

This latest report in the **WORK\_IT** series – the seventh in a mini-series looking at PropTech – explains how next-generation tenant engagement platforms are merging data driven strategies with people services to elevate user experience.



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# NEXT-GENERATION TENANT ENGAGEMENT PLATFORMS: BLENDING TECHNOLOGY, DATA AND PEOPLE SERVICES

## INTRODUCTION

Recent years have seen the development of tenant engagement platforms in response to growing employee demand for technology-driven, hospitality-infused and inspiring workplaces.<sup>1</sup>

While there now exist a wide range of digital platforms featuring technology capable of enhancing employee

experience to some degree, many do not effectively leverage data to identify problem areas or proactively deliver the features and services end-users require.

Most platforms also often neglect the human element of service delivery. Using a smartphone app to locate colleagues, reserve meeting rooms and order F&B

unquestionably improves convenience, but having friendly and well-trained staff on hand to help employees navigate their day can make all the difference.

CBRE believes that next-generation tenant engagement platforms must combine technology with advanced data strategies and best-in-class hospitality services to create a truly transformative and employee-centric workplace experience.



## THE EVOLUTION OF TENANT ENGAGEMENT PLATFORMS

There are a variety of tenant engagement platforms for commercial real estate landlords and tenants to choose from.

Examples include Comfy, a smartphone app that connects people, places, and systems. Initially designed to enable employees to control office temperature, Comfy has evolved to become an end-to-end solution for managing all aspects of the workplace environment.

The app provides on-demand control to employees and facility management teams by connecting and integrating them with building automation features, IT networks and Internet of Things (IoT) systems.

Similar tenant engagement platforms include Smart Spaces by Aviva, which provides a single end-to-end platform for all workplace needs such as room bookings, visitor management and asset management.

Staff can book seats at a kiosk or via a tablet, mobile app or their desktop. Access for visitors is expedited by providing them with calendar invites and a scannable code for ease of entry. Smart Spaces also allows asset management teams to monitor building and equipment-related information such as operational status and maintenance history.

WeWork's Powered by We offering goes a step further and helps clients locate the right space; design and build it; connect it with employees via a suite of integrated technology; and enhance it through regular community events.

These and other tenant engagement platforms undoubtedly improve user experience by integrating property services and amenities via a digital offering. While adoption remains a challenge, many operators have found that integrating security passes into smartphone applications rapidly improves take-up.

However, CBRE believes that technology alone cannot create a truly effective and employee-centric workplace.

Data analysis and people services are emerging as key differentiators for tenant engagement platforms amid increasing demand for proactive, rather than reactive, services and more personalised user experiences.

## HARNESSING DATA ANALYTICS

Most tenant engagement platforms collect vast amounts of data but are not equipped with the requisite expertise or algorithms to analyse it, making them incapable of providing actionable insights to workplace teams.

<sup>1</sup>Tenant Engagement Platforms: Digitising the Workplace Experience, CBRE Research Asia Pacific, June 2018

However, the most advanced tenant engagement platforms capture how users are utilising the office on a day-to-day basis, the features and amenities they prefer and the transactions they conduct, and then identify areas for improvement.

For example, data from scheduling systems, motion sensors, in-app user behaviour and learned preferences can provide considerable insight into how employees collaborate or spend their time in the office.

It can also enable workplace teams to ascertain whether large spaces are being occupied by individuals; whether there are rooms that are always available but rarely occupied; and whether there are certain spaces that are chronic service request generators.

Data collected by Internet of Things (IoT) sensors, space management software and calendaring data can also provide a wealth of information related to space optimisation and occupancy analytics. After this data is captured, processed and analysed by workplace teams, occupiers can accurately gauge space, seat and room utilisation; the average size and duration of meetings; and entry and exit statistics. It can also help them identify so called “zombie spaces”, or common areas that are relatively underused.

These insights can be used to help occupiers and landlords improve utilisation by changing the role and function of that space or adding new features to make it more attractive to users.

With employees increasingly demanding to work in a way that suits them, this data can also be directed at creating personalised working experiences for individual employees.

## DELIVERING PEOPLE SERVICES

Much of the conversation around tenant engagement platforms invariably focuses on their technological sophistication and efficiency. However, many platforms overlook the importance of genuine human interaction, particularly regarding service delivery.

Consumers have come to expect great in-person customer experiences in shops, restaurants and hotels, and are increasingly demanding the same in the workplace. They also expect the simplicity and ease of those experiences to be accessible to them at any time through technology.

CBRE believes that for tenant engagement platforms to be truly effective, they must be integrated with people services.

Well-trained and knowledgeable experience professionals stationed on site must be available to facilitate enquiries and requests made through the application and support employees over the course of their working day.

## UNIFYING TECHNOLOGY AND HUMAN INTERACTION

As a scalable product suite, CBRE’s Host offering blends people, training and technology to create an employee-centric workplace experience.





Host integrates technology and end-user experience features on a single platform. This enables employees to access their workplace needs from a single app and organisations to administer building management requirements from a single and customisable platform.

Trained and certified experience professionals located on-site are responsible for creating a supportive and comfortable atmosphere; welcoming visitors; and acting as air-traffic control for all employee-facing services.

Host, which can be customised to specific client requirements, also features a mobile app that allows users to navigate the workplace, schedule meetings with colleagues, reserve workspaces, use food and beverage services, and access building and concierge services.

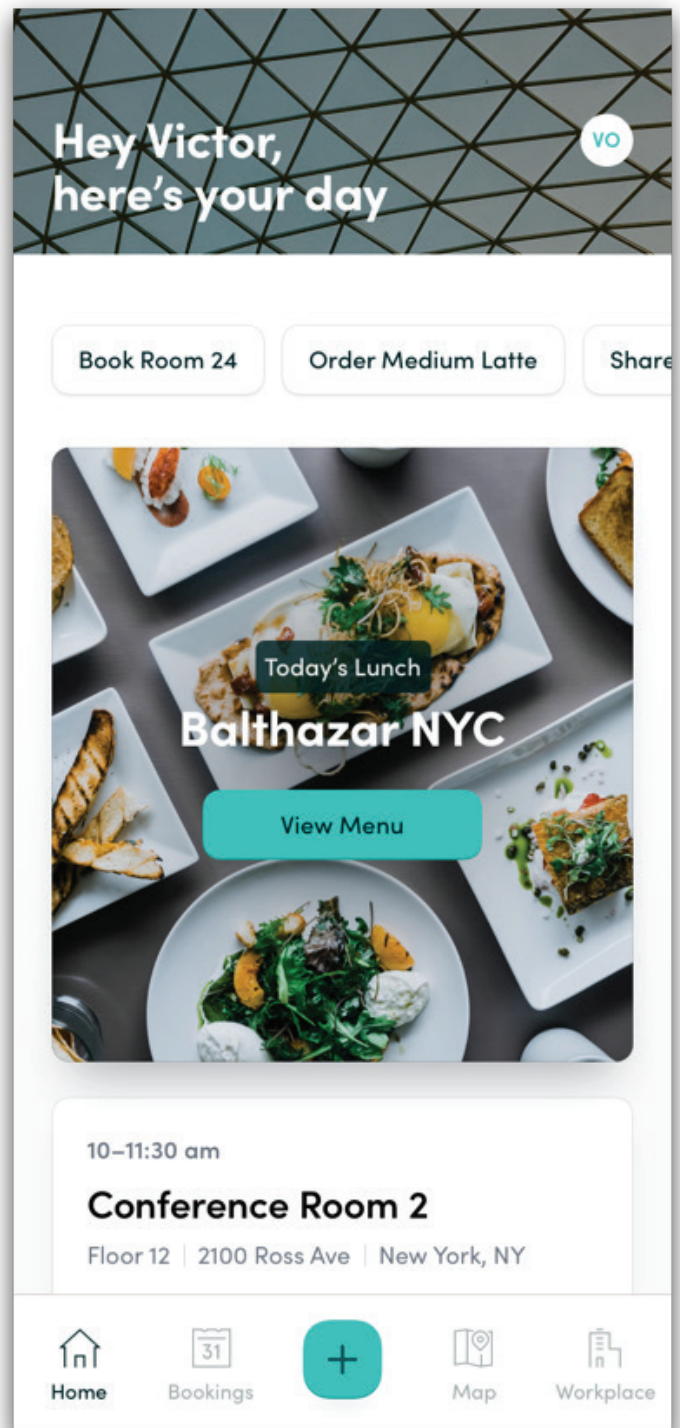
**APPLYING PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS**

The most advanced tenant engagement platform are beginning to apply predictive analytics, which uses data mining and machine learning to analyse past behaviour to make predictions about future trends.

This will enhance the ability of experience professionals to provide proactive, rather than reactive, services. When the application recognises that a certain employee has booked a meeting room and usually sets it up in a certain way, experience professionals can be automatically notified accordingly.

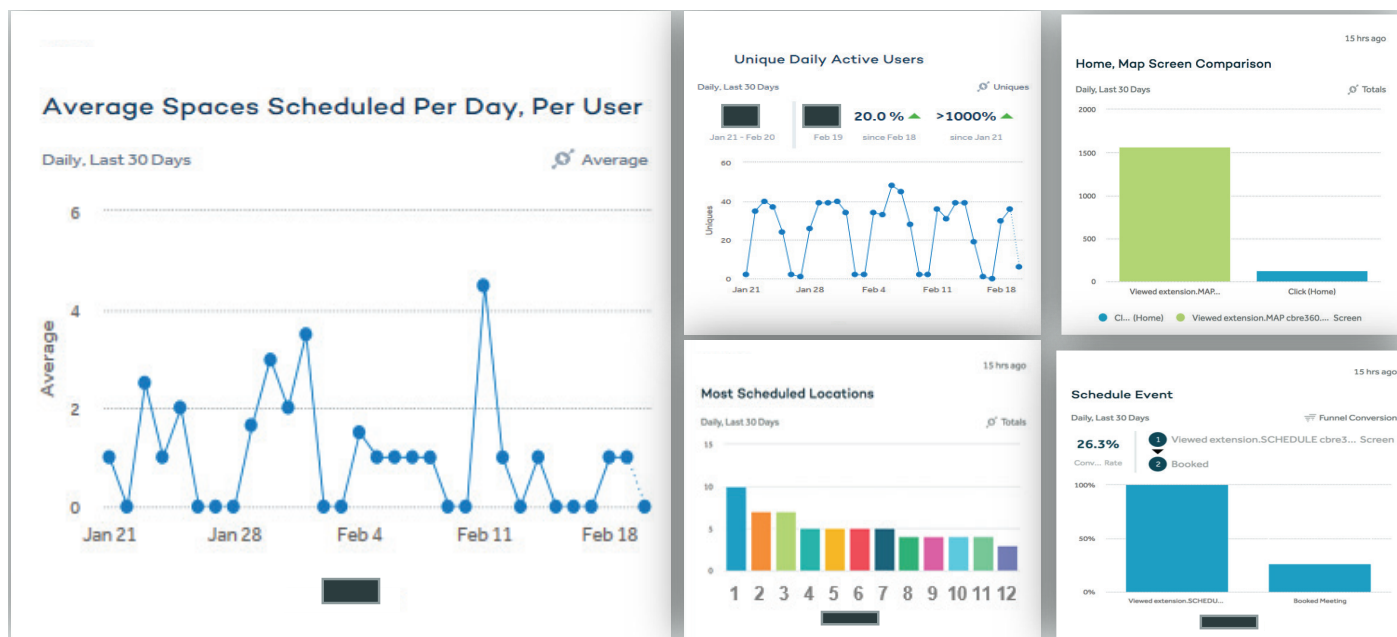
These applications are also utilise artificial intelligence to take key decisions on behalf of users based on their previous behaviour. For example, if someone who regularly orders a coffee at a certain time of day fails to do so, they could be sent a reminder via their smartphone or one could be automatically ordered for them.

**FIGURE 1: HOST HOME SCREEN**



Source: CBRE Research, February 2019

**FIGURE 2: HOST DATA ANALYTICS DASHBOARD**



Source: CBRE Research, February 2019

This shift towards anticipating and augmenting employee workplace experiences will result in a greater focus on personalisation, with tenant engagement platforms tagging users according to their preferences and automatically suggesting similar options. If a user is a regular attendee of yoga classes, the application could send them notifications of other wellness services.

Artificial intelligence and the advanced wealth of data that will be captured is ultimately expected to create smarter and deeper connections between people and the workplace.

As well as blending technology, data and people services, CBRE believes that operators of tenant engagement platforms can activate the overall user experience by expanding their partnerships with third-party vendors such as F&B outlets, fitness centres and other amenities to obtain special deals for end-users.

Other innovations on the horizon include the integration of virtual assistants and chatbots, which would enable platforms to expand their range of services to users. For example, users wishing to make a reservation at a restaurant operated by an F&B partner could notify a virtual assistant to do so on their behalf.

CBRE also expects the development of tenant engagement platforms to reach a point where they will be open source. Software developers would therefore be able to create new functions and applications that feed directly into the platform and broader ecosystem.

These and other emerging features will ensure tenant engagement platforms continue to evolve while maintaining their overarching focus on creating moments that improve the user and tenant experience.

CBRE believes that the most advanced end-to-end systems will eventually come to be regarded as employee productivity tools, such as WebEx and Outlook, given that so many of their features directly benefit user efficiency.

**FIGURE 3: NEXT-GENERATION TENANT ENGAGEMENT PLATFORMS**



Source: CBRE Research, February 2019

**CBRE GLOBAL RESEARCH**

This report was prepared by CBRE Asia Pacific Research Team, which forms part of CBRE Global Research – a network of preeminent researchers who collaborate to provide real estate market research and econometric forecasting to real estate investors and occupiers around the globe. For more information regarding this research report, please contact:

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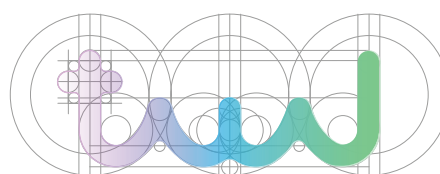
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