

# IWFM – Market Outlook 2022: optimism remains despite challenges and uncertainty

4 years ago



*From IWFM:*

Each year, IWFM's Market Outlook Survey provides vital insights into the challenges and performance of the workplace and facilities management sector by putting the key questions direct to the professionals.

In these extraordinary times, it could not be more important to track, record and comment on the UK workplace and facilities management market, and to contextualise it using reflections from previous surveys.

As might be expected, the overall findings for 2022 reflect the broader economic picture: challenges of supply chain squeezes; creeping inflation – especially energy prices; and a skills shortage pinching sharply now as the post-Brexit sector finds itself bereft of skilled frontline workers.

With the as yet unfelt impacts of war in Ukraine notwithstanding, the general outlook could be described as one of recovery and optimism as the six in ten expecting an improved outlook for 2022 remained consistent with last year, with fewer expecting it to worsen – the optimism linked largely to expectations of a reactivated sector as workers return to offices.

With the pandemic having a profound impact on working practices, we have seen a continuation from last year in organisations' changing workplace strategies to cover remote, home and flexible working. As working practices evolve, a recognition of changing requirements to manage this new working environment comes through as a negative impact; however, perhaps in a reflection of the uncertainty that

remains over working arrangements, the factors most strongly identified as having a positive impact on the market over the last twelve months were also changes in the use of technology and data, in workplace strategies, including remote or hybrid working.

Peter Brogan, IWMF's Head of Research and Insight, commented: *'Those able to harness the potential of new and emerging technologies and successfully apply data capture and analysis techniques to optimise technology use will be at the forefront of sector growth. Working from the encouraging insight from this year's Survey, we will continue to develop tools to support the sector to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the evolving workplace.'*

The Market Outlook Survey also explored equity, diversity and inclusion issues. The results indicate that awareness and focus on these matters has continued to increase, but it is also clear that barriers remain that hinder progress in this area, particularly unconscious bias and lack of support, mentors and role models. We look forward to monitoring progress in this area through our next survey.

Find out more by downloading the full Market Outlook Survey 2022 report below:

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