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Why return to 'normal' isn't normal for facility leaders

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[Eptura](), the global worktech leader, recently released new research that reveals that 34% of businesses plan to increase office attendance. This trend is prompting enterprises to enhance their use of AI and cross-platform data analytics to better manage workplace occupancy and ensure a balanced employee experience throughout the workweek.

Now in its third year, the 2025 edition of the Workplace Index, based on a survey of 200 operational leaders and insights from 25 million global users, uncovers a critical paradox in technology: enterprises aren't suffering from a lack of tools — they're struggling with too many disconnected systems. In fact, two thirds of companies are using anywhere from 6 to as many as 40 different solutions to manage workplace operations.

"Despite the abundance of workplace technology, many organisations are struggling to harness its full potential due to disconnected systems," said Eptura Chief Executive Officer Brandon Holden. "Instead of driving efficiency, fragmented tech stacks create decision-making bottlenecks, making it harder to streamline workflows, analyse data effectively, and adapt to evolving business needs."

Among the key findings, enterprises highlighted their top operational challenges:

- Disconnected tech is impeding informed business decisions: Respondents said the biggest barriers to analysing data are multiple dashboards and gathering meaningful insights across different systems, with 37% of organizations using 11 or more full-time employees to collate, analyse, and report on worktech data. In addition, 50% of businesses are using on average 17 standalone technologies to manage workplace operations.

- Enterprises are struggling to realize the full value of AI: Over half of organisations report insufficient skill sets and cross-platform integration as the top obstacles to deploying AI. Most businesses' use of AI is at an early stage, primarily deployed for chatbots, dashboards, and diagnostics.
- Rising office attendance is exacerbating real estate portfolio challenges: 34% of businesses are looking to increase the number of days in the office this year, and over the past three years, the volume of visitors per location has nearly doubled. This is placing more pressure on leaders to balance workplace experience with optimising space utilisation.
- Difficulty demonstrating ROI is slowing technology integration: More than two-thirds of businesses cite budgetary constraints as the key restriction to integrating workplace, buildings, and facilities technologies. Their number one challenge in securing budget is a lack of perceived value in integrated solutions.

Despite these barriers, Eptura's research highlights a clear path forward: true digital transformation comes from a unified operational approach and integrated technology across the organisation.

Takeaways to optimise workplace operations:

· Increase efficiency by consolidating operational data: The three key opportunities for organisations seeking to increase value across business functions are leveling occupancy across the working week, optimising real estate portfolios, and increasing asset lifecycles.

· Prioritize AI to drive experiences: The top two areas businesses plan to implement AI in the next 12 months are to enhance employee experience (77% of respondents) and automate visitor management (68%).

· Rise of the digital workplace leader: Organisations are turning to a new role to manage hybrid needs, with three quarters having hired or in the process of hiring a digital workplace leader over the last 18 months.

· Technology value increases as systems become more connected: Enterprises that progress from separate solutions to fewer vendors and integrated platforms will maximize — and be better able to demonstrate — value from their investments.

"This year's findings serve as a critical wake-up call," said Holden. "By leveraging AI-driven analytics and cross-platform integration, organisations can enhance workplace efficiency, optimise their real estate usage, and extend asset lifecycles — ultimately driving better decisions."