



5 Ways University Librarians Are Using Occupancy Technology to Reopen Their Doors

The latest occupancy monitoring technology is helping library teams make smarter, data-driven space utilization decisions for today and the future.



Introduction

The past year saw the transition of traditional library operations and services, with many having to close their doors, minimize capacity, or completely alter their spaces. As we look ahead to the 2021-22 academic year, librarians and administrators are prioritizing ways to understand how their spaces are being used, make data-driven decisions, and create comfortable, convenient experiences for students—**and many are relying on easy and affordable occupancy monitoring technology to do it.**

What Is Occupancy Monitoring?

Also known as people counting, foot traffic monitoring, and crowd management technology, occupancy monitoring technology counts the number of people in a defined space.

Occupancy monitoring offers numerous benefits to universities when it comes to reopening - and staying open - whether through real-time insights or historical usage data to better inform operational decisions and improve the student experience.

Here are 5 ways university librarians and administrators are using occupancy technology to reopen their doors.



1

Increase Awareness of How Space Is Used

Occupancy monitoring offers a lens into how your space is actually used. By evaluating foot traffic data over a period of time, administrators are able to identify what part(s) of the library students use the most, better understand why they sit in a particular section as opposed to another, and even more precisely, the particular type of furniture students choose to sit in.

They can also determine how spaces are used before and after renovations and evaluate the ROI of space improvements to validate spending additional budget on future renovations or new development.



2

Structure Reopening Plans

At the height of the pandemic, administrators were tasked with determining if they needed to close the library completely, require appointments, and/or open additional spaces to maintain social distancing. While check-in data may have suggested that additional spaces were necessary, it is not often collected leaving actual real-time space occupancy in question.

Occupancy monitoring can help assure that no single space exceeds an undesired peak occupancy, and allows library staff to make data-driven decisions, such as opening more space and better plan staffing needs knowing when the library is at its busiest.



3

Enhance the Student Experience

As libraries reopen their doors, it is important that students still have places to study and find community. Occupancy monitoring data made available to students through a mobile app or school website empowers them to make more informed decisions about where they go in the library to avoid crowded spaces and easily find a place to study.

By seeing how busy a space is at any time, students can decide where they want to go, and when, before they leave their dorm rooms or step foot onto campus.

4

Digitize Space Monitoring

Gathering data on how a space is used is already a standard in the digital world, and now it can be in the physical world. With occupancy monitoring technology, librarians don't have to rely on using staff or student resources to manually headcount a space, allowing staff more freedom to perform their normal duties.

Monitoring the number of students, faculty, and/or staff gathered in campus buildings is difficult to manage at scale. Real-time foot traffic monitoring with occupancy technology can alert administrators if buildings exceed capacity requirements to maintain healthy campus environments and operations.



5

Improve Operational Efficiencies

Occupancy monitoring offers historical foot traffic data that can help administrators identify where they can be more efficient with their space planning. For example, occupancy data can be used to help measure policy effectiveness, compare utilization across spaces, and understand if micro changes like putting lights on an outdoor patio increases usage of that spaces.

So, when it comes to building layouts, design, renovations, and/or expansions, administrators can make educated, data-driven, and money-saving decisions regarding their spaces.



Conclusion

As the fall semester approaches, university librarians and administrators are already taking control of how their spaces are used, whether for campus reopening, to ongoing crowd control and/or traffic flow management.

[Contact us](#) to learn more about how Occuspace is helping universities across North America provide more convenient and efficient on-campus spaces for students, faculty, and staff.

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