

Data-Driven Real Estate Reporting



New guidelines elevate the importance for facility managers to be able to explain the use and value of an organization's spaces to company financial leaders. People and places have always been an organization's greatest assets. But, those assets are being underutilized.

BIG REPORTING CHANGES

Steelcase research reports only 54 percent of real estate is used. Now, new [Financial Accounting Standards Board](#) guidelines starting in 2019 require organizations that lease property for more than 12 months to recognize those leases as assets or liabilities. This big change to balance sheets makes it more important than ever for leaders to understand how and if spaces are being used.

CoreNet Global's [the LEADER](#) recently suggested corporate real estate will need to collaborate with information technology and accounting in order to reexamine lease accounting and reporting. Forward-thinking organizations are looking for data-driven solutions to help accurately determine facility use and drive better reporting and decision-making around real estate utilization.

MEASUREMENT CHALLENGES

Right now, a number of challenges prevent organizations from getting actionable data. Utilization and occupancy data is frequently gathered by people walking around taking notes or by anecdotal data from people walking by specific spaces. These common forms of measurement are inaccurate, inconclusive, labor intensive and not scalable.

At the same time, many statistics, even those collected by sensors, are recorded with an underlying assumption that an organization has assigned one space to each individual. However, many companies are embracing new ways of working that allow people to work in company cafes or private enclaves among other places. Single workstations or private offices are no longer the only workplace solution. Company travel and mobile workplace strategies can greatly impact data.

BETTER INSIGHTS

Throughout its 105-year history, Steelcase has spent decades observing how people do their best work allowing Steelcase to view workplace analytics through a human-centered lens. The evolving ways people work are changing how organizations support their workers. If the workplace isn't providing people with what they need, people will vote with their feet — leaving to work from remote locations and sacrificing in-person collaboration for perceived comfort.

To address the growing needs for accurate workplace data and actionable insights, Steelcase is examining how big data can be used to measure and improve the workplace.

WORKPLACE ADVISOR

Steelcase Workplace Advisor uses sensors to detect how and when spaces are being used and send precise data to the Steelcase cloud platform built on Microsoft Azure. Steelcase is able to bring its rich understanding of the workplace to its Workplace Advisor Dashboard which helps provide insights from the data. Data can reveal what spaces are being used, which are not, and can help organizations make informed decisions about how to change those spaces to better support their people.

Organizations are organic. Business needs, people and spaces evolve. At times, rapid changes are required to respond to shifting market conditions. The ability to trace, visualize and act on data over time allows organizations to see how spaces are living and breathing. Facilities can fine-tune spaces in real time adding to the organization's ability to compete.

By putting into place a system designed to clearly and accurately report real estate use, organizations can meet future guidelines and requirements as well as work closely with leadership to ensure its spaces are being used to support its most important asset — it's people.