YOUR GUIDE TO SAFE WORKING

Things have changed dramatically in workplaces all over the country.

We've all come through the initial challenges of wondering whether we can make remote working successful. From the sudden cultural shift through to concerns about having the right tools, the majority of office-based organisations have surprised themselves with just how effectively they can work, even during a global crisis. As we move towards a partial return to work, initial concerns may have passed, and we are finding companies are taking a proactive approach to solving and identifying challenges. They are looking at strategies to support a hybrid business model that protects their staff whilst allowing them to operate as near normal as possible. This guide looks at the key elements of the government 'return to work' guidance and addresses those elements of it that can be supported by technology

Contents

Keeping 1m from others

The need to socially distance at work is going to be with us for the foreseeable future. And employees will be seeking reassurances about the measures their employer is taking to mitigate risk and meet government criteria.

The challenges:

Desk use:

· In a traditional 'designated' desk space set up it's an issue of proximity
· Open plan working often has clusters of desks facing each other – the worst scenario for safety
· With a hot desking model, the challenge is greater still. Multiple workers using the same space is not possible in the way it was before

Meetings:

· Small huddle spaces are suddenly unusable
· Meeting rooms capacities have probably halved
· Each meeting space will need to be thoroughly sanitised in-between use
· Meetings will include high numbers of remote staff
· Central desk based microphones are a contamination risk

The solutions

GoBright space management system:

Designate desks as bookable, closed, or awaiting cleaning. Staff can use the GoBright app or web portal to book a desk before leaving for work. Only 'bookable' desks can be chosen – those that are clean, not facing each other, and at the specified distance from others. The status of each desk is clearly visible in the physical location thanks to the Desk Connect on-desk module.

With GoBright impractically small meetings rooms can be closed make them invisible to booking, whilst larger rooms can have their maximum occupancy levels reduced as chairs are removed. Employees searching for a room in GoBright will only be shown those that can safely accommodate the number of in-person attendees

Nureva HDL audio conferencing range:

HDL ensures that everyone in meetings, whether present or not, has reliable audio. No matter how far apart they are sitting, everyone can be heard thanks to full room audio pickup using the patented Microphone Mist technology.
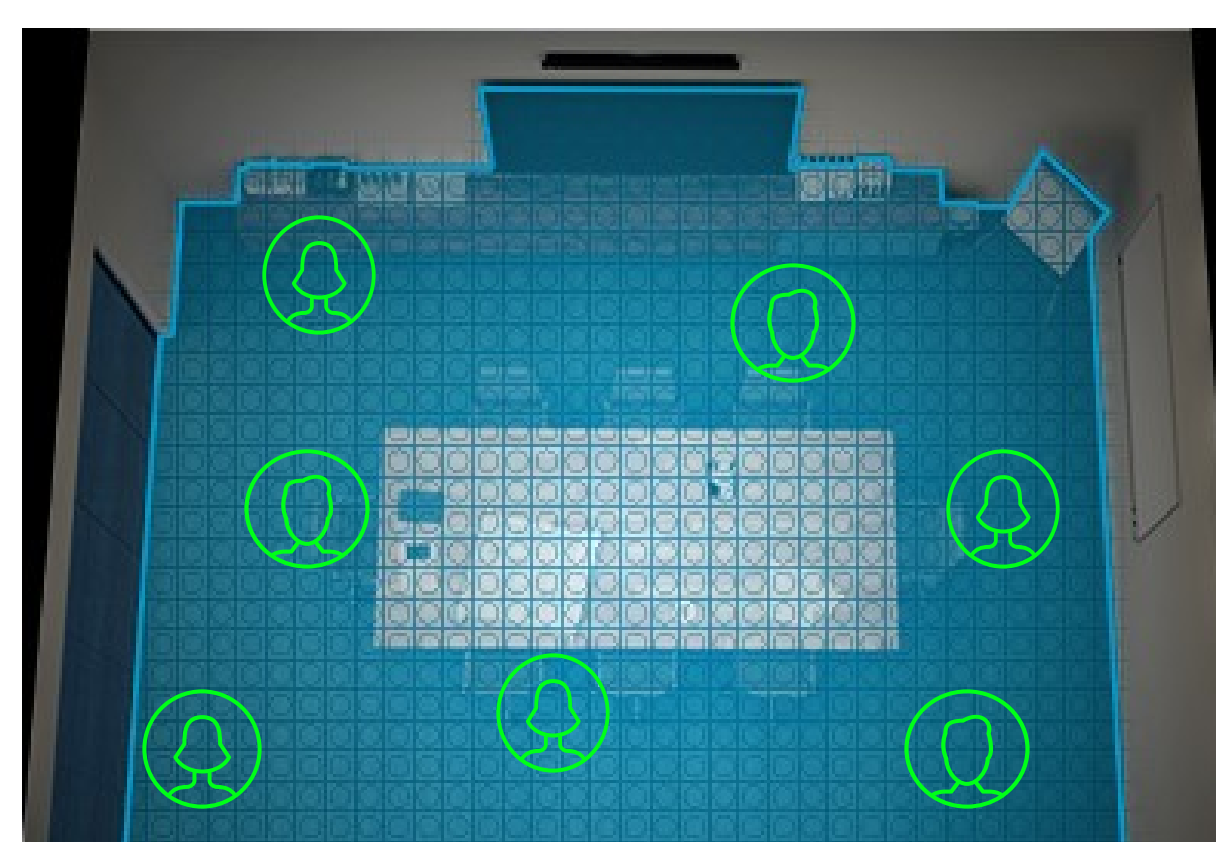
Staggering arrival and departure times

As business leaders put their plans together for a safe return to office life, at the forefront of their minds will be devising strategies that mean they can comply with the government guidance on managing the flow of people in and out of the building.

The challenges:

Entrances:

· Staff who would normally arrive and leave at a similar time will be too close to each other as they enter and exit the building

Social distancing:

· A full complement of employees will make it difficult to ensure social distancing within the office
· If staff spend all day in the office it prevents other team members from attending

The solutions

GoBright space management system:

Flexible choice of desk booking start times allows organisations to encourage the staggered arrival of their employees. This avoids unsafe congregation in building entrances/key walking routes and ensures the desk remains available at the employee's new start/end time.

Carefully limit who is in the building by asking employees to pre-book a space before leaving from home, via an app or desktop portal. In this way you can control the number of employees coming to the workplace at any given time.

Although hot-desking and short-duration desk bookings are flagged as something to avoid, by implementing a solution that can safely automate a desk cleaning policy between uses, this is an option that can be considered. Once a desk has been vacated, GoBright will illuminate the desk purple to notify the cleaner (and warn the users not to use until clean), so the workspace can be quickly sanitised before being made available again.

Available
Occupied
Needs cleaning
Non Bookable
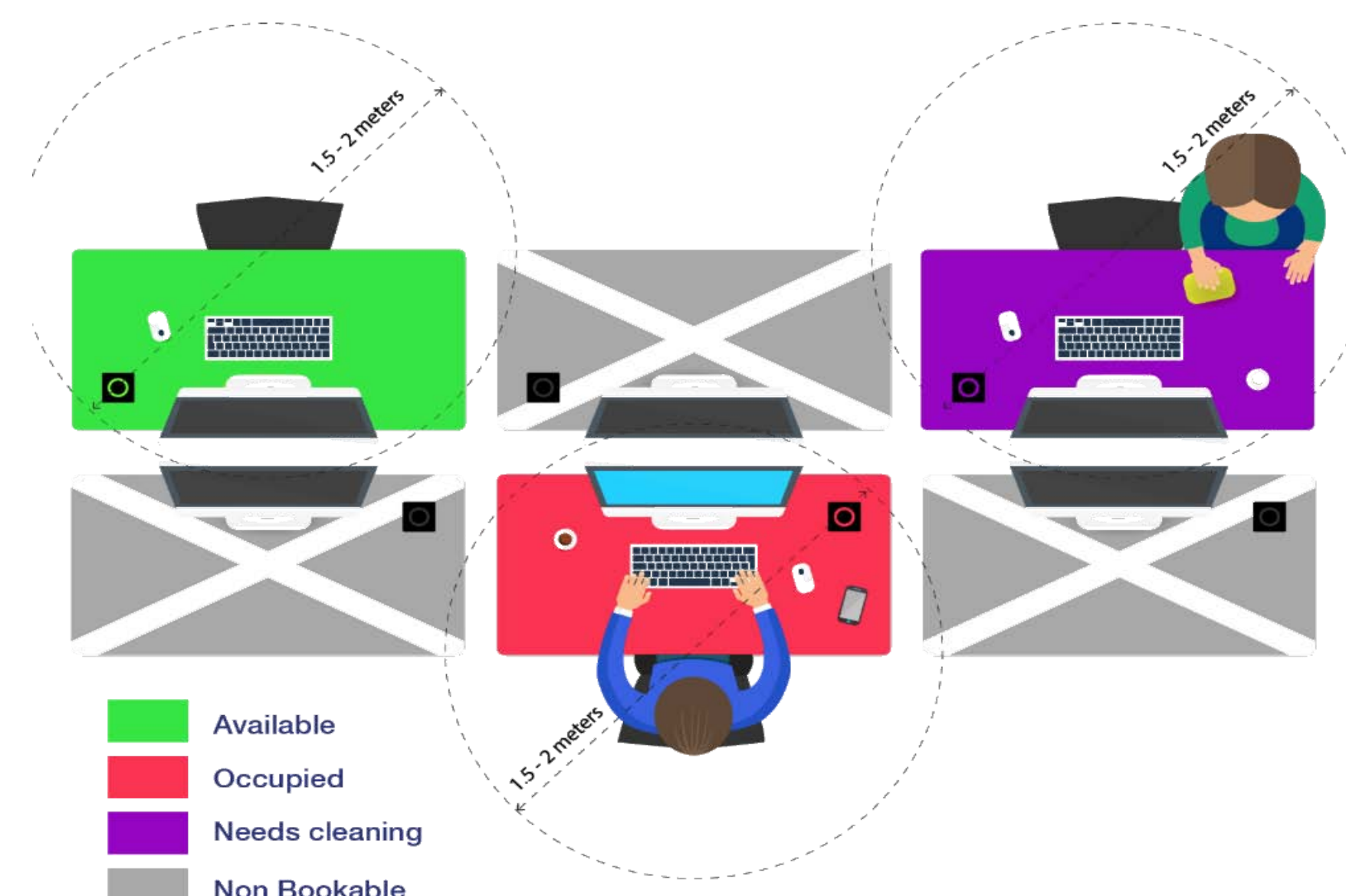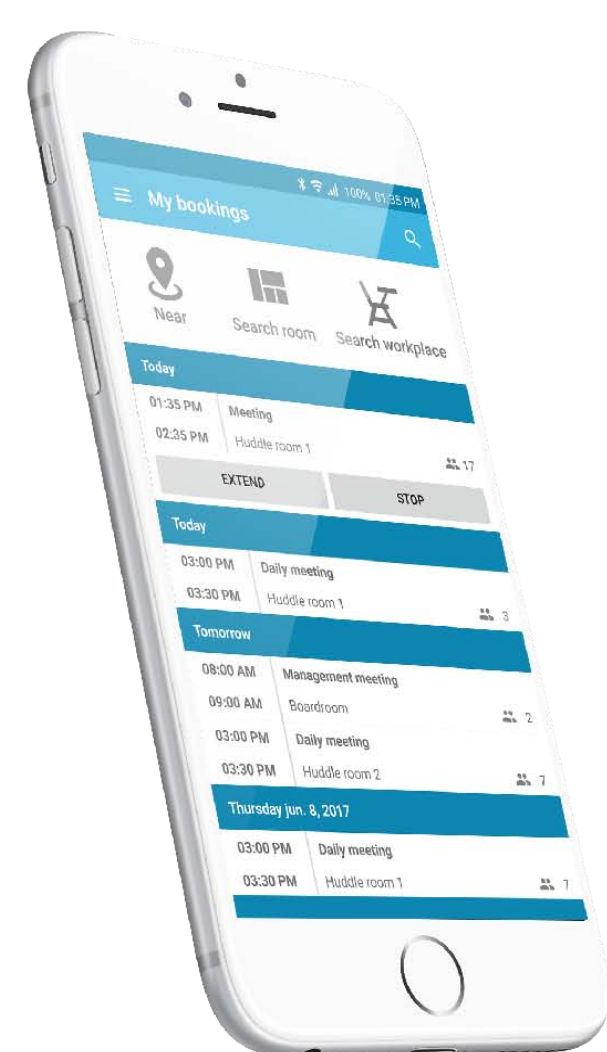
Minimising touch based devices

Touch technology has been a massive growth area in recent years, bringing an ease of use that delivers a great user experience. Suddenly using a touch screen is the last thing we want to do, and the government advice stresses that they should be avoided if possible.

The challenges:

Collaboration in meetings:

· Touch screens are commonplace in meeting rooms where participants are encouraged to stand up and contribute via a touch screen

Visitor check in:

· Many organisations use a touch screen to register visitors, particularly if there is no receptionist present

Room booking:

· Room booking systems invariably feature a touch screen outside the room that allows meetings to be booked, cancelled or extended via touch functionality

The solutions

GoBright space management system:

GoBright's visitor management functionality means your visitors can pre-register in advance, so eliminating the need for the traditional sign in process. Reception staff check the guest indirectly via the GoBright portal on their PC. For unmanned receptions, QR codes can be used to sign in and out.

For room booking, GoBright's usual features such as a map kiosk and room touch screen can have their touch function temporarily disabled, whilst remaining in use as an information display only. Rooms can be booked via an app, and check-in and room release automation can be carried out via sensor-based detection.

Evoko:

Our room booking system presents all information elegantly on the screen and it actually changes information on the display when someone walks up to it, always displaying the most relevant information without staff having to touch the screen.

Nureva HDL range:

By having a wall-mounted microphone system that offers full room audio pick-up, the need to touch devices is kept to a minimum.
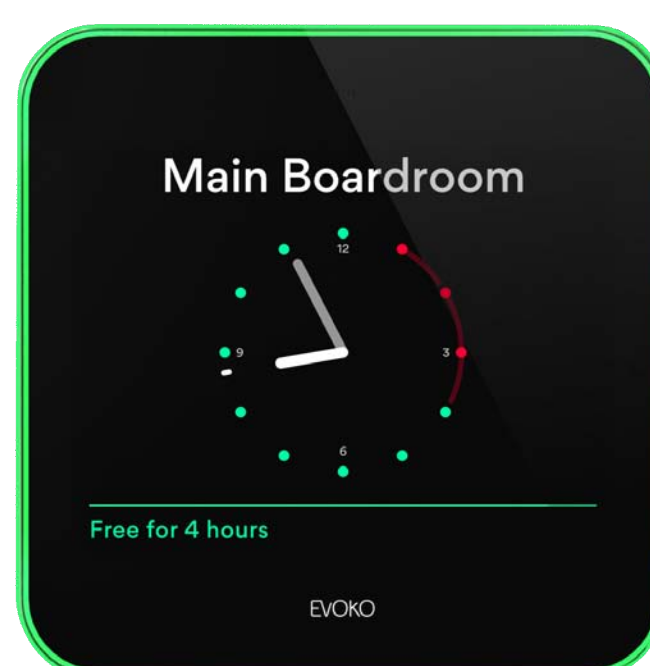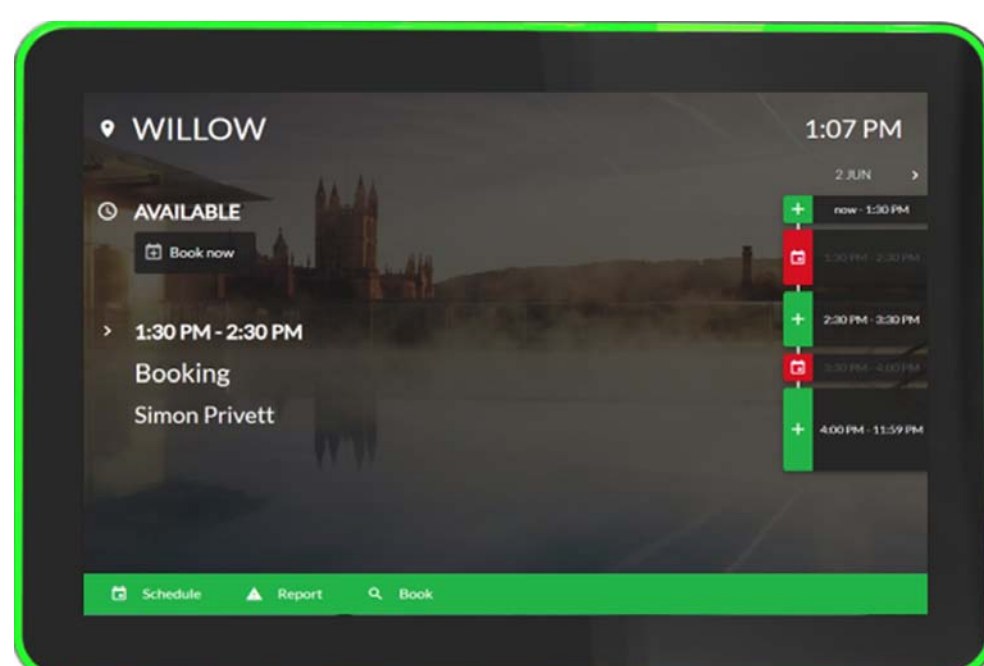
Managing occupancy levels to enable social distancing

For a safe working environment it is essential to control total occupancy levels to a point where social distancing can be maintained. The guidance clearly states that if necessary, restrictions are placed on certain areas where it is impossible to stay 2m apart.

The challenges:

Whole building occupancy:

· Controlling total occupancy levels to a point where social distancing can be maintained by both employees

· Taking an overview of total occupancy and taking decisions on whether more staff can be allowed to enter

Social distancing

· Ensure there is enough space between employees as they move through the building

Community areas

· Dealing with areas such as canteens and kitchens where people naturally gather

The solutions

GoBright space management system:

GoBright's analytics let facilities or premises managers monitor both live and historical data on desk and room use. Monitor occupancy stats of desk spaces, to understand how staff are using the office on specific days/time periods, so organisations can open/close floors as required. Monitor the occupancy over time to adjust workplace policies such as staff in-office rotas, or a phased to the office.

Using GoBright's wayfinding functionality, organisations can comply with the need to create one way flows around the building. Integrate wayfinding with narrow casting software and you can add health and safety advice and reminders about the need to socially distance. Physical 'glow' markers visibly indicate an area's status, so that staff can instantly see where they can no longer go
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Evoko Liso:

This meeting room scheduler gives you full insight into your organisation's meeting patterns to really optimise resources. You get decision making support that truly cuts cost by analysing statistics in web-based Evoko Home.
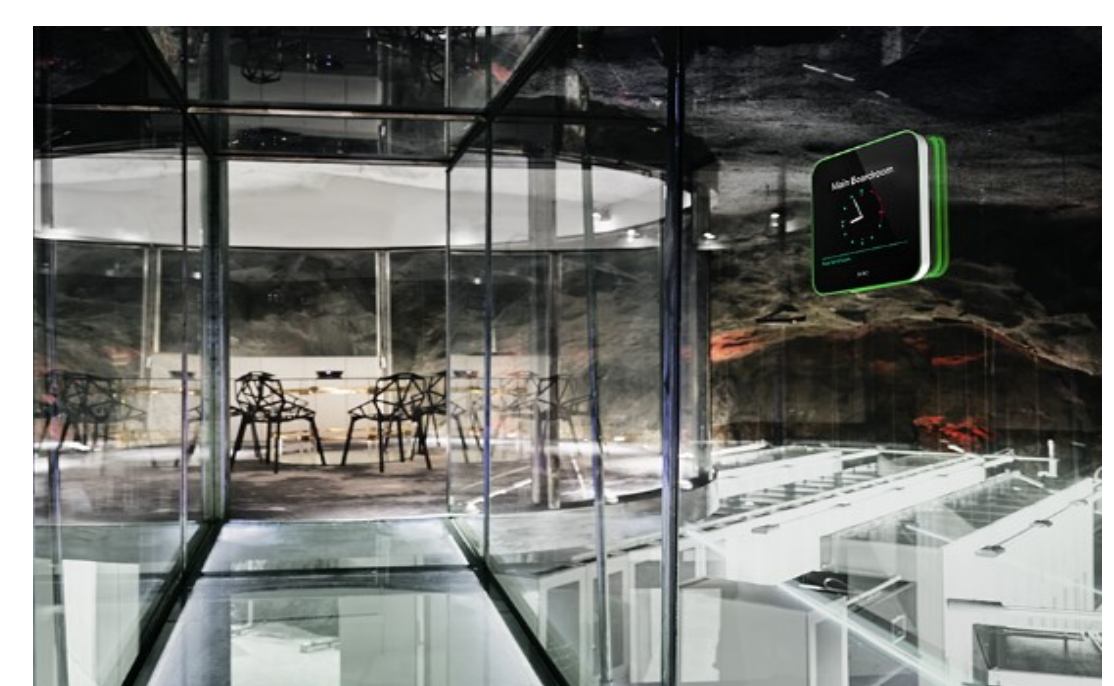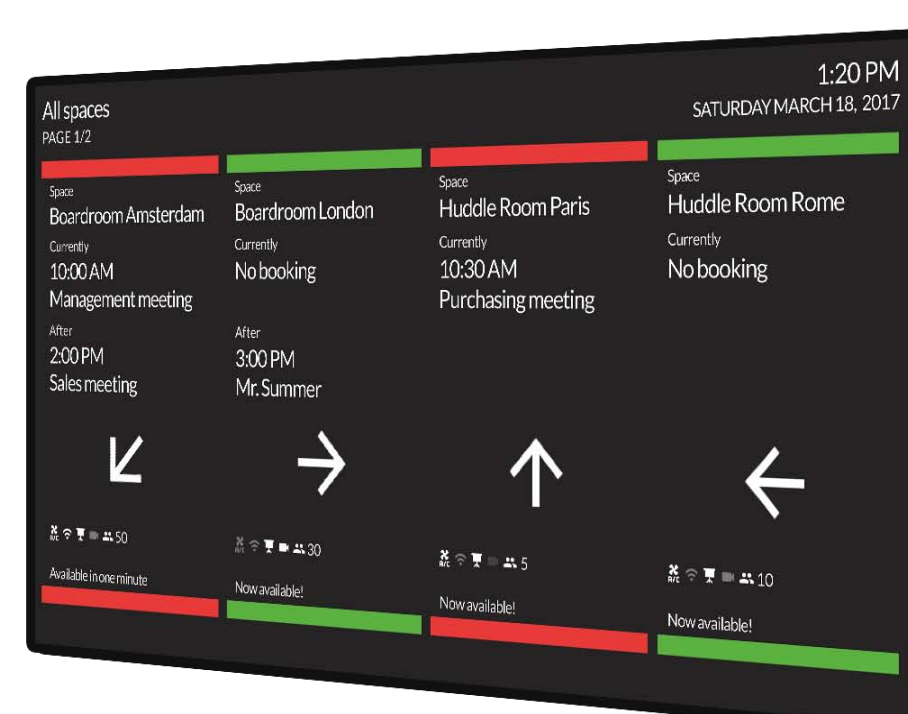
Avoiding hot desks unless they can be cleaned between use

A central element of the agile environment is hot desking, linked to a drive towards activity based working. Many organisations have adopted the practice, realising that they could operate more effectively with less real estate. Now government guidance clearly states that hot desking should be avoided unless thorough cleaning can take place after every use.

The challenges:

Lack of space prevents a change hot desking

· If a hot desk model has already been implemented, you are unlikely to have the space to reallocate designated desks. You need to find a way to make hot desking work safely.

Tracking which desks have been used

· The nature of hotdesking means different employees come and go. How do you keep control of cleaning between users?

The solutions

GoBright space management system:

Through the system each desk can be assigned a status – bookable, closed, or awaiting cleaning. Workers check desk availability before leaving home, via an app or desktop, with the system only allowing bookable desks to be chosen. The status of every desk is clearly visible in the physical location, and the criteria for each status is easily changed as government guidance evolves.

Optional functionality includes the use of maintenance free sensors to register movement. When movement has not been detected for a designated period of time, the status will change automatically to 'requires cleaning'. Alternatively desks can be released via the app. It can be programmed to send an automated message to the cleaning team.

The result is a system that allows for the safe and effective use of hot desk resources whilst complying entirely with the government advice.
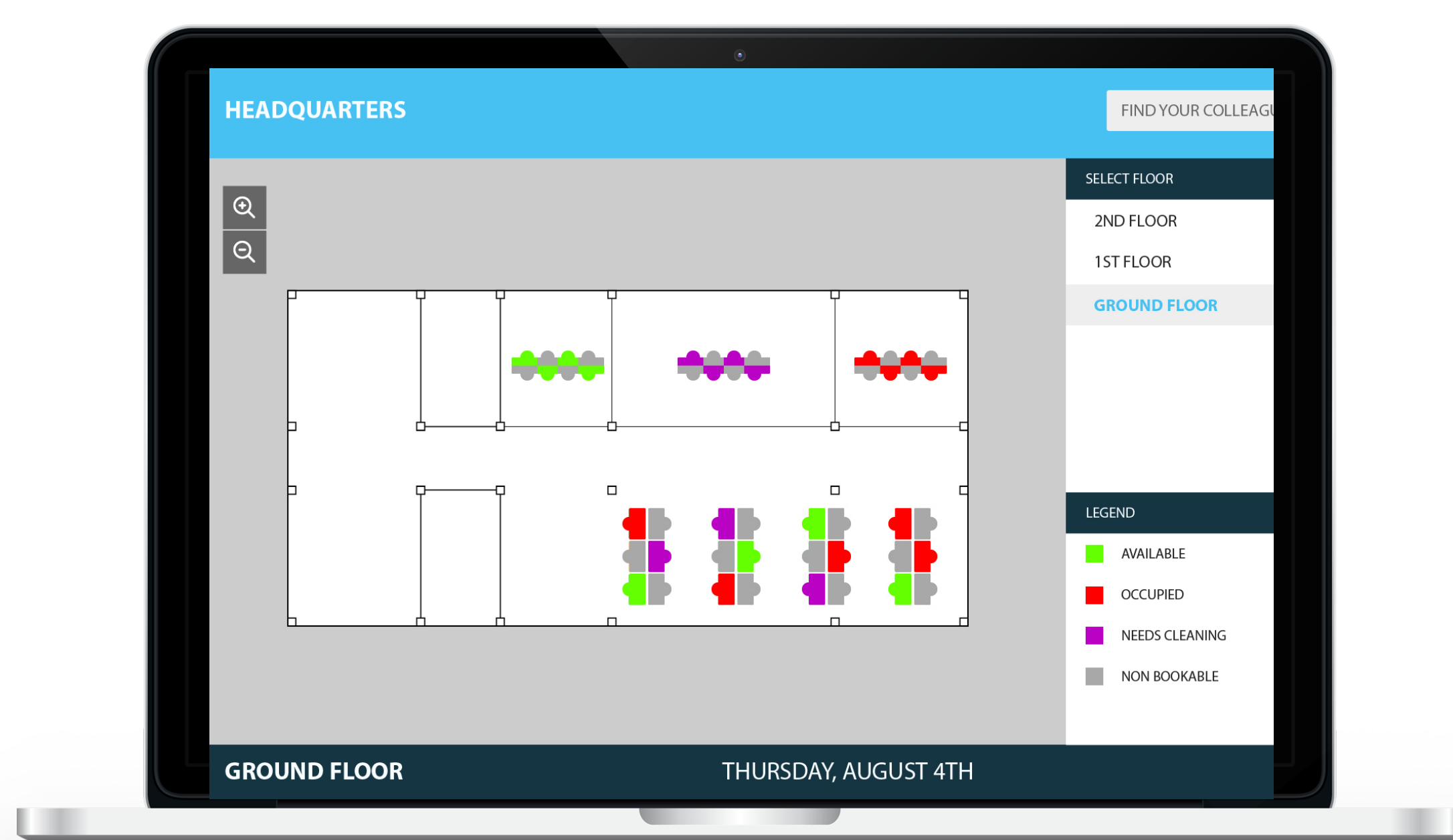
Controlling visitors

Each organisation has a duty to protect visitors to their buildings. So thought must also be given to the guidance about controlling the number of visitors in the building and how the reception of them can be safely handled.

The challenges:

Reception staff are unaware that visitors are due

· In normal times, visitors may arrive without the prior knowledge of the reception staff.

Signing in process requires physical contact

· Many organisations use a physical book or a touch screen to check in visitors. These are no longer usable as they are contamination risks, but a record must be kept to meet H&S regulations.

Unmanned receptions require use of touch screens or telephones

· If an organisation does not use reception staff, visitors usually need to use a phone or touchscreen to alert staff to their arrival. Again, these methods are no longer usable.

The solutions

GoBright space management system:

With GoBright's visitor management, you can ask your staff members to pre-register their visitors, so that the receptionist can ensure total visitors do not exceed the daily maximum. On arrival, rapid sign-in/out can be done by the visitor by scanning their personal QR code, with minimal screen contact. Signing in and out can be contactless, as pre-registered visitors can also be signed in/out by reception staff from the GoBright portal visitor list.
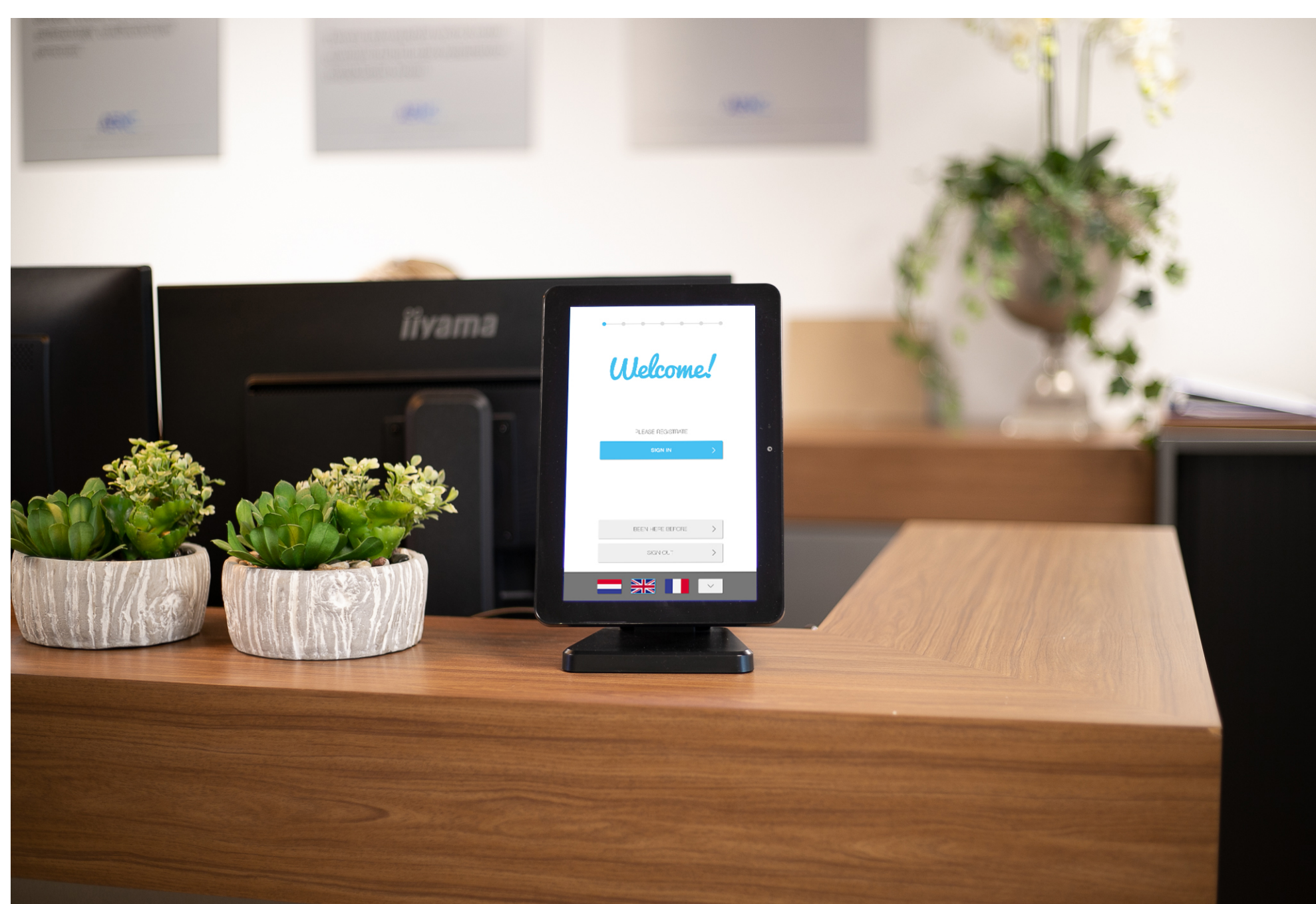
Work at home if possible

We think an element of home working is here to stay. Surveys have revealed that most of the UK workforce would like the opportunity to work, at least in part, from home. And the government advice concerning return to work is quite categorical - working from home should be supported if at all possible and steps must be taken to engage such employees.

The challenges:

Maintaining relationships
· Line managers will need to find secure ways to have personal discussions with remote staff, for giving help and advice, conducting appraisals and receiving personal updates.

Working as a team
· When you have a hybrid model of some physical and some remote workers, you need to work harder to maintain team working and collaboration, otherwise progress will slow and relationships break down.

Effective communications
· Remote employees need to feel connected and involved with meetings. It's essential that their contributions are as valued as those who are physically present.

The solutions

Flabba intelligent video solutions:

Flabba is a tool designed to make remote face-to-face discussions efficient. It is an intelligent video-enabled SaaS platform that provides not just video conferencing, but essential business workflow facilities.

These include one way or two-way video, document sharing and management that is available after the meeting has finished, session recording and transcription, and meeting archiving and reporting, all in a single platform.

Nureva HDL audio conferencing range:

When joining a meeting remotely, poor audio can cause remote workers to disengage. The HDL range provides reliable audio that allows all participants to be heard clearly, whether in the room or joining from home.

Evoko Home:

The Evoko Home, room scheduling system also offers extensive multi-site management options with permission control and real-time unit monitoring, enabling workplace management from a distance.
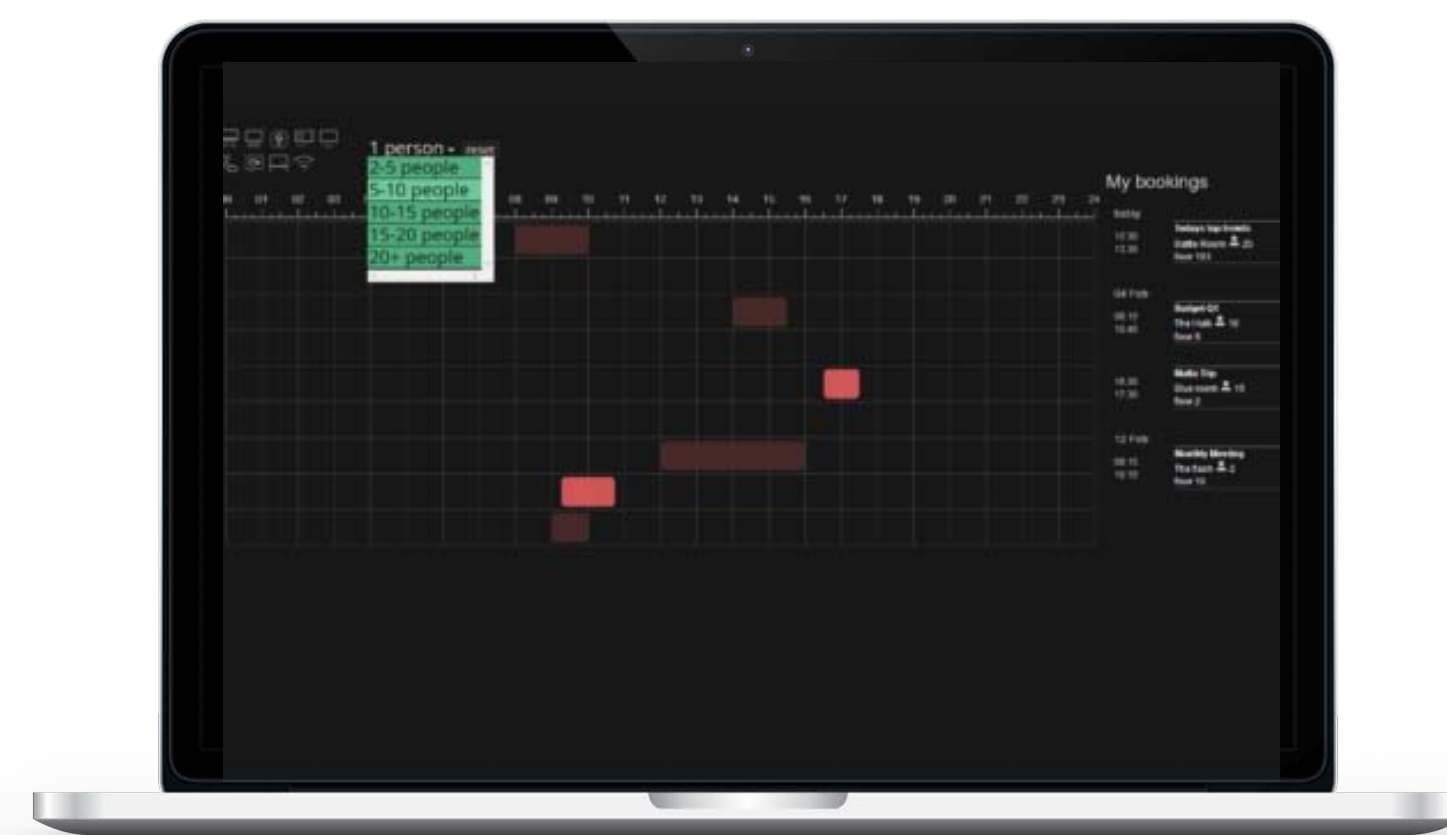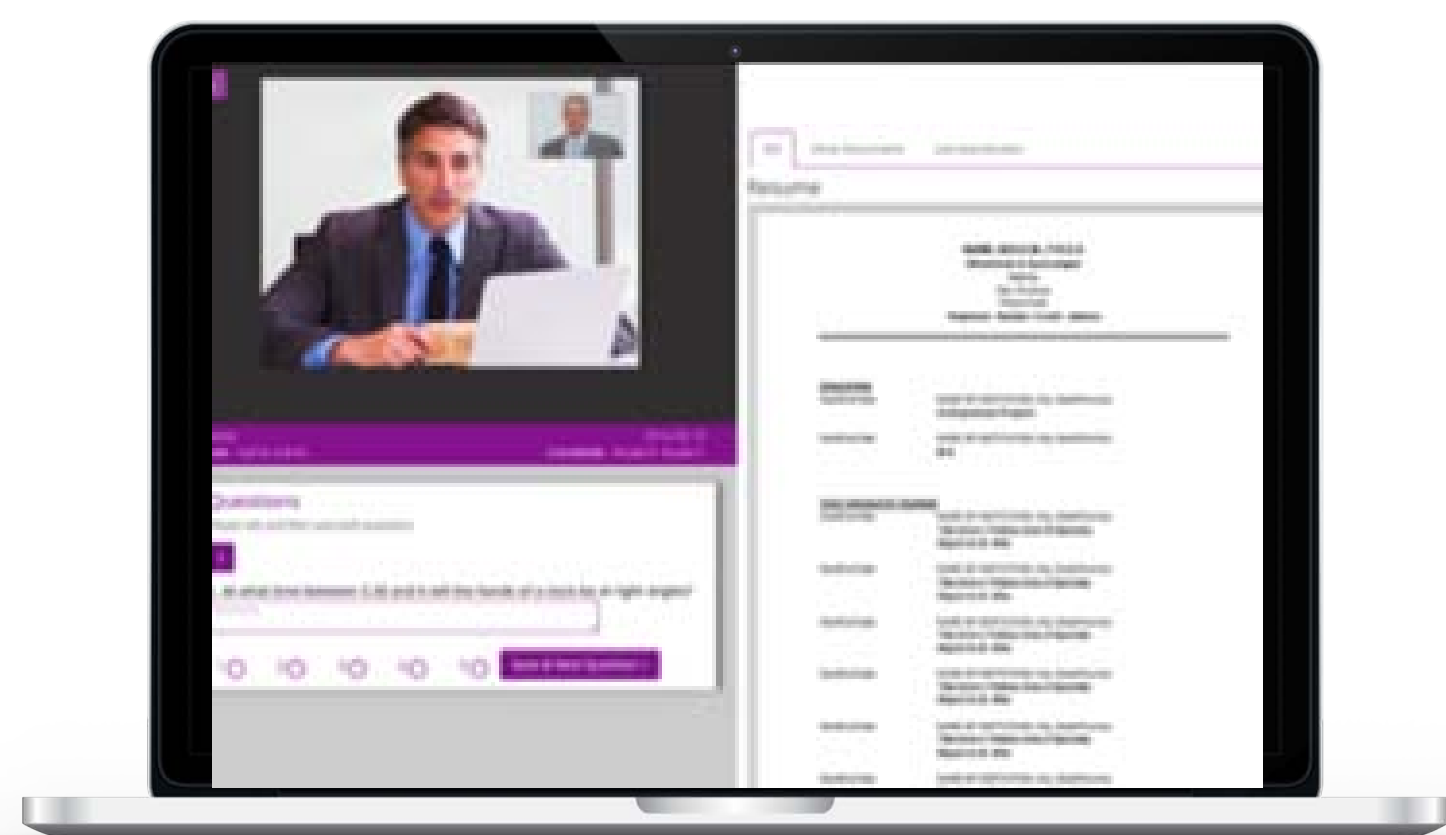
Our safe working solutions

Nureva Audio

Nureva's HDL audio conferencing solutions have the power to simultaneously process every audio source in a room and deliver a more natural sense of communication. Capable of handling 15,000 million instructions per second, they are much more powerful than conventional systems. Installation is easy. Calibration is automatic and continuous to provide optimal performance with minimal hassle. The result is the best quality sound for people in and out of the room, no matter where each is standing, how they move or what direction they are facing.

Workplace Management Solutions

GoBright provides a modular management platform for all of your meeting spaces, desk booking, and visitor management.

With a return to work, facility managers and other key stakeholders will require access to real-time data to ensure the building remains safe.
GoBright provides access to real-time occupancy data, allowing swift planning and adjustment of workplace policies.

Bespoke online video software solutions

Flabba is an intelligent video-enabled SaaS platform that provides not just video conferencing, but essential business workflow facilities such as one way or two-way video, persistent document sharing/management, meeting recording, and transcription, meeting archiving and reporting in a single platform.

This provides an adaptable solution supporting the workflows found HR business activities such as appraisals or recruitment, providing a safe alternative to face to face meetings.

Smoother 'Covid-proof' meetings

Evoko Liso revolutionises the way you meet by taking the hassle out of room bookings, whilst providing simple to deliver solutions that support current government guidelines and advice surrounding Covid-19.

Contact us:

Email: info@presentations.co.uk
Call: +44 (0) 1296642000
Website:www.presentations.co.uk