2024 Report

Workplace Technology

Trends & Insights

Uncovering the trends, insights, challenges, and opportunities across the workplace technology industry in Australia in 2024.

PRO AV SOLUTIONS

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Introduction

As we look ahead to 2024, the Pro AV Solutions Workplace Technology team has collated its top trends for the year and engaged some of the industry's brightest minds to garner their insights.

"Moving into the new year, it's clear that workplace technology will still be front and centre when it comes to driving innovation, culture, and a mature hybrid approach for many organisations."

Ben Daffy, Director – Modern Workplace
Pro AV Solutions

With more than 25 years of working with Australian businesses, government, and education, the Pro AV Solutions team is in a unique position to evaluate the current workplace technology landscape against both historical and emerging practices and technologies.

To prepare this report, our team has engaged with internal and external stakeholders to gauge the present challenges, opportunities, and trends that will shape workplace technology across Australia in 2024.

We've also sought out some of the industry's leaders to provide their valued insights and analysis on what lies ahead this year.

At the outset, a few things became clear as we developed this report.

Our customers are still navigating and resolving what hybrid work means in their organisations, and, at the same time focused on clear strategies and technologies that will drive success for hybrid teams long-term.

Most are acutely aware of the impact of AI, both culturally and technologically, that will become evident in the coming months and years. At the same time, most are also keenly focused on achieving sustainable outcomes in every aspect of the workplace.

This presents several exciting opportunities for organisations prepared to embrace innovation and emerging technologies and practices.

We hope you find the content in the following pages enlightening and relevant.

TREND 1
AI

The 2024 Landscape

AI was certainly THE hot topic for 2023, and many experts are now focused on 2024 as the year in which we will move past the hype to experience and evaluate the impact of AI in material terms.

As the technology proliferates across the business, government, education, and other verticals via existing key platforms, as well as augmenting the development process, organisations need to quickly mature their understanding and approaches to the management of AI as part of their digital transformation and cybersecurity strategies.

Organisational governance around AI is rapidly becoming a priority to ensure Trust, Risk, and Security Management are addressed to control the authenticity and accuracy of AI models applied across the enterprise.

This landscape also suggests that the continued democratisation of generative AI and associated information and functions will allow organisations to focus on the skills-based approach to workforce and workplace management.

95%
of workers see value in working with generative AI
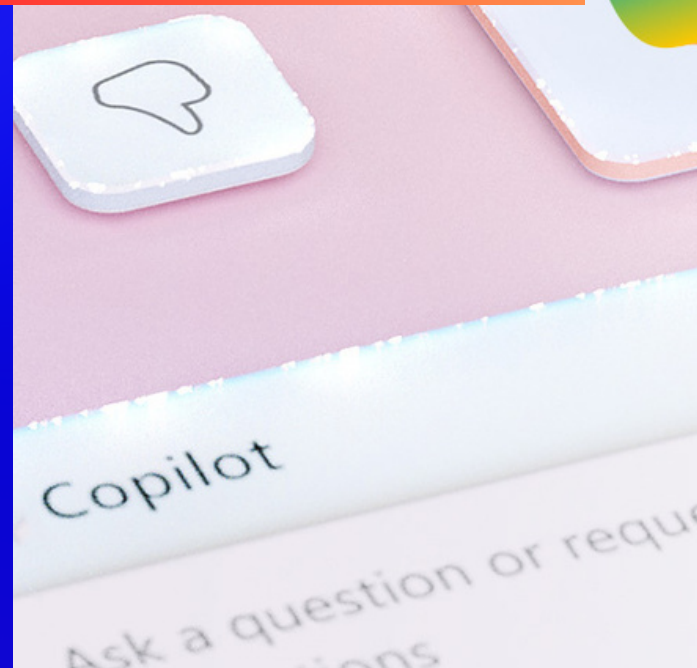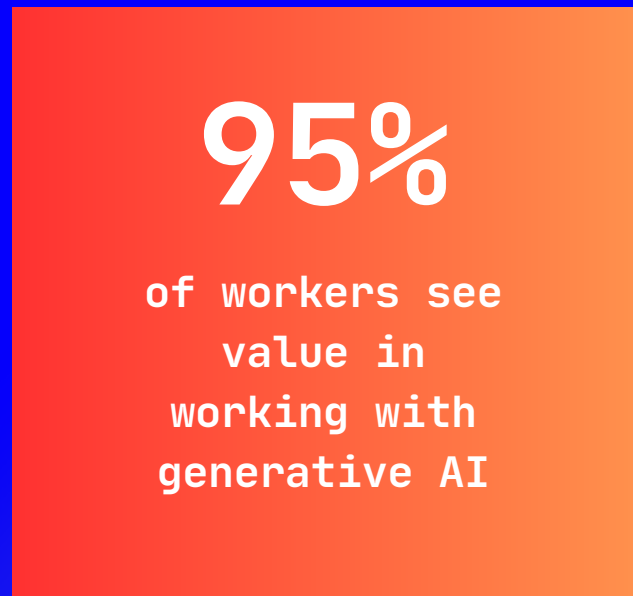
Source: Accenture – Work, workforce, workers: Reinvented in the age of generative AI, 2024

Intelligent Platforms and Applications

The augmentation of business applications and platforms with AI and connected data will be seen at scale for the first time in 2024. From CRM and ERP systems all the way to platforms such as Microsoft 365, the availability of AI tools inside the workplace apps we already live in, leveraging the data we already have will be transformational in many respects.

Case in point, the much-hyped "Co-Pilot" from Microsoft [now generally available for enterprise customers] in 365 will introduce a range of productivity automation and "intelligence" within the apps used by millions every day. Based on the information currently at hand, Microsoft plans to transform nearly every aspect of its ecosystem by leveraging AI.

✳ **"Digital technologies, including AI, could be worth $315 billion to the Australian economy by 2028"**

Source: Artificial Intelligence Report

Solving Challenges with AI Integration

As AI technology also augments unified communications, building automation, and environmental software systems that power the modern workplace today, substantial opportunities are now on hand to leverage integrations that address many of the challenges that property and ICT teams and leaders are presently facing, such as hybrid workforce management and sustainability.

Microsoft Signature Teams Room @ Pro AV Solutions Melbourne Showroom

Intelligent Devices & Peripherals

As AI-driven software transforms the engine room of the workplace in 2024, a range of next-gen devices and peripherals that connect to these applications will help transform many of the interactive and collaborative aspects of the workplace as well as the physical environment.

Camera Systems

Intelligent conferencing camera systems are now available from multiple leading vendors, combining AI-driven facial recognition and sensory technology and innovations from platforms such as Microsoft Teams to transform the traditional video conferencing experience.

Microphones

A new generation of microphone systems can now leverage the AI within Microsoft Teams and other UC platforms to provide a new dimension of inclusivity, improved compliance

capabilities and enhanced user experience. Features like more accurate subtitles and transcriptions with attribution offer excellent value to many organisations.

10:00

10:15

👤 6

🌡 16°

Intelligent Sensors

Outside of the collaboration space, improved sensory devices now integrate via established network infrastructure to provide the data inputs that AI-augmented facilities platforms can use to manage, automate, and optimise nearly every aspect of the physical workplace.

💧 51%

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Insights
Andrew Higgs
Microsoft

Andrew is the Regional Solutions Specialist Lead – Teams Rooms Asia: Australia, Asia-Pacific, GCR, Japan, and India for Microsoft, and a recognised thought leader in the workplace collaboration field.

"In 2024, Microsoft Teams Rooms will continue to evolve and expand. Microsoft is grateful for its customers embracing Teams Rooms in their workplaces and is committed to delivering even more value in the future.

Recently, at Microsoft Ignite, several exciting announcements were made, including the introduction of Intelligent Meeting Spaces with Microsoft's Intelliframe and Intelligent Audio. These features are transforming the way businesses work by integrating AI into their daily routines.

With Intelligent Teams Rooms solutions, combined with Microsoft's M365 Copilot or Teams Premium, it becomes easier to understand who in the room is speaking. Gone are the days of squinting at a video tile and wondering, "Who is that... who is talking right now..."

In the coming year, the focus for Microsoft Teams Rooms will be on leveraging AI more in meeting spaces, expanding our customer base, and helping customers upgrade their BYOD spaces to native Teams Rooms.

This will enable them to take full advantage of next-generation AI features. We are dedicated to delivering the best possible meeting experience and are excited to see what the future holds for Teams Rooms."

TREND 2
Sustainability

With continued innovation in manufacturing processes, combined with more robust levels of accountability for delivering sustainable outcomes across the modern workplace, 2024 should see further opportunities arise to mitigate the environmental impact of workplace technologies.

Many ICT and property leaders are now faced with the paradox of more rapid development cycles when it comes to workplace technology, while prioritising the reduction of waste and environmental impact across their organisation.

In 2024, there are now several ways to ensure that these objectives dont need to be diametrically opposed, with improved opportunity to resource hardware responsibly, and structure investments in workplace technology to avoid waste of functional hardware.

42%

plastic parts in Rally Bar Huddle are made with post-consumer recycled plastic
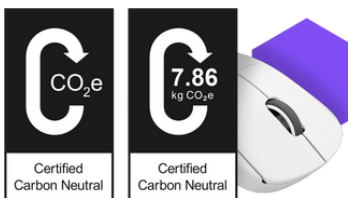
Supply Chain

Leading tech brands are making substantial inroads in terms of transitioning to more circular materials and providing a more transparent approach to the carbon impact of tech products.

Logitech, as an example, now has its entire portfolio Certified Carbon Neutral, and across an increasing range of products, it provides a carbon impact number.

These products have undergone a detailed analysis to determine the total amount of carbon emitted during manufacturing, transportation, use, and end-of-life.

Display manufacturer Samsung, as another example, has made significant progress in transitioning to renewables [18% increase since 2020] and reducing On-campus greenhouse gas emissions [24% decrease since 2020] as well as many other improvements as part of their climate change response.

Life Cycle Optimisation

With more businesses seeking to minimise the environmental impact of their workplace technology hardware, many are now considering alternative investment and asset management approaches such as AVaaS [AV as a Service] that offer the ability to extend the lifecycle of hardware without introducing additional performance risk or expense.

Sources
1. Logitech Climate Action
2. Samsung Display Sustainability Report 2023

Insights

John Corbett
Corbco

John is a leading Australian Corporate Real Estate Strategy & Execution consultant with over 20 years of experience in Enterprise Workplace Transformation.

"I believe we will continue to observe a greater emphasis placed on the physical workplace as a more direct contributor to now established hybrid working models, particularly as "structured hybrid" grows in popularity.

With robust industry recognised ESG metrics starting to emerge, we are beginning to observe a greater, more tangible emphasis being placed on ESG.

While landlords are continuing to invest heavily in the sustainability space, the occupier contributions to date have largely been limited to cherry picking the most green friendly buildings, and this is only going to grow.

However, I believe we will begin to see the ESG conversation slowly begin to shift from the "building" to the "premises," and occupiers (particularly those larger ones) have to find ways to make a more direct impact on ESG.

From a user experience standpoint, while the significance of workplace experience will continue to hold true, building quality and building location will emerge as the differentiators of choice as the flight to quality conversation continues.

The challenge emerging is the timing of the supply pipeline to meet these new evolving demands."

Insights

Steve Gray
Appspace

Steve is Director of Global Reseller Partnerships for AppSpace Inc. and holds a BA in Psychology in addition to his substantial expertise and experience in the workplace technology and communications field.

"In the landscape of workplace technology in 2024, a significant trend gaining traction is the consolidation of disparate point products and apps into comprehensive workplace experience platforms.

This strategic approach is driven by the recognition that the proliferation of standalone tools and applications often leads to fragmentation, inefficiency, and added complexity for employees.

By integrating various functionalities such as communication tools, collaboration platforms, and workplace management apps into a single unified platform, organisations aim to streamline workflows, enhance employee experience, and ultimately boost productivity.

This consolidation not only benefits employees by simplifying their work processes and providing a seamless employee experience but also offers considerable advantages for administrators.

With a single platform, administrators can more effectively manage user access, permissions, and data security protocols. Furthermore, consolidating workplace technology into a unified platform can lead to cost savings for businesses.

By eliminating the need to purchase, integrate, and maintain multiple standalone products, organisations can reduce their total cost of ownership.

This streamlined approach also minimises the resources required for training employees on various tools and ensures better utilisation of software licenses and subscriptions.

TREND 3
The Connected Workplace

Pro AV Solutions Showroom, Melbourne

Through strengthening the connective tissue between technology, physical spaces, and people, organisations now have the opportunity to provide a fully reimagined workplace for their teams.

While the concept of the "Hybrid Workplace" has stabilised to a degree, many organisations are struggling to crystallise their vision in terms of moving past current paradigms and tensions to reimagine a workplace that delivers transformative value to all stakeholders.

With continued innovation and development of technologies and best practices, 2024 is set to bring about a raft of opportunities for workplace teams to deliver inspiring, authentic, and inclusive experiences for team members across the workplace, regardless of physical location.

Return to the Workplace

As most employers continue to seek to improve attendance at the workplace, 2024 is shaping up to be another challenging year in terms of tensions with teams that wish to remain working predominantly from home.

Businesses are still seeking ways to 'earn the commute', exploring both physical and digital transformation opportunities to attract existing team members and new talent into the workplace.

At the same time, management practices are evolving, with many organisations exploring skills-based practices and approaches.

✳ *"The conversation on remote work is too caught up in where work happens, and not enough in how it happens"*

Scott Farquhar
Atlassian co-founder and Co-CEO

Employee Experience

As the normalisation of hybrid work continues, many organisations are now looking more strategically at how they can provide consistently excellent experiences for employees, whether they are at home or in the office.

Solutions such as Appspace, which delivers digital signage, employee communications, location services, and desk point management in a single platform, are becoming increasingly critical in terms of maintaining alignment and culture.

93%

of executives in a recent Gartner study responded they are now actively experimenting with skills-based approaches

Source: 2024 Gartner Top 10 Strategic Technology Trends

Pro AV Solutions Workplace, Sydney

Gartner predicts through 2027, 25% of CIOs will use augmented connected workforce initiatives to reduce time to competency by 50% for key roles.

Augmented Reality frontline wearables by Realwear

Augmentation

Whilst there has been enormous media attention on consumer items such as the Apple Vision Pro, many organisations are achieving success with commercial augmented reality and wearable technology solutions.

With continued low unemployment on the cards for 2024 and many areas of the economy suffering from skills shortages, augmentation technology is proving to be a force multiplier for organisations seeking to distribute expertise effectively across broad geographical boundaries.

In conjunction, there are also still massive and largely untapped opportunities across sectors such as retail, education, and hospitality.

Inclusive Experience

As the management of hybrid workforces with diverse needs, expectations, and situational aspects continues to evolve, most organisations recognise the need to provide an inclusive experience for team members regardless of physical location or myriad other factors.

Standardising home technology bundles via catalog solutions is helping provide a more consistent collaboration experience for those working from home.

Leveraging intelligent camera systems [e.g., Cloud Intelliframe for Microsoft Teams] that provide equitable visualisation of online meeting participants and intelligent microphones for live subtitles in online meetings are also making a positive impact.

In a survey of 2,000 managers and employees conducted by Unisys in partnership with HFS, only 33% of managers rate their hybrid work models as very effective.

Source: From Surviving to Thriving in Hybrid Work Report

Hybrid Workplace Management

When it comes to hybrid work experience, most organisations have achieved a reasonable baseline in terms of their collaboration capability and the tech available to team members for remote work.

What's still proving to be more of a challenge is optimising the experience for people within the physical workplace environment and managing a hybrid workforce with varying arrangements and schedules effectively to maintain and improve productivity.

With the added challenges of meeting sustainability goals in workplaces where fluctuating occupancy is the new norm, more organisations are looking to the next generation of technology to solve these challenges.
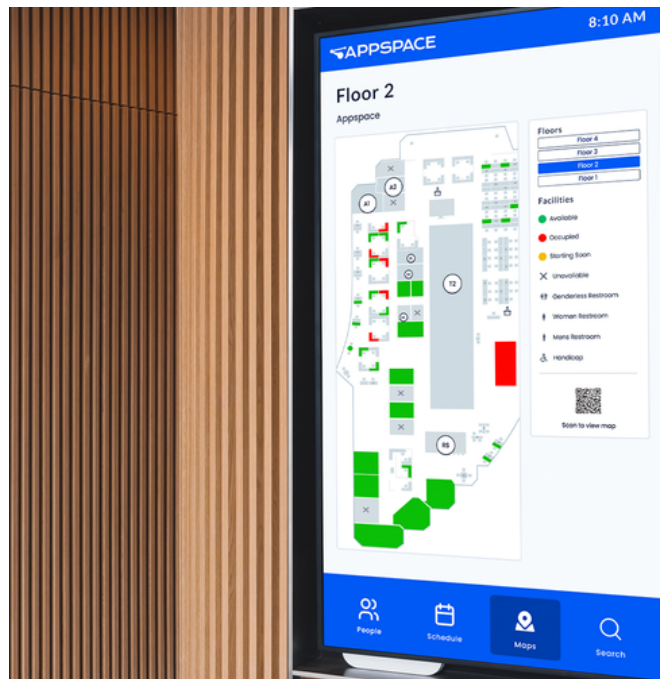
Platforms like Appspace and Cisco Spaces now provide us the opportunity to visualise and direct the physical organisation of people within a flexible workspace, manage the allocation of shared and personal workspaces, and at the same time, integrate with intelligent sensors that track the physical environment.

The highly anticipated Microsoft Places platform should also offer an excellent solution to integrate digital experience with the physical workplace environment once released.

Imagine, for a minute, the building that recognises the trend of reduced occupancy on Fridays, consolidates and assigns desk and room bookings across a smaller number of floors, and then shuts down unnecessary systems to lower the carbon footprint of the facility.

Many of these integrations are already occurring in an ad-hoc manner – maturing enterprise platforms such as the above should herald a new generation of intelligent buildings that provide a tailored experience for hybrid workers and a set of tools that managers can use to manage hybrid teams and workplaces.

Insights

Stuart Craig
Crestron

Stuart is Executive Vice President ANZ at Crestron Electronics, a Harvard Business School Graduate, and a recognised leader within the AV Integration and Workplace Technology industry.

"This industry has driven enormous change in how people work and play during and since COVID. And there is so much more to come.

Now that we are all familiar with Microsoft Teams and the technophobes have had to make that leap (you got there!), we refine the experience more intelligently, taking Microsoft Teams or your platform of choice to a whole other level.

Most businesses still need to grapple with floor space dilemmas and how not just to attract workers back into the office but how best to use that space to enable better engagement when they do come in.

At the same time, how do they connect productively with the WFH folk on that particular day?

Why people attend the office has changed, and that will stick with us.

They come to collaborate and engage socially.

They come to connect to their business (not just their tasks), and employers are working hard to find meaningful ways to ensure their company culture is preserved.

To achieve all that, any space that is not video capable and content sharing capable is a lost opportunity."

Then, there are the premium meeting spaces. How do you make that hybrid board meeting or 'all hands meeting' or critical presentation 'engaging' and 'real' for all participants?

How does nobody get left behind by being remote? The answer is intelligent video. This is the most significant trend for 2024 and 2025.

When people come into one of our Crestron Experience Centres and see just what an intelligent video solution can do for large meetings, it redefines their idea of video conferencing and the remote experience."
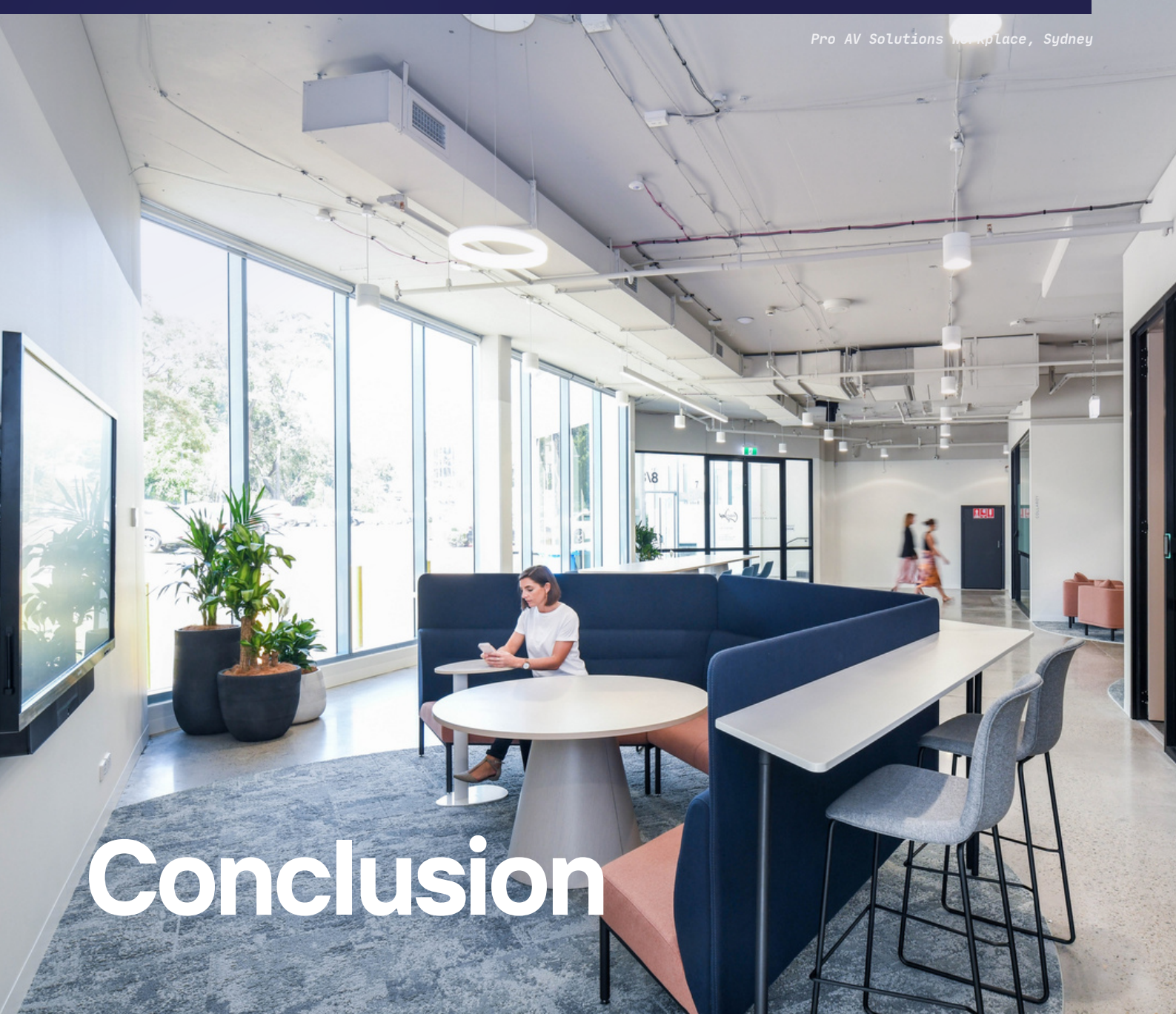
Conclusion

Across the workplace technology industry, there is a high level of optimism and excitement for what 2024 will bring. Innovation and emerging technologies are aligning with a renewed willingness to reconsider nearly every aspect of the workplace experience.

Over the last 5 years, most organisations, by necessity, have improved their ability to react to change with agility, which now bodes well in this time of rapid technological advancement.

Across all verticals, our customers are experiencing a high degree of positivity and confidence that the technologies that are available and emerging will allow them to achieve new levels of success in 2024 and beyond.

The Pro AV Solutions team would like to thank all contributors to this report for their valuable time and expertise. We also thank you for reading and wish you every success on your workplace technology journey in 2024.

Looking for help to build your workplace technology strategy in 2024?

Reach out to the Pro AV Solutions Workplace Technology Team today to book a workshop on Teams or at one of our Workplace Experience Showroom locations around Australia.

BOOK A SESSION »

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