

From Expansion to Optimization:

How Data-Driven Decisions Avoided \$55M in Real Estate Costs

Challenge

An occupier with 41,000 employees struggled with high capital budgets, driven by constant requests for new space build-outs and expansions. Despite these investments, leadership observed significant underutilization, with empty workpoints and vacant areas across multiple departments.

A deeper analysis revealed a disconnect between space requests and actual usage, raising concerns about efficiency and allocation. However, one department's rapid growth was validated, creating a challenge: how to balance legitimate expansion needs while eliminating inefficiencies and ensuring capital investments were truly justified.

Solution

The organization introduced a "use it or lose it" space allocation policy, requiring departments to demonstrate space utilization to retain their footprint. Occuspace area sensors were deployed across a 1-million-square-foot pilot, targeting both the growing department and adjacent spaces to track real utilization.

The system provided granular insights, measuring average and peak occupancy, space category utilization, dwell times, and traffic patterns—enabling data-driven decisions. Before rollout, leadership executed a comprehensive communication plan, including emails, a website, FAQs, town halls, and roadshows, ensuring transparency and reinforcing that the solution was privacy-safe, with no PII tracking.



Results

The initiative delayed two planned buildings totaling 90,000 square feet, leading to a \$55M cost avoidance over 1.5 years. The growing department expanded into surplus space identified within IT and other groups, avoiding unnecessary new construction.

Following the pilot's success, the organization permanently installed area sensors across 5 million square feet, integrating real-time occupancy analytics into business operations. Beyond space optimization, the sensors enabled energy efficiency initiatives, dynamic cleaning and foodservice operations, and workplace experience improvements—unlocking additional ROI from the initial investment.



Zone & Space Type Utilization