

TOP 5 THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN BUDGETING FOR YOUR NEW HYBRID WORKPLACE

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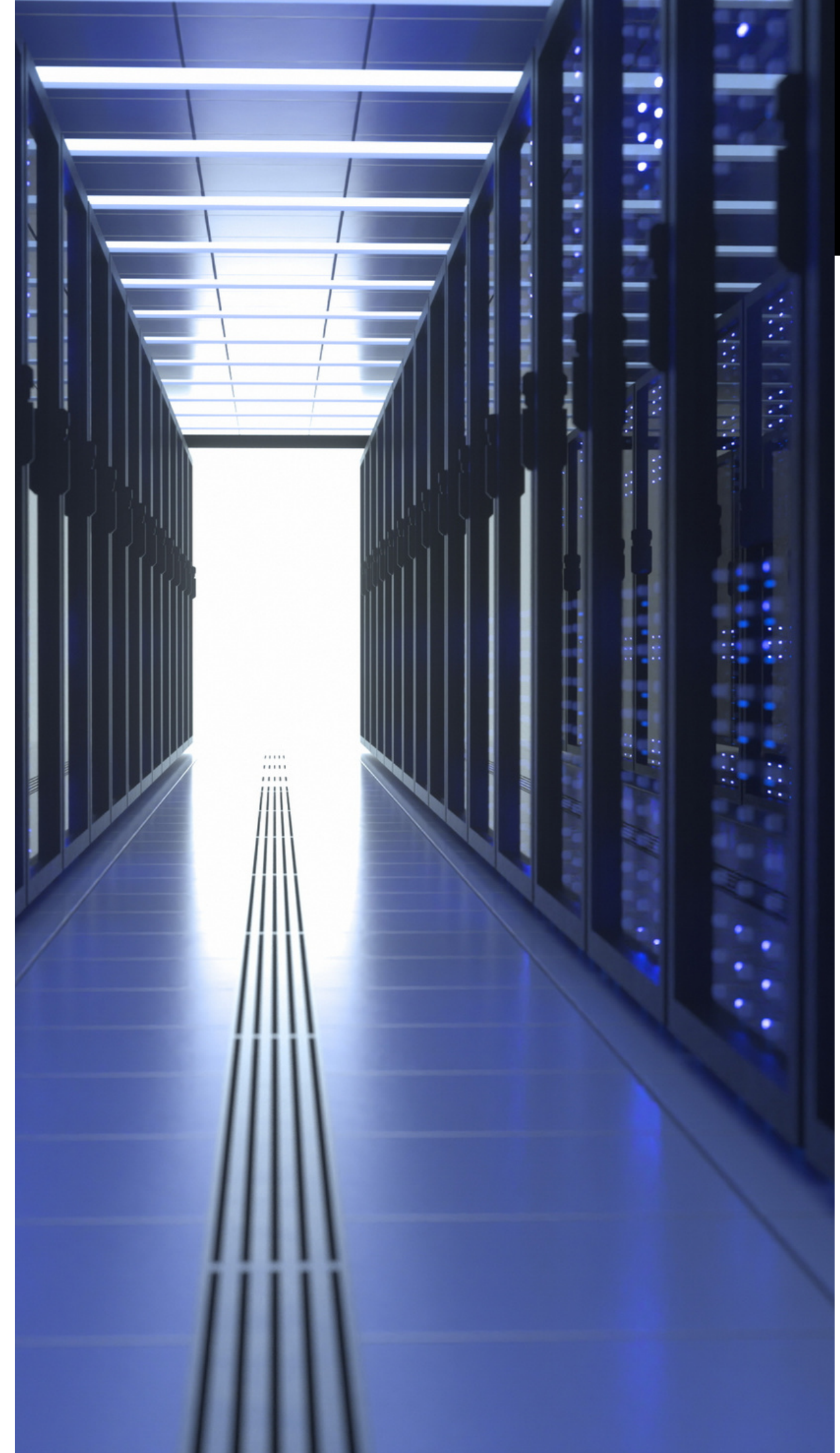


I AV & TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS SUPPORT

In order for Hybrid office models to thrive, they will need to support the increased demand and dependency on technology for a variety of activities for in-office, mobile and remote workers. This increased communication will continue to leverage technology platforms and the Hybrid office will need to provide appropriate room settings for things such as touch down, dedicated desking, focus rooms, plug & play or enclosed meeting/'zoom rooms'. In addition to increasing their IT allowance for hardware & software devices clients will need to consider electrical and communications infrastructure components including additional costs associated with conduits, back boxes and cabling distribution for the additional AV screens and connection points.

Data will be critical for companies to understand the success of their Hybrid workplace. Recent surveys completed by Microsoft Canada have explored whether business leaders are effectively leveraging data to drive growth and innovation, stay competitive and improve customer and employee experiences. Innovative smart building systems with connected tech/building apps, touchless technology, space utilization trackers, room booking devices, AI technologies, occupancy sensors and hot-desking devices will be essential for gathering data for a measurable flexible hybrid workplace. The resulting impact on the budget is these smart technologies will require additional budget considerations for items such as power, cabling or wifi components.

Audio visual components for high-use meeting rooms and conference centres may require separate AV closets/ server rooms for equipment. This may result in a dedicated space with specialized cooling to accommodate equipment heat loads.



II OFFICE COLLABORATION DEMANDS

Organizations will be tailoring their workplaces by providing more collaborative spaces and neighbourhoods where employees can come together in the same environment to engage with one another in a variety of dynamic social settings.

Square footage allocations are shifting from dedicated offices and open area assigned workstations to a more flexible environment including more Zoom rooms, individual focus spaces, or enclosed team meeting spaces. Unfortunately, this shift does not mean a reduction in construction costs. By building in more of these meeting settings, plus considerations for adaptable solutions with future resiliency, project costs will be affected in various construction divisions including:

- > Drywall
- > Millwork - doors, frames, blocking
- > Ceilings
- > HVAC
- > Lighting
- > Power & Communications
- > Fire protection
- > Finishes such as painting and flooring.

Collaborative spaces are becoming even 'harder working' spaces. The increased demand to convert offices, conference & meeting spaces into various types of settings rooms is resulting in the introduction of adaptable architecture including demountable partitions, folding partitions, telescopic meeting fronts, and products such as Skyfold walls. The cost to invest in these flexible walls has a wide variety of price points determined by the selected manufacturer, model type, flexible features, manual versus electric operation, function, acoustic properties, materials, and sizes. In addition to the wall system themselves, there is also a blocking or structural steel component required to stabilize and accommodate the weight of the systems.



III FOCUS ON HOSPITALITY



There is a heightened sense of what the employee experience will be when returning to the office. Corporate clients are seeking to incorporate a hospitality-focused atmosphere to make staff feel welcome and comfortable and create a memorable experience that they will enjoy and want to return to frequently.

Many staff members that are coming into the office for a variety of meetings or engagements will be seeking break-out or lounge spaces for the 'in between' meeting times. This will allow them to socialize with their colleagues in a more casual setting or provide a touch-down space to simply catch up on emails.

This translates into workspaces that are being designed to accommodate more employee/ member lounge areas complete with on-site food & beverage amenities. These high-touch bespoke spaces are being designed with elevated fit and finishes including all the conveniences for food and refreshment services.

Clients will need to consider costs associated with:

- > Millwork components with higher-end materials for both style and durability
- > Specialty Plumbing for coffee bars and serveries with features such as barista stations, filtered or carbonated water
- > Special serving stations with catering-type functions such as heated or refrigerated islands
- > Elevated selections for lighting including pendants, floor lamps, and other accent lighting
- > Plug & play capability to allow staff to work from anywhere
- > Lounge settings with a variety of furniture settings with a higher-end hotel or residential look & feel

IV ACOUSTICAL TREATMENTS WILL PLAY A LARGE ROLE

Noise in workplaces can come from all kinds of sources: including people speaking with work colleagues, on the phone, video conferences, open office collaboration areas, and outdoor environmental sounds such as road traffic or construction. These noisy environments will inevitably increase in the new hybrid office as employees will be leveraging more technology for virtual communication with colleagues and clients thus having a direct impact on the overall office acoustics. Not to mention all the newly integrated hospitality and social spaces.

The direct result is the hybrid workplace will become noisier and as a consequence people will start speaking louder, making it unpleasant for some staff members to focus or enjoy being in the space. This is why acoustics will play a large role in the future hybrid office.

Acoustic treatments and costs to be considered may include:

- > Upgraded partition or ceiling construction
- > Additional insulation or spray foam treatments
- > Suspended acoustic panels
- > Wall-mounted acoustic panels or screen dividers
- > Sound masking systems
- > HVAC and duct work system upgrades
- > Light fixtures with acoustic properties
- > Window covers or glass treatments



Including an Acoustic Consultant early in the design and engineering of the project delivery team will help to mitigate some of these potential acoustical risks. The fee for this service should be taken into account in the overall project costs.



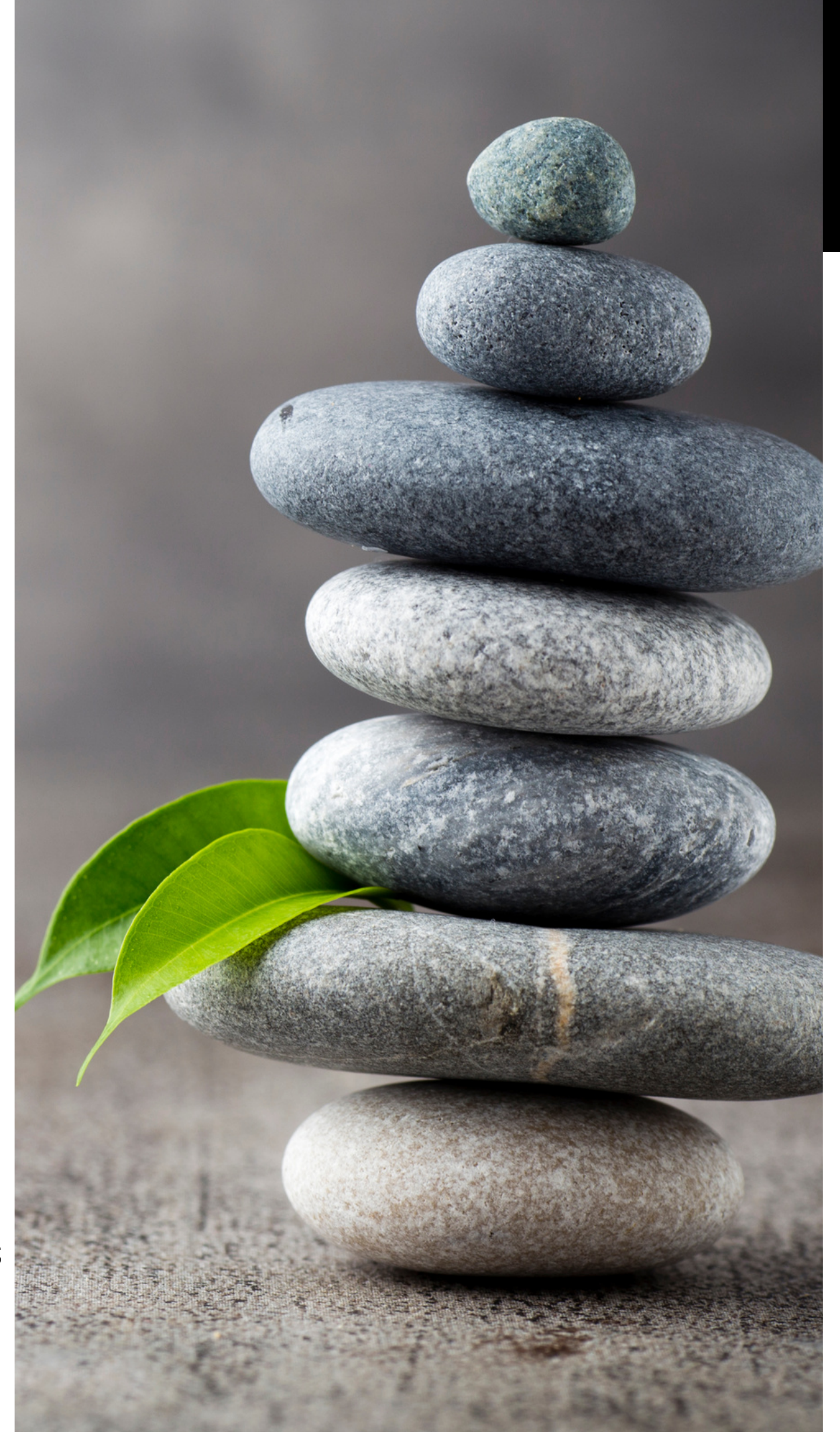
V HEALTH & WELLNESS

Coming out of the pandemic most organizations will continue to look at the steps they need to take to provide improved health and wellness support for their employees. A company's investment in its employees' health and wellness will ultimately translate to higher levels of performance, attraction and retention, and overarching success in the new hybrid workplace.

Through this wellness lens companies are moving towards incorporating more on-site facilities and services such as:

- > Fitness facilities with shower and change rooms
- > Access to patios or rooftop terraces
- > Meditation and zen spaces
- > Quiet spaces, libraries, or no tech zones
- > Concierge-type services to help with personal services; personal shoppers, dry cleaning, day-care

With the increased desire for these amenities comes the need for additional budgeting considerations. In some cases, these will be considered wish list items and may need to be budgeted early in the process to understand the cost implications and help clients prioritize the components to be included in their on-site health and wellness program.



ABOUT VESTAICON

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We guarantee effective planning and coordination along with confident team leadership to maintain communication throughout all stages of construction.

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