

Wireless charging: the key to workplace mobility, productivity & engagement

chargifi⁺



Contents

- 3 Executive summary
- 5 Introduction
- 6 Survey insights
- 23 Our panel
- 24 Appendices
- 25 About Chargifi

Chargifi powers amazing workspaces by enabling the mass deployment and management of wireless power. With convenient access to power, employees are able to remain connected and have full freedom to move seamlessly between spaces. Chargifi provides companies with behavioral data and usage analytics with actionable insights to enable smarter decisions, whether they are an enterprise workplace or a coworking space.

More than simply convenient power, smart wireless charging enables seamless workplace experiences by connecting into your existing workplace technologies, for example, when integrated with a third party software, wireless charging can be used to identify a user, check-in to a space, launch a scheduled video meeting, or set their lighting and temperature preferences.



Executive Summary

Workplace mobility, the freedom to work in different spaces specific to how you want to work, is revolutionizing today's workplace. We asked over 2,000 employees about their workplace experience and how workplace mobility affected their day-to-day lives.

We also spoke to a panel of industry experts for their insights into our research: Joe Finlayson, Head of Enterprise Technology and Business Development at WeWork, Jon Howell, Smart Spaces and Experience Lead EMEA at Aruba, Jonathan Parkes, Head of Global Construction and Workplace Strategy at Aptiv, Owen Gregory, COO of London's leading business members club, The Clubhouse and Naveed Ahmad, Manager of Information Technology at KOA.

The results of the survey and the panel's commentary confirm just how much wireless charging has the potential to positively impact efficiency, engagement and productivity at the office by enabling real workplace mobility. Our insights reveal the genuine business benefits of incorporating a productive charging environment into the office.

Key Findings :

The right spaces for your work experience: More than half of the survey respondents felt that workplace mobility would allow them to focus better at the office. However, only **63%** of people who can work from different spaces felt that their office was fully set up to allow them to work away from their desk conveniently.

Workplace technology is an enabler: Wireless charging is a vital part of effective workplace mobility, allowing people to work away from their desks without worrying about power and cables.

Improved productivity: People are twice as likely to feel their office enables them to be productive if it correctly supports workplace mobility, such as allowing employees the freedom to choose when and where they work.

Improved engagement: People are more likely to feel they can engage and work collaboratively if their office is set up to support workplace mobility.



What does this mean for businesses?

The findings of this report clearly show that people who work in workplaces that are set up with the freedom to move between different workspaces feel more productive and more engaged. The value of this improved productivity and higher morale is high, as research has shown that [disengaged employees cost organizations between \\$450 and \\$550 billion annually](#). When you also consider that [87% of people who don't feel engaged in their workplace are looking for work](#), there is, even more, to gain from creating a more mobile environment.

Recommended actions include:

Audit your current mobility structure, identify gaps between expectations and the implementation of workplace mobility and then find solutions to improve it.

Facilitate workplace mobility through spaces that work for different tasks. For example, creating areas for quiet, focused work and others for teams to collaborate.

Use technology to allow people to work in a more mobile way, for example, smart wireless charging enables convenient power for flexible working between spaces, or intuitive check-in allows meeting rooms or hotdesks to be more productive.

Introduction

Technology is a key enabler for today's workforce, having the freedom to move around and outside of their workplace, choosing spaces based on how they want to work while remaining productive.

Workplace mobility gives employees the freedom and infrastructure to work anywhere, from any device, but simple and basic requirements like access to power can cause a barrier. The idea of workplace flexibility is also popular with the modern workforce, and [81 per cent of workers now want a job that offers flexible working](#), highlighting the demand for freedom of movement within a workplace setting.

With the demand for flexibility, a mobile workplace strategy also needs to consider the effective use of space and therefore develop '[real-estate saving strategies that capitalize on the fact that assigned desks in the workplace are only occupied about 20% to 40% of the time.](#)'

Workplace mobility is not only trending with employees but also with employers. The rising cost of real estate means that companies need a more mobile workforce to maximize utilization of their workspaces. Jon Howell comments that: "the reduction of things like ghost or zombie meetings, getting clarity between perceived utilization and true utilization are some of the biggest factors in reducing real estate costs. Until companies put things like sensors or smart wireless charging in place, they don't get sight of the true utilization of their space."

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Jon Howell, Smart Spaces and Experience Lead EMEA at Aruba.

Naveed at KOA added, "people look forward to having a flexible environment where they can focus on their work, and at the same time to be excited by where they are, rather than overburdened with their work. We spend most of our lives in our workspaces, so why not celebrate the work?"

Businesses that make workplace mobility a reality for their employees reap the rewards in more than employee engagement. True mobility in the workplace means having the right technology and all the benefits that come with it. While Wi-Fi is now a given for the mobile workers for connectivity, wireless power is becoming just as vital as nothing happens without power. Advances in technology mean that meetings can be more productive without everyone searching for powerpoints before a meeting can get started. Power is the foundation of connectivity, without power, there is no connectivity, and without connectivity, there is no productivity. Therefore, wireless charging enables real workplace mobility and is firmly placed within the broader workplace mobility strategy.

This report, based on our survey of over 2,000 people and interviews with a panel of industry experts, explores in depth the impact workplace mobility has on productivity and employees' engagement with their colleagues and their work.

A top-down view of a meeting table with two people, laptops, tablets, and smartphones. The image is semi-transparent, serving as a background for the text. The text is centered and reads:

Workplace mobility allows people to focus better

The first area of research in the study explores whether workplace mobility allows people to focus better within the office and whether modern companies should provide different types of spaces where employees can work.

In recent years, the concept of sociability and collaboration has dominated workplace design, hence the proliferation of open spaces in many offices. The focus has been on the benefits of bringing colleagues together, but little thought has considered the employees who want a quiet space to work productively.

Open spaces can be a symbol of collaboration and flat hierarchies in the workplace. Businesses assumed that employees prefer this layout, as it would make it easier to share knowledge and build relationships with colleagues. However, more recent empirical research suggests that every day, [86 minutes are lost per day due to the various disturbances of an open space workplace](#) and an open plan layout can generate a **15%** loss in productivity.

As Jonathan Parkes states: “There’s lots of research to suggest we’ve all blindly followed the Googles of the world into these kinds of open-plan workplace designs and what we’re doing is spending so much effort in selling this new concept that I don’t know if it’s working. I don’t think when you bring large amounts of people into the office together that there is a one-size-fits-all approach. Cultural and demographic factors play a significant role”.



Joe Finlayson also suggests that: “Creating a space for employees to be effective at work is a challenge. Not every employee works the same way. So, helping employees understand the space options around them, how to use the space effectively and tracking the utilization so that decision-makers are aware of how space is being used and establishing effective spaces are important steps toward helping employees use their work environments effectively.”

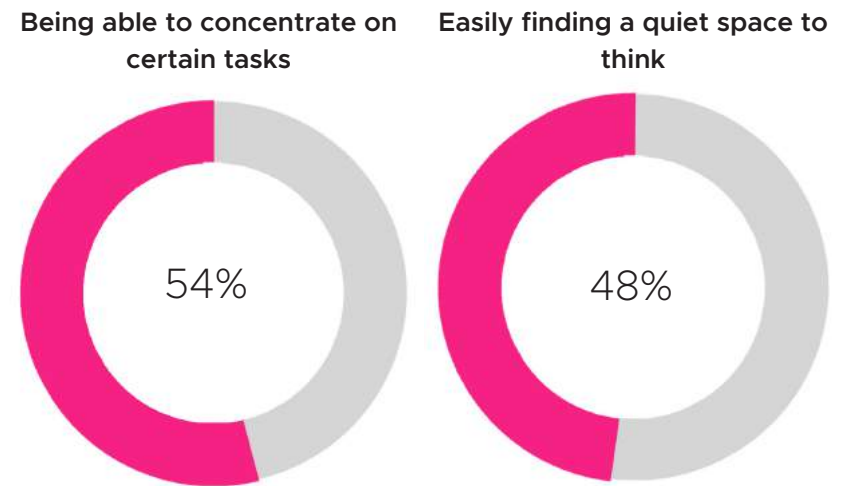
Our research suggests that people are now more enthusiastic about the idea of a quieter space to focus on tasks within the office. The top answers to the question, “Modern offices provide employees with different types of space to work in (e.g. quiet rooms, casual meeting spaces). What would you enjoy most about this?” were:

- Being able to concentrate on certain tasks** 54%
- Easily finding a quiet space to think** 48%

Forward-thinking companies should think about offering quiet zones and private working spaces to remove distractions and boost productivity.

Jon Finlayson also proposes that “mobility in the workplace can be both a benefit and possibly a drawback when it comes to productivity. It offers flexibility and freedom for employees to work “their way”. However, it also requires employees to be mature enough to utilize the space around them to do their work effectively without being distracted.”

The top answers to the question, “**Modern offices provide employees with different types of space to work in (e.g. quiet rooms, casual meeting spaces). What would you enjoy most about this?**”



18-24 year olds see workplace mobility as a way of staying active



Flexible working is a strong driver for young people in the workplace. According to the Deloitte Millennial Survey 2017, [millennials believe that flexible working arrangements support better productivity and staff engagement](#) while enhancing well-being, health and happiness. As Jonathan Parkes notes, 'for the younger generation money seems to be a secondary concern, they're interested in being stimulated and excited by the company they work for and are much more interested in the purpose of the company and how that fits with their values and beliefs'.

The top answer from 18-24-year-olds, when asked about the benefits of modern offices, was, "Moving around more during the day". For millennials, the freedom to move around during the working day is vital; they have grown up with the ability to communicate rapidly from anywhere in the world, it makes sense that they expect this to be supported in the workplace. Hotdesking and shared spaces with workbenches, touchdown points or social hubs, where staff can work in a group or on their own in a more informal setting, are more attractive to millennials than the traditional office design with fixed computers and desks.

“The younger generation....[are] interested in being stimulated and excited by the company they work for.”

Jonathan Parkes, Head of Global Construction and Workplace Strategy at Aptiv

Health and exercise are also high on the agenda for millennials, which ties in with their desire for workplace mobility. Naveed explains that they “...are more concerned about their well-being and their health, so companies need to follow this in terms of perks, with the like of gym facilities and motivational classes, for example. Our most important assets are our mind and body, and coworking spaces should be helping people with this aspect of their personal development too”. Allowing people more movement within their own office is a simple way to encourage your teams to look away from their screens and stretch their legs.

Of course, millennials aren't the only employees who benefit from workplace mobility; all employees will be more productive when they have an infrastructure in place that lets them work anywhere while being able to collaborate and communicate better with their coworkers.



Mobility is the most effective when built upon a strong technological foundation

True workplace mobility is only possible when it is built on strong technological foundations. It's not enough to preach workplace mobility without putting in place the infrastructure that enables employees to practice it.

However, analyzing the responses, it is clear that the physical workspace has not kept pace with the ideological support for workplace mobility

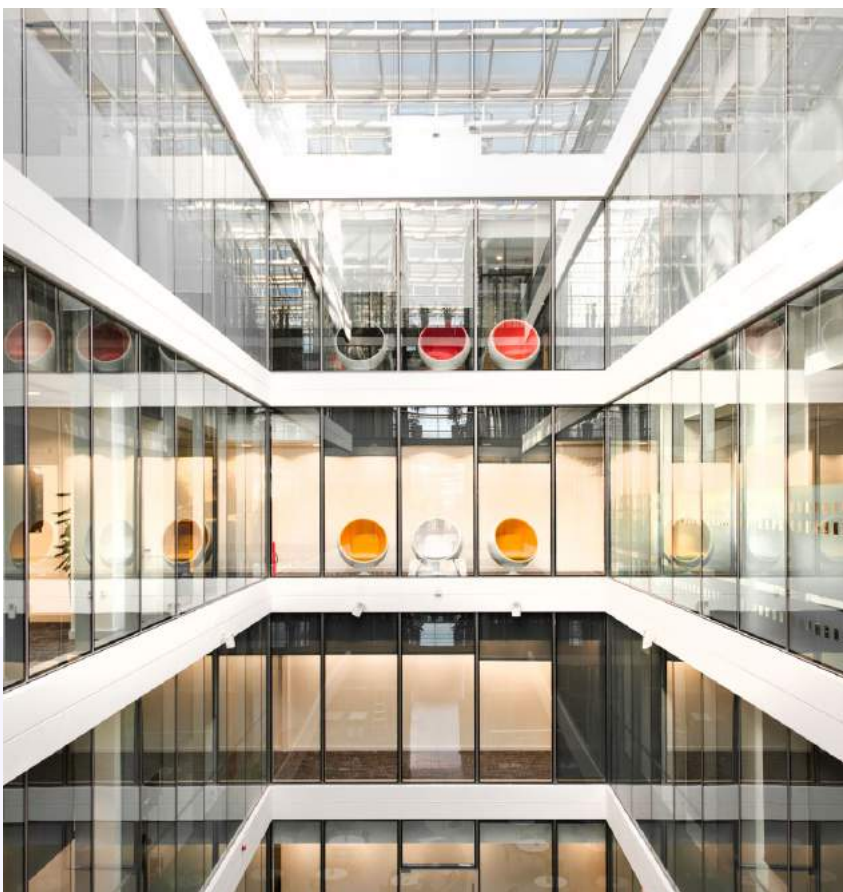
Less than half of the people surveyed felt their office setup allowed them to work away from their desks.

Only 63% of people who could work from different spaces felt that their office was fully set up to allow them to do so conveniently.

Over a third of people who work away from their desk felt their workspace setup didn't fully support this.

Crucially, when offices were properly set up to support mobility, survey respondents were **30%** more likely to agree with the statement "My current office allows me to easily engage with my coworkers, managers & my work".





Structures which support and promote workplace mobility include:

Hotdesking: an office environment where employees are not assigned a personal workspace but instead use any available desk. On average, [30 to 40 percent of an organization's space is vacant at any one time](#), creating a visible waste of company resources. Hot desking allows companies to save on real estate, by facilitating more people to be present per square foot.

Hoteling: unlike hotdesking, hoteling is an office system where employees schedule and reserve desks that they intend to use in the open workplace.

Both of these structures offer greater flexibility and potential for collaborative working. But they need to be implemented with intuitive technology alongside a strong workplace structure, to prevent employee frustrations of a desk appearing free; when in reality it isn't.

Embracing workplace mobility is about combining a work culture that promotes it with the tech that supports it, as well as having patience. New ways of working will take time and effort to embed, but the reward of higher employee engagement and productivity is worth it.

Wireless charging enables workplace mobility

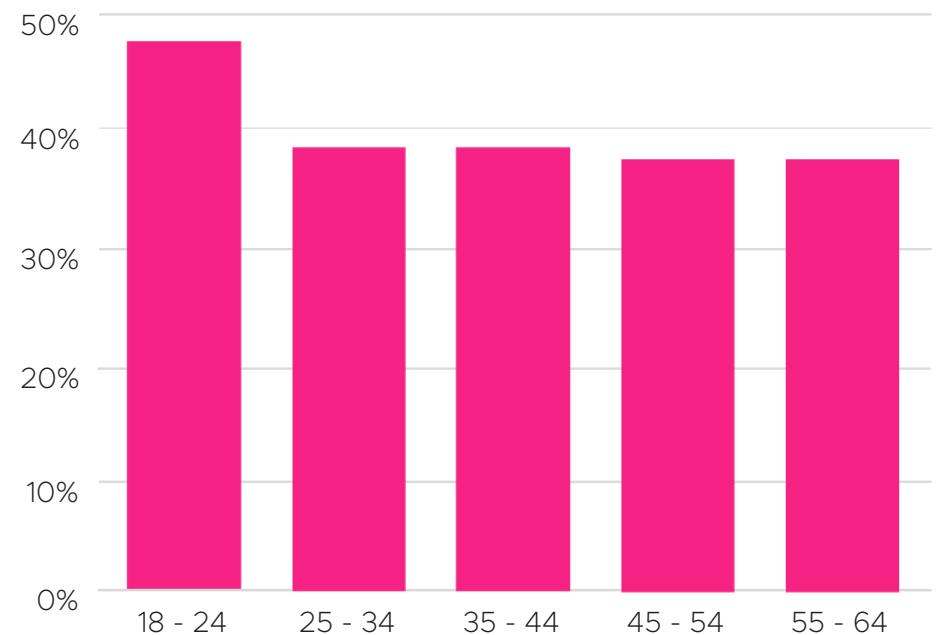
In the previous section, we've seen how workplace mobility is desired but not always facilitated. So what is the tech that needs to be in place to make it happen? One of the major pieces in the puzzle is wireless charging - the ability to charge a device when it is placed on a wireless charger, removing the need to have a plug and a cable with you at all times and be near an often inconveniently placed plug socket (near the floor). This kind of convenient tech allows employees to take full advantage of workplace mobility.

Studies have already shown that inadequate power supply is a big barrier to workplace mobility:

"Lack of ability to charge is the third strongest reason why employees are reluctant to move away from dedicated desks (**68%** of people have strong to middling concerns)" - Workplace Mobility We Work.

Of the people we surveyed, **39%** said they were able to work away from their desks to help them complete tasks. The figure also jumps to **46%** among 18-24-year-olds. These statistics could demonstrate that this group is attracted to companies that encourage workplace mobility or it could be an indicator of necessity, as this age group is more likely to be new to the workplace and require the support of other team members.

% of people who stated they can work from different spaces in their office by age



What's more, in response to the question "Wireless charging spots keep your phone & earphones charged without plugging them in. If you could use these in your office, what would be the main benefits to you?" our survey found:

51% said "not needing to carry charging cables", consequently making it easier for them to move around the office

43% said "using my phone without worrying about power", removing their reliance on their office landline so they can easily work away from their desk

44% said "having a full battery when I leave the office."

Technology has had an incredible impact on the traditional workplace and businesses need to keep up.

“We spend so much time on our mobiles; it's time to make them a strategic tool for greater efficiency and well-being.”

SmartSpace Workplace Technologies (2018).

Naveed highlights that '...technology is improving and most mobile phones these days have wireless charging, and it looks like in the next few years even laptops will have the same technology. Not being charged affects your productivity throughout the day but I can imagine a world where you can go anywhere - to an office, or a cafe - and have wireless charging spots available in the same way that Wi-Fi is available. I believe that wireless charging is the next big thing in the market.”

“I believe that wireless charging is the next big thing in the market.”

Naveed Ahmad, Manager of Information Technology at KOA

Wireless charging has the added benefit of allowing companies to make smart, informed decisions about their employees' mobility. When integrated with workplace management platforms, smart wireless charging can capture [‘insightful real-time data on employee behaviour and real-time spot availability, giving live data on which meeting rooms are available and directing employees towards under-utilized facilities’](#). It is then simple to direct employees to available spaces and ensure that employers get full use of the space they are paying for.

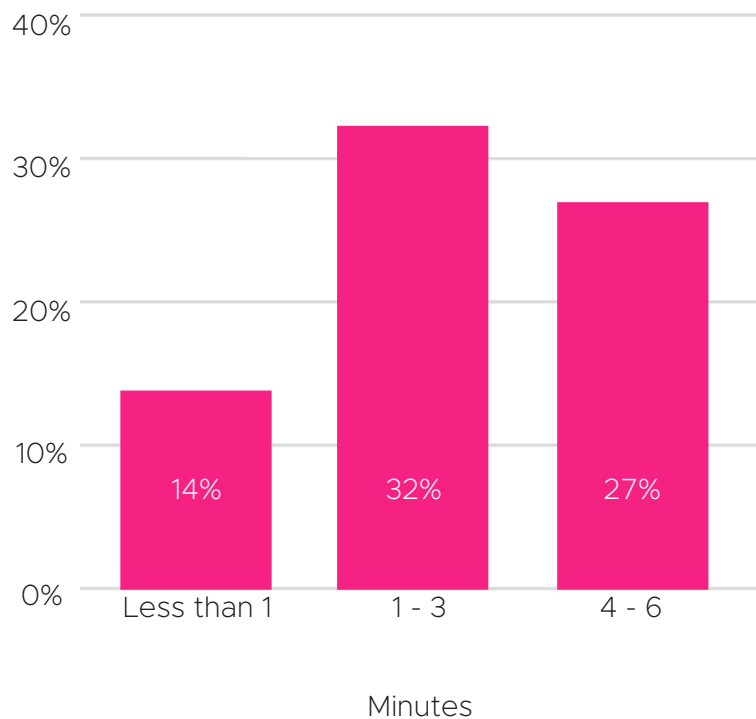
A powered phone means constant access to apps such as Slack, Dropbox and Google Drive, which allows you to work on the move. These types of apps on smartphones are the enabler and foundation for a flexible work environment that many employees now expect and want.

A modern meeting room with a glass wall and a wall covered in office-related icons. The room contains a wooden table and chairs. A large screen displays the text "What You Love".

Meeting room set up is wasting time and reducing productivity

Advances in communications and smart workplace technologies create a future workforce that is more mobile, more productive, and more flexible than ever before. However, in the present, many companies are still struggling with the basics of modern meeting room setup.

When asked, **‘When using meeting rooms, on average how long does it take you to set up the required technology (plug into power, bring up presentations on screens, dial into calls)?’, our survey respondents replied as follows:**



Poor meeting productivity is a big issue for many companies, and because employees often spend so much time in meetings, even a small amount of wasted time adds up quickly. The time wasted when struggling to set up meeting rooms for clients, or internal meetings has reportedly [cost the US economy between \\$70 to \\$283 billion](#).

Moreover, [nearly half of global employees say the biggest time-wasters are tech-related](#), such as administrative tasks, slow or glitchy software, and/or devices. Losing **5%** of the working day to tech issues equates to 21 minutes of lost productivity per day, 1.75 hours a week, or one working day per month. This comes in at a cost of [£3.4 billion to UK employers annually](#). All the more reason for companies to make sure that when they promote workplace mobility, they have the support it.

There is a clear ROI incentive to introduce efficient and time smart technologies. Smart wireless charging is one such technology that can boost productivity and streamline the working day, often by working in harmony with another tech. For example, when an employee enters a meeting room and places their phone on the wireless charging spot, their phone is recognized. This then triggers the meeting room booking online (showing that the room is occupied) and triggers connections to required software so the meeting can begin, with no wasted time or unnecessary wires. Then when the employee leaves and removes their phone from the spot, the room recognizes the session has ended and the meeting room becomes available again on the system.

People want access to convenient power in meeting rooms without having to take turns with plugs or carry cumbersome cables that become trip hazards. As Owen Gregory says: "...one issue I have at the moment is cables. I hate cables. Talking about our meeting rooms specifically, there is one place in the middle of the desk where people are supposed to plug cables in, but it doesn't work as it should, so people end up taking cables out from behind the screens and it just creates a big mess of wires. This is a big benefit that Chargifi has by getting rid of the wires". Wireless charging solves these issues by placing power where workers want and need it.



Technology meets design

Connecting into systems that allow for seamless and engaging actions will enable employees to carry out their jobs more efficiently. Using IoT within the workplace can not only make employees more likely to engage with their coworkers but will also make it easier to measure their productivity by using real-time data.

Using IoT also gives potential employees an incentive to work with you, '91% [of the surveyed 16-23-year-olds] say that a [firm's level of tech integration would be a deciding factor in joining as an employee.](#)'

There are any number of technologies in the digital workplace that can be used to:

Find and book spaces away from their desk like meeting rooms.

Power up their devices, snacking on power from space to space. Stay connected to other team members through instant messenger and automatically let them know they're not available

Be securely and reliably connected to Wi-Fi in general

Take conference calls easily away from their desks via their mobiles

Effective communication is critical for a productive team, and luckily, there are many advanced technological solutions which can suit businesses of all sizes and support office mobility.

Companies that embrace digital workplaces also [tend to be 21% more profitable](#), as research from CBRE's Live, Work, Play report reveals that [69% of millennials will trade other work packages for quality of workspace](#). The connected nature of Chargifi's wireless charging, allows wireless charging to fit seamlessly into the IoT environment that is created by an effective digital workplace strategy.





Providing the right infrastructure for workplace mobility increases productivity

74% of people who felt their office was adequately set up to allow them to work away from their desks conveniently were more likely to agree with the statement “My current office allows me to be as productive as possible”.

Tellingly, only **35%** of people whose offices were NOT set up to allow them to work away from their desk conveniently agreed with that statement.

Most leadership teams are happy to acknowledge that employees are affected by their surroundings, but accepting that a poor workplace may be bad for employees and the reason for poor employee performance [may be awkward for those who see cost reduction as the only path to greater efficiency](#).

Cost reduction may be one path to greater efficiency but investing in tech that enables workplace mobility, such as wireless charging, supports employees to be more efficient. Employees rely on their phones throughout the working day, and wireless charging allows workers to stay productive while they are mobile. For example, Joe Finlayson presents the argument that “mobile solutions are simply another tool that enables people to work how, when, where they want. However, these tools need to provide value in solving a problem, or else they won’t be adopted”.

“ We see this technology as an end-to-end solution, we don’t just see it as wireless charging, we see this technology as being able to do multiple things.”

Jonathan Parkes, Head of Global Construction and Workplace Strategy at Aptiv

Jonathan Parkes comments that the benefits of wireless charging are twofold: ‘We want people to charge their phones but we also want a seamless experience so if you’re in a meeting room and you want to start a Zoom meeting, you put your phone on there and it starts, taking it to the next level so things just work. So I think we see this technology as an end-to-end solution, we don’t just see it as wireless charging, we see this technology as being able to do multiple things, whether it’s switching on lights or air conditioning or something else”.

As we have seen, wireless charging can enable other workplace benefits and trigger many actions that help employees be more productive. For example, it can activate a video conference when a phone is placed on the desk and alert a room booking system of your presence. Providing the right infrastructure for workplace mobility, which includes other technology that can complement wireless charging, means that you encourage high productivity throughout the working day.

Providing the right infrastructure for workplace mobility increases employee engagement



The most engaged employees help to inform new ways of working. Disengaged employees, on the other hand, are a drag on the business. [87% of people who don't feel engaged in their workplace are looking for work](#), and disengaged employees cost organizations between \$450 and \$550 billion annually. Strategically working to reduce the number of disengaged employees in your business not only benefits your overall workplace morale but provides a clear ROI incentive.

Our survey found that people whose offices support workplace mobility are **63%** more likely to agree with the statement: "My current office allows me to easily engage with my coworkers, managers & my work".

The data shows that workers who are highly satisfied with their workplace also demonstrate higher levels of engagement. [Only 13% of global workers are highly engaged and highly satisfied with their workplace.](#) The positive finding, however, is the correlation between engagement and workplace satisfaction, which indicates that changing the work environment can be [an essential tool for organizations to deploy as part of a strategy to improve engagement.](#)

The most engaged employees have reported greater [flexibility to make choices about where and how they work](#). So if strategies are put in place to support mobility, employees who need to focus on an important project or collaborate with their peers are free to choose spaces that support those behaviours and hence feel more engaged and be more productive. Wireless charging should be an integral part of any workplace mobility strategy; low battery power and reliance on plug socket availability can create anxiety and clutter for your employees, so alleviating these concerns should increase engagement.

Jonathan Parkes explains that they see Chargifi as ‘...part of a bigger ecosystem of technologies that allow people to collaborate and to book spaces and to connect through their mobile devices as simple as possible. What we’re trying to remove is the workplace drag, all those barriers for people to collaborate and to work.’ Wireless charging spots offer a solution to this problem; they can charge devices without the need to untangle wires or access plugs. When you install wireless charging points in your workplace, you allow your staff to move around the space untethered, all the better to engage with their fellow workers.

In conclusion, workplaces that have the right culture and infrastructure will be well placed to take advantage of technology that encourages mobility, from virtual reality and artificial intelligence that make virtual meetings as impactful as face-to-face meetings to smart rooms that use voice recognition to connect users in multiple locations seamlessly.

The expectations of the workforce will continue to evolve in line with the technology they see and use in their personal life. It, therefore, makes sense for brands to embrace this movement toward greater workplace mobility; not only do employees expect it, but mobility can boost their productivity and engagement with the rest of their coworkers.



About the panel



Joe Finlayson is the Head of Enterprise Technology Business Development and Alliances at WeWork. Joe is a seasoned professional with over 16 years of experience working for Fortune 100 companies (including Intel, Dell & Microsoft) as well as SaaS start-ups.



Jon Howell is the Smart Spaces and Experience Lead EMEA at Aruba. Jon has spent the last decade in business development and management of WLAN products and is a technical evangelist around wireless mobility and market trends surrounding cloud networking and SDN (including mobility and distributed networks).



Jonathan Parkes is the Head of Global Construction and Workplace Strategy at Aptiv. He has a degree in Construction Management and is a subject matter expert around intelligent building technology integration with a focus on employee experience and data-driven continuous innovation.



Owen Gregory is the Chief Operating Officer of The Clubhouse, London's leading business members club. Owen has been with the The Clubhouse since 2012 and comes from a sports background having previously worked for the Rugby Football Union.



Naveed Ahmad is the Manager of Information Technology at KOA. KOA is a unique real estate concept that aims to bring a new definition to residential living in the UAE. Founded by Mohammed Bin Zaal. KOA has been created with the aim of leading Dubai's real estate industry into a new era of cultural and urban enrichment that contributes to the soul of a dynamic new Dubai.

Appendix

Methodology

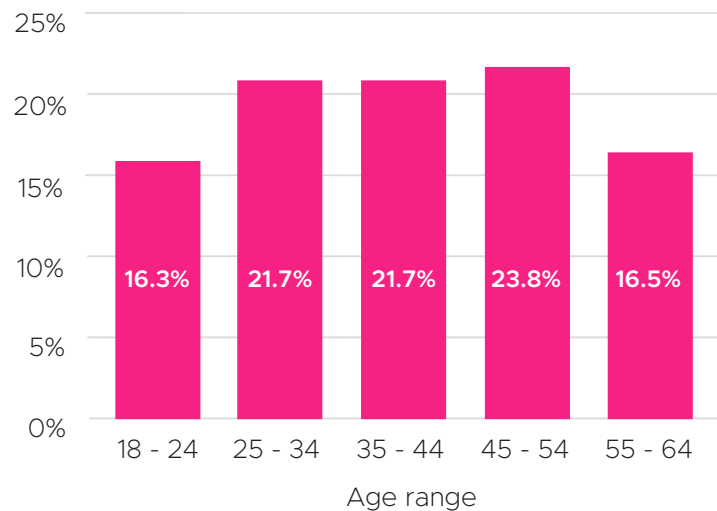
We surveyed the following numbers of people:

UK - 1043

US - 1010

To participate fully in the survey, respondents had to confirm that they had a desk-based job in an office to ensure we were targeting the right segment of the workforce.

Of those surveyed, 47% were female and 53% were male. The age range of our final sample was:



Survey questions

Our respondents were asked a list of 9 questions referring to their charging needs in relation to their:

primary workplace

workplace mobility

meeting room setup

workplace technology

levels of productivity and engagement.

If you would like a list of these questions and the results, please contact Chargifi by email through hello@chargifi.com.

Definitions

Where we refer to a generation by name, our definitions have been taken from the Pew Research Center

About Chargifi



Chargifi provides convenient power in amazing spaces. We deliver a market-leading cloud management platform that enables the smart mass deployment of wireless charging; Wireless charging SmartSpots connect to the cloud, enabling the remote management of an IoT network of convenient wireless power. Behavioural and usage analytics in the Chargifi dashboard help understand how spaces are being used, and when integrated into existing systems through API or SDK, smart experiences can be triggered to improve user experience.

This valued and connected service provides a unique touch point and value exchange opportunity that can impact engagement, satisfaction and overall customer experience, which in turn drives revenue. Chargifi is deployed by over 90 organisations in 21 countries and is backed by leading technology investors including; Intel Capital, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Techstars, Accelerated Digital Ventures, firstminute capital and R/GA Ventures.

Chargifi works with all types of Wireless Charging, and we are industry-leading members of both the Wireless Power Consortium and the AirFuel Alliance.