

## Mitie bolsters hybrid workspace evolution with the launch of Sphere

3 years ago



With work from home guidance lifted, many employees are returning to their workplaces under a hybrid model of working, based between home and the office.

The move to a flexible mix of working in different locations has led to many businesses changing their office designs to create more effective workspaces that support this new way of working. However, in many cases these changes have been driven by business ideas – rather than data on how employees want to use the space in order to be most productive.

To help overcome this challenge, Mitie has launched Sphere, its new technology solution that collects and analyses data to generate insights on employees' experience in the workplace, including how well suited the space is to the tasks and activities they are undertaking.

Using tailored questionnaires, Sphere collects data through an easy-to-use app on three different aspects – physical, sensory and emotional:

- 'Physical' includes space and desk availability
- 'Sensory' refers to factors like noise, temperature, lighting, and CO<sub>2</sub> levels
- 'Emotional' factors focus on determining how the workplace can help employees take advantage of the social aspects of being in the office

Data collected through Sphere is analysed, enabling Mitie's workplace design experts to provide insights on how the current workspace design is affecting employee productivity, wellbeing, and attitudes towards the workplace. Armed with this information, the team can identify and implement solutions to improve the

employee experience, support wellbeing, and enhance workspace productivity. For example, if data shows that a number of employees are having difficulty concentrating due to high noise levels, Mitie's experts may propose repurposing parts of the office that are currently underused to create 'focus areas' where colleagues can carry out tasks that require a quieter environment.



### *The Shard 11*

By focusing on the needs and desires of colleagues, businesses can create workspaces that support their own priorities as well as those of their people. Creating employee-focused spaces where colleagues are able to do their best work will encourage more individuals to come into the office more regularly, as well as helping to attract and retain the very best talent.

Rather than a one-off questionnaire, Sphere takes a long-term approach to workspace evolution to ensure it continues to be fit for purpose. The software enables businesses to continue tracking employees' experiences in the workplace after the initial solutions have been rolled out to provide a better understanding of colleagues' opinion of the changes, as well as identifying whether any further improvements or adjustments can be made.

Sphere was successfully trialled with employees working for one of Mitie's customers in Scotland. Early findings of the trial highlighted that colleagues want their workplace to become a 'destination' that compliments the benefits of working from home. This can include better use of outdoor areas and offering a range of spaces designed to suit different tasks – such as collaboration areas and 'quiet zones' for focusing.

The trial also showed that colleagues who spend more time in the office have a greater sense of belonging to their organisation, which in turn is expected to have a positive knock-on effect on colleague retention.

Daniel Guest, Chief Operations Officer, Technical Services and Integrated Facilities Management, Mitie, said: "The Coronavirus pandemic has accelerated changes to how and where we choose to work, so it's imperative that businesses adapt their workplaces to support these new ways of working and enhance the employee experience in order to retain the best talent. Using Sphere, alongside our experience and

expertise designing effective workplaces, we're harnessing data to help our customers make sure they have the right solutions in place to support hybrid working, while keeping employee productivity and wellbeing front and centre of workplace design."