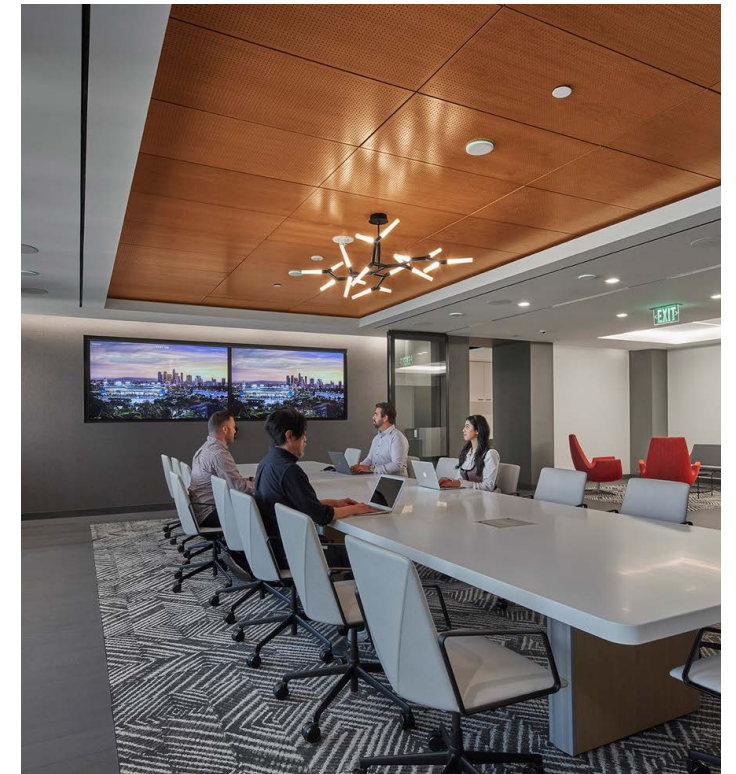
Commercial offices will focus on spaces that support bringing employees together, including amenity areas with items that people normally don't have at home. Organizations will create programs that emphasize social, sharable and informal get-togethers which will create a demand for spaces where people can hang out while working.

Additionally, room design will continue to morph into technology suites with multiple and shifting displays to transform the in-office and virtual experience. There will also be a push for facility design to reflect live, virtual work. Technology will change to allow constant video/audio connectivity throughout the office by camera, creating an engaging virtual meeting. This will help employees be able to work together consistently while being in different places.

ARE THERE ANY OFFICE DESIGN STRATEGIES YOU AREN'T SEEING DISCUSSED ENOUGH?

We need to be aware of "hyper-hospitality." This happens when organizations try to make an office too much like a cozy living room space. It's important to reinforce a careful balance and strategic mix. We don't want to replicate a home environment because then the space becomes just a cozy place without the programs to draw employees in. We must focus on both aspects and not just the comfort factor.

We're seeing clients build out shared and community spaces, which is great, but we don't want organizations to ignore or forget the element of user-buildability or convertible spaces that can be broken down or restructured based on what the user needs.



There is a need for greater staff and culture input. The danger of inauthentic design choices and ineffective facility investments arise from following trends or lack of user data. Mixed, collaborative and social spaces all must be both culture and work-driven.

We also need to be more sensitive when it comes to acoustics. Because of new, and more, virtual meeting tools, the emphasis on acoustics needs to be a top priority.

ARE THERE ANY LESSONS LEARNED THAT YOU ARE STRESSING TO YOUR CLIENTS?

Projects can become very specific and require testing and data. Organizations need to build rapid-prototyping and testing into their budgets to make improvements and get solutions that are effective and measurable in the ways they want. Investing for change and understanding that change is constant, even in facilities, is crucial.

For more on the future of work, commercial office trends, or design best practices, reach out to our Market Sector Leaders:



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