



## Building a visionary, agile workspace that showcases the best of Ricoh's digital innovations

Equipped with leading-edge workplace analytics, IoT sensors, and collaboration solutions, the new Ricoh Digital Experience Centre will unleash employee creativity and support pioneering R&D work.

### COMPANY & CHALLENGE

Creating the workplace of the future is a driving passion for the Ricoh Digital Experience (RDx) team. Made up of data analysts, software developers, and user experience specialists, the team builds next-generation SaaS solutions, such as the workplace experience platform RICOH Spaces. When the chance came to move to a new location, the RDx team seized a golden opportunity to plan their own dynamic, visionary workspace.

Since its formation in 2015, RDx had been based at a site just outside Birmingham city centre, occupying a functional but limited workspace. For example, the company had deployed the desk and meeting room booking functions in RICOH Spaces at the site, but without dedicated collaboration zones, and there was no full-scale rollout of occupancy and environmental sensors to monitor the work environment in real time.

Nathan Thomas, Head of Product at RDx, explains: "We are a group of creative problem solvers who thrive on collaboration and being able to test out our latest solutions in real-life scenarios. We reached the point where our old site was no longer working for us, nor did it express that we are a global innovation centre."



The adoption of hybrid working following the pandemic provided another reason to re-think the workspace. Data collected in RICOH Spaces showed that on average only 50 percent of the 6,700 square feet available was now being used. Maintaining such a large site was no longer a sensible, cost-efficient option.

But RDx was also keen to attract employees back to the office as much as possible, as Nathan Thomas explains: “Getting people back on site was important to feed off each other’s energy and share ideas, and to build a sense of togetherness. But you can’t simply mandate attendance; persuasion works better than compulsion. To attract people back, we needed to ensure they could do things in the office that they couldn’t do at home.”

RDx decided to downsize, and found the ideal location at the Rum Runner Works, formerly the site of a world-famous nightclub in the centre of Birmingham. The next question was how to create a workspace that would encourage productivity and employee engagement, and form a showcase for Ricoh’s digital innovations.



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*Nathan Thomas, Head of Product at RDx*



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Nathan Thomas, Head of Product at RDx



## SOLUTION

Over the course of a year, RDx worked with Ricoh Europe's facilities management team to design and implement layouts, technologies, and furnishings for the new Digital Experience Centre. Half the size of the previous site, the new office features 22 desks and three meeting rooms, one of which doubles as a recording space. As well as the RDx team, the site is home to product managers, and to sales and admin teams from Ricoh Europe.

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The Digital Experience Center features a full-scale deployment of RICOH Spaces, including new features that are still under development. Employees use an iOS or Android app or web browser to book desks, meeting rooms, and Smart Lockers, and can access cutting-edge 3D maps to navigate the site. Alternatively, they can check availability and reserve meeting rooms on conveniently placed Logitech Tap Scheduler digital panels.

Occupancy sensors throughout the site provide real-time data on how many people are using the office, where they are working, and how they engage with the space. Meanwhile, environmental sensors track temperature, humidity, and CO2 levels, and feed data into analytics dashboards. One key metric is a comfort index that measures CO2 against fresh oxygen and detects when levels will impact employee wellbeing and concentration. The RDx team can then adjust HVAC settings to maintain a pleasant, productive work environment.

While the meeting rooms are fully equipped with audiovisual solutions based on Logitech and LG Technologies reflecting what Ricoh provides to customers, RDx is also taking a more informal approach to group working. Half of the new office will function as a collaboration zone, with two giant moveable RICOH Interactive Whiteboards (IWBs) with touchscreen capabilities to aid brainstorming sessions.

"Having people sit round a table in a meeting room often feels too formal and doesn't always encourage lively discussions," adds Nathan Thomas. "Bringing in the IWBs while we gather round on sofas creates a much more relaxed and informal huddle space, where people are comfortable bouncing ideas about. And we can bring remote participants into the discussion if they're not in the office that day."



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Nathan Thomas, Head of Product at RDX



## BENEFITS

At the new Digital Experience Centre, RDX has formed an agile, futuristic workspace that facilitates innovation and productivity. For example, employees can easily locate onsite colleagues via RICOH Spaces to work together and keep development projects moving forwards. Enhanced imagery of the meeting rooms and collaboration zones displayed in RICOH Spaces helps users to identify the best space for their needs.

Nathan Thomas adds: "The IoT sensors and analytics give us eyes and ears over the whole workplace. We can see areas used most often and those that are underutilised, and make continuous enhancements; for example, by adding an IWB to an underused area. And if someone books a room then changes plans, the sensors detect non-activity and make the space available again. We've created a data-driven intelligent workplace."

The new site will serve as a centre for research and development for new SaaS solutions, with RDX able to implement and gain hands-on experience using new functionality before going to market. For example, the RDX team is working closely with colleagues from RICOH 3L, a research institute in Japan, to integrate next-generation AI elements into RICOH Spaces to foster employee creativity and fulfilment.

With a central location and excellent transport links, the Digital Experience Centre will demonstrate RDX's workplace innovations to potential clients and the wider Ricoh organisation. During experience days and research events, visitors will be able to trial the solutions and offer feedback. "It's more than a showroom," adds Nathan Thomas. "It's a living facility where we are actually using and continuously optimising the solutions."

Furthermore, the dynamic workplace will not only encourage employees back to the office, but also act as a valuable

recruitment tool for RDx, as Nathan Thomas notes: "It's a competitive market for digital talent, and that makes our employee value proposition really important. Having a city centre office equipped with leading-edge technologies that enhance the employee experience will help us to attract and retain the best people."

Nathan Thomas concludes: "Creating our own workspace has given us invaluable insight into the challenges that clients are facing around bringing people back to the office and improving collaboration and efficiency. It's allowed us to find ways to transform and optimise the workplace that we can deploy on future projects at client locations. The new office will be vital as we continue to define the workplace of the future."

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## ABOUT RICOH

Ricoh is a leading provider of integrated digital services and print and imaging solutions designed to support digital transformation of workplaces, workspaces and optimise business performance.

Headquartered in Tokyo, Ricoh's global operation reaches customers in approximately 200 countries and regions, supported by cultivated knowledge, technologies, and organisational capabilities nurtured over its 85-year history. In the financial year ended March 2023, Ricoh Group had worldwide sales of 2,134 billion yen (approx. 16.0 billion USD).

It is Ricoh's mission and vision to empower individuals to find Fulfillment through Work by understanding and transforming how people work so we can unleash their potential and creativity to realise a sustainable future.

For further information, please visit [www.ricoh-europe.com](http://www.ricoh-europe.com)

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