

# Think Smart, Work Smart

More and more offices are now aspiring to adopt contemporary patterns to create open, collaborative, technology-enabled and space-efficient workplaces to be perceived as a smart company. *Outlook Business* takes a look at what goes into making for a smart office.



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First there were smart cities, then came smart homes, and now it is the turn of smart offices to hog the limelight. Gone are those days when office meant a few cubicles, a few uncomfortable chairs strewn around, and a lone desktop in the name of technology, in short a place you tried making a home out of in your own little ways – think picture postcards, photographs you pinned on the small soft board, indoor plants and more, to make your desk at the workspace seem and feel more appealing. Not anymore.

More and more offices are now aspiring to adopt contemporary patterns to become more open, collaborative, technology-enabled and space-efficient. The proliferation of more advanced technology means the way people do business is ever-changing. This shift is evident in the trend toward creating the so-called smart office — also known as the responsive or digital workplace — in which technology is used to make the

physical work environment intelligent and adaptable to company workflows.

It is commonplace now for potential employees and customers to base their opinion on you as a company from what they experience, hear and see. And, since the first impression often lasts, the way your office looks plays an important role. According to a recent HR study, the massive changes that are occurring in the workplace are like a tale of two cities; those companies that are modernising, especially with mobility, will attract and retain top talent, those who don't will create employee frustration, lower productivity and employee unhappiness.

#### What makes for a smart office

The idea behind creating a smart workplace is to unify operations under one system and empower that system with technology. By enabling this, businesses are able

to get more out of their employees by ensuring they are happier, and thus in a position to make more informed business decisions.

**Smart Technology:** A smart office starts with smart technology that makes sense for your office needs. Whether it's an all-in-one workstation, thermostats, virtual reality cameras, virtual reality speakers to serve as an in-office hub; or a sleek notebook you can take on the plane, or grab on the way to that important new business presentation, the right technology is key. While naysayers argue increased technology could promote isolation in the workplace, many believe that advanced tools could actually boost communication between workers.



**Chandrahas Panigrahi**  
Sr. Director and Consumer Business Head, Acer

Acer steps in right here with technology that is vital to creating smart workspaces. Today, modern offices wish to provide the smart office technology environment that can customize the modern interconnected workforce and can help employees to perform at their best potential. At present, technology primarily

focuses on efficiency, interconnectedness, productivity and sustainability however, in the coming years, these altogether will revolutionize the next frontier of innovation.

In today's multi-device world, Smartphones and Tablets are the top devices usually used by employees for mobility but, when it comes down to real work, PC and laptops are invincible. There are variety of PCs to choose from for the modern smart office – From the sleek Acer All-In-One range to the thumb sized PC on Stick which turns any monitor to a full-fledged PC. Newer laptop form factors like the Acer Switch and Spin series which combines the productivity of a laptop with the portability of a tablet is ideal for travelling executives or the sales team. Further business series laptops like the Acer TravelMate series come with a host of security features and productivity enhancements to get work done quicker and safer.

“Making offices smart with technology is vital for the modern business; it will improve employee productivity while making their lives easier and the office a better place to work in. We believe our range of new devices will bring efficiency, productivity and provide customized working environment needed for the smart office,” says Chandrahas Panigrahi, Senior Director and Consumer Business Head, Acer.

For some, the responsive workplace offers an opportunity to extend the office far beyond its walls and enable more complete remote collaboration. While some focus primarily on harnessing digital tools to remake the physical office, others see technology as capable of severing the ties that bind employees to any one locale. A Harvard Business Review analysis demonstrated that when workers are granted a degree of autonomy by their employers, they tend to feel their work is more meaningful. However, by incorporating smart office technology, employers don't have to trade accountability for worker freedom. A marriage of technology and flexibility allows workers the space they need to produce at their best level without undermining supervision for employers.

**Smart Interiors:** Making sure employee spaces are comfortable and conducive to productivity is perhaps most important. Consider the size and shape of desks; chairs that offer extra support; and walls that offer privacy without (literally) closing off opportunities for collaboration and conversation. Add to it facilities such as a vibrant cafeteria and a well-equipped gym. For instance, the DLF Expedia office has been designed



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