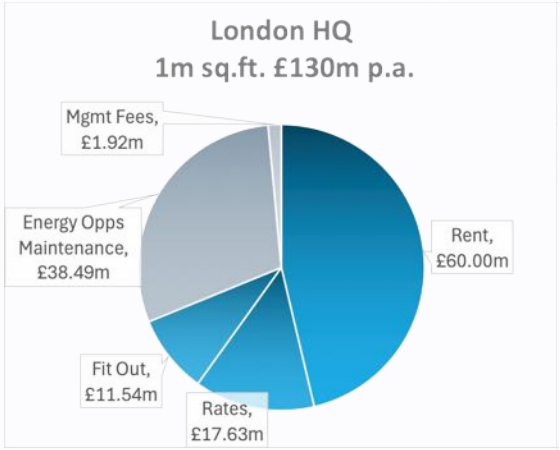
Beringar

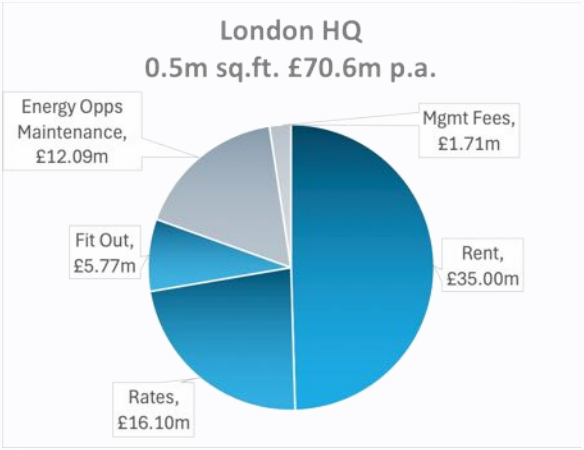
Too much, too little or the wrong space?

The hidden cost of poor space decisions

Too much, too little or the wrong space







We have been asking this question for decades

1971/73



MIT Sloan
Non-territorial office

1983



Becker et al.
Observed office occupancy

1985



Stone & Luchetti
Activity settings not just desks

1980s



DEGW/ORBIT
Buildings, organisations, workplace use and technology

1987



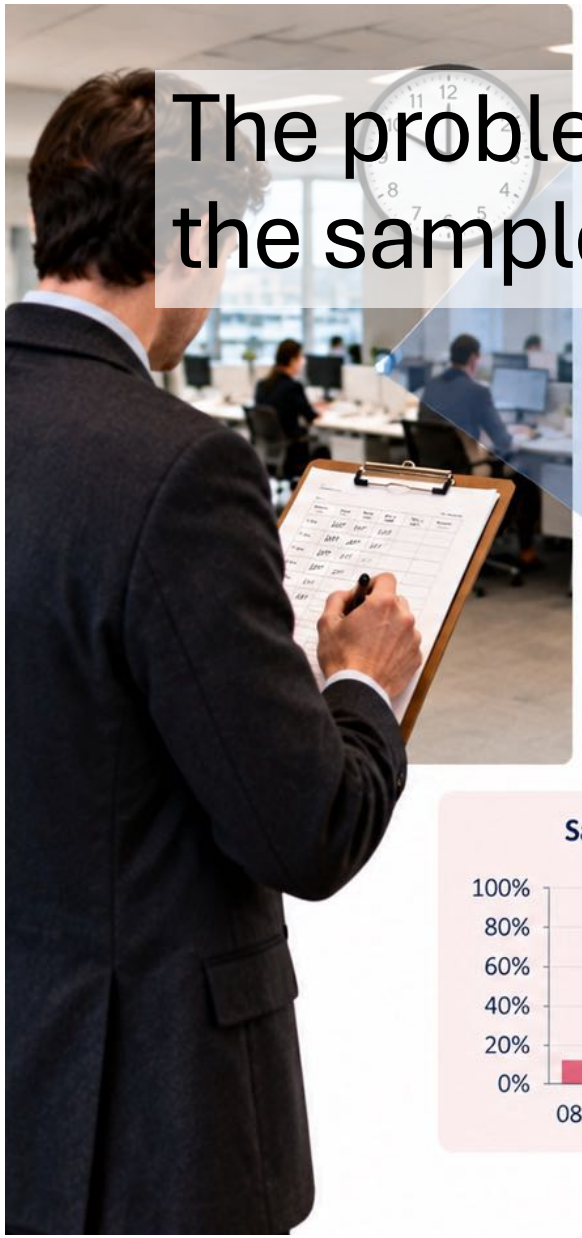
UK Property Services Agency
Occupancy audits to improve space utilisation

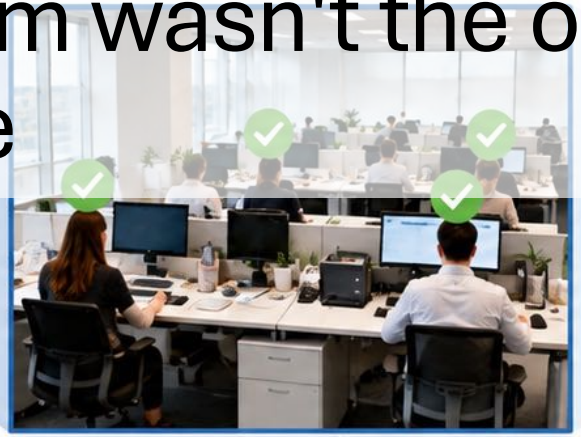


How we used to measure utilisation. UFO and the clipboard

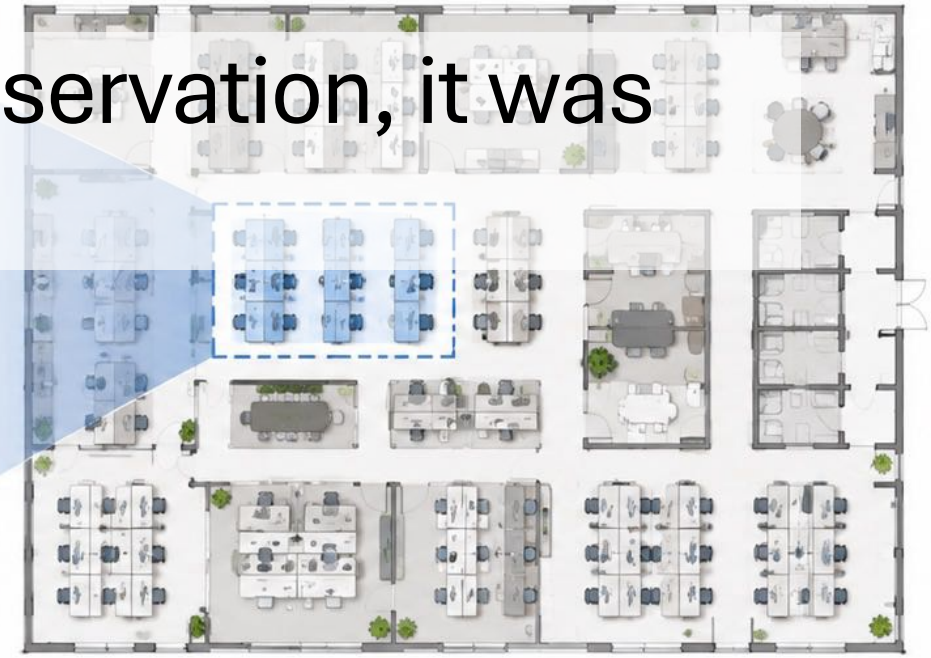


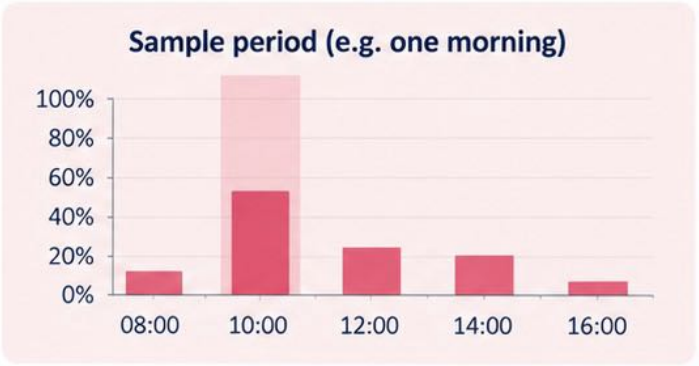
The problem wasn't the observation, it was the sample



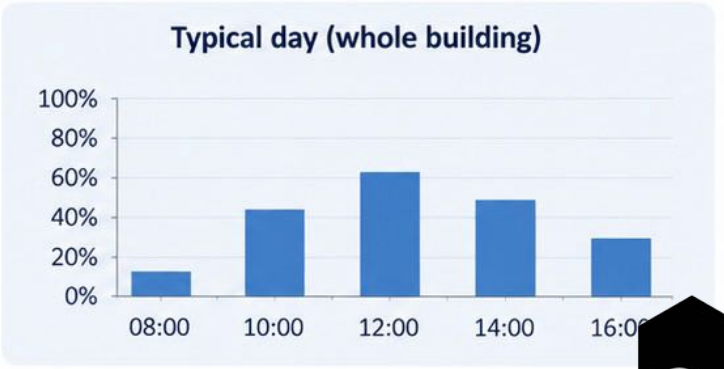


People observed	4
Desks observed	8
Observed occupancy	50%



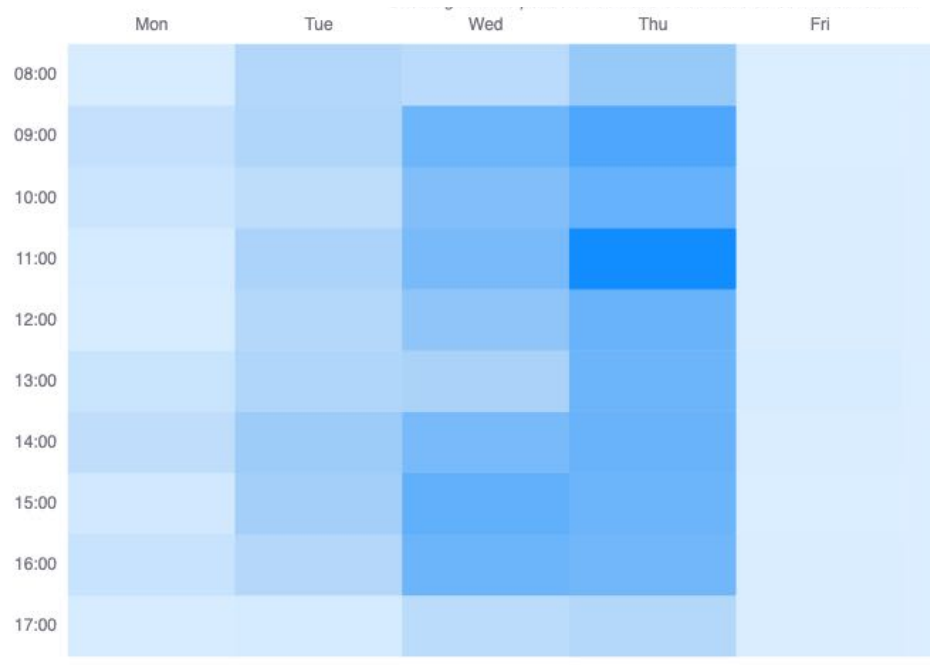


Sample-period bias



Flexible working isn't new but it has evolved



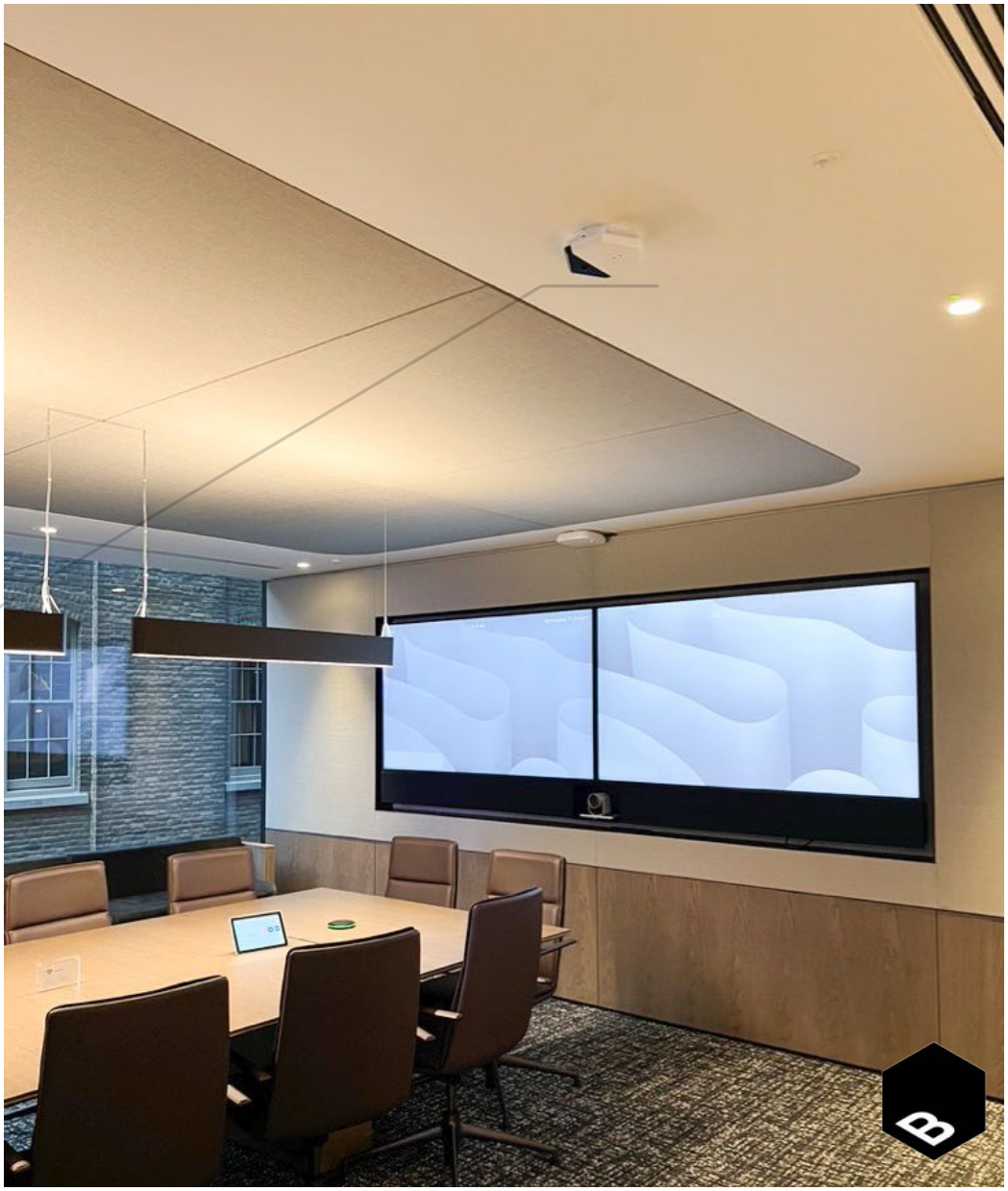


Different organisations. Different days. Different hours.

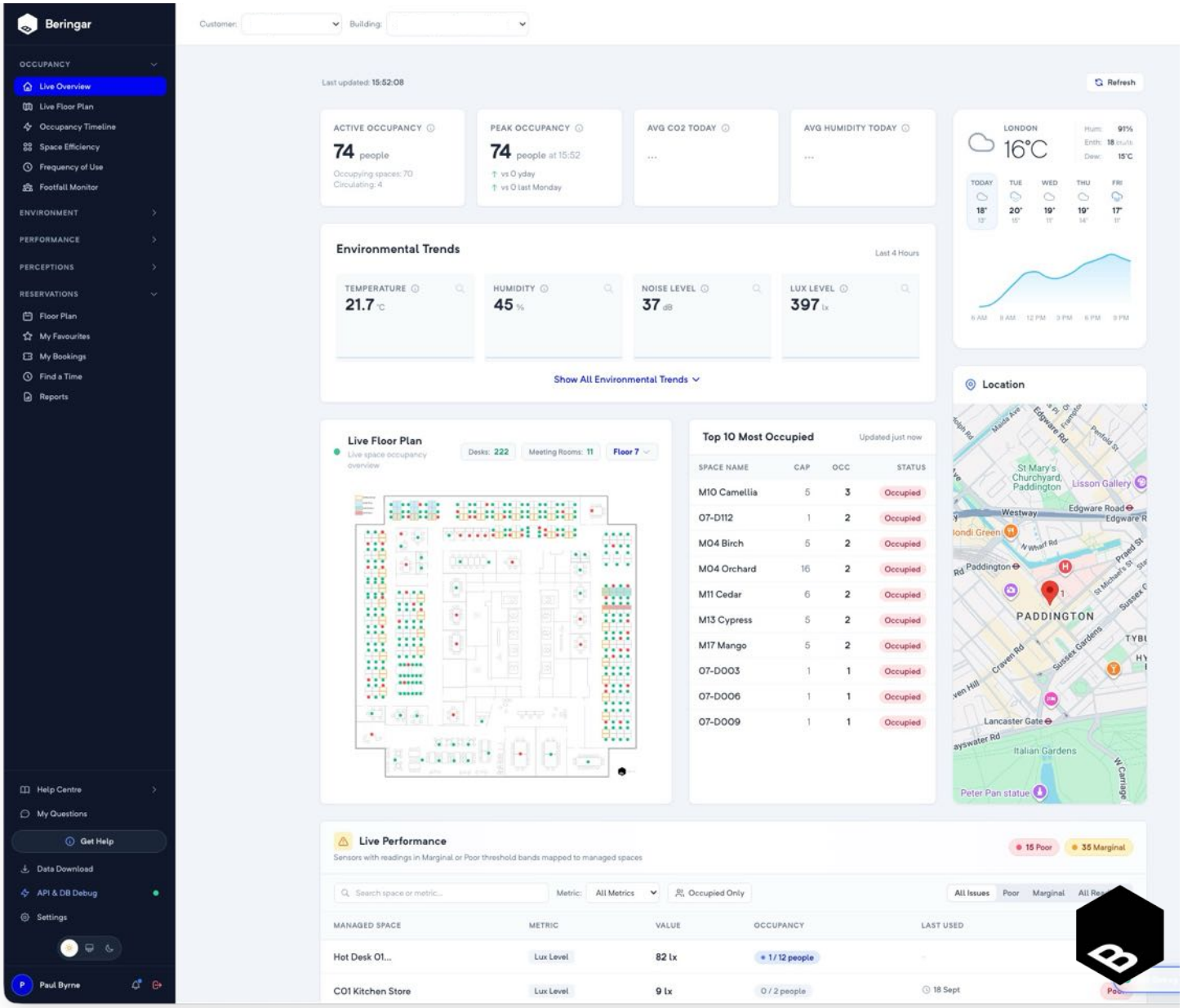
From snapshots to continuous measurement



Every minute. Every day. Over time.



More observations give a richer picture but more data isn't automatically insight



AI can help turn data into insight

But it needs data, context and history to work with

Data

Real measurements from the building



- Occupancy
- Temperature
- Humidity
- Light (lux)
- Noise
- CO_2

Context

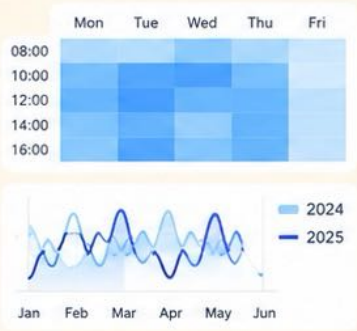
How the space is intended to be used



- Building type
- Teams and functions
- Schedules and policies
- Space type (desk, meeting, focus, collaboration)
- Configuration and changes

History

Patterns over time



- Daily, weekly and seasonal patterns
- Trends and changes
- Past occupancy and environmental conditions
- Building and portfolio history

AI

Finds patterns, relationships and anomalies



- Identify patterns
- Highlight anomalies
- Explain changes
- Test scenarios
- Answer questions in natural language

Insight

Better information for better decisions

- How much space is needed?
- When is it needed?
- What type of space is needed?
- What could change?
- What are the implications?

AI can help answer the question.
It can't manufacture the evidence.

Underused doesn’t mean empty



Looks busy.

50%

occupied.

Property decisions are difficult and public



1. Established headquarters

A large headquarters in a major financial district.



2. Move to a smaller HQ

A new, substantially smaller headquarters in a different location.



3. Additional space taken

Subsequently, additional space required in the original district.

Long-term commitment
Leasee and fit-out decisions have long consequences.

Inputs keep changing
Headcount, working patterns, strategy and technology evolve.

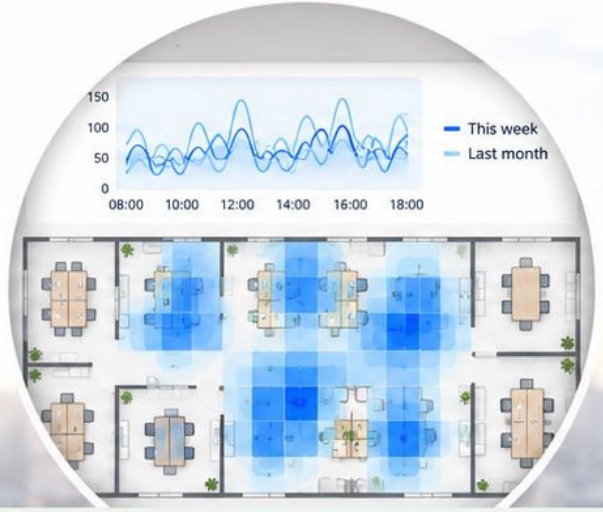
No perfect forecast
Good data reduces uncertainty but cannot eliminate it.

And it's public
Major property decisions are visible to employees, investors, the media and con

Too much, too little or the wrong space?

Better evidence for better decisions.







Measure

Real-world use of space, continuously.

Understand

Identify patterns, trends and what's changing.

Decide

How much space?
When? What type?

How much space?
Total area and capacity.

When?
Days, hours and patterns.

What type?
Desks, meeting, collaboration and support space.