
WHITEPAPER

Space Management for Modern Law Firms

Turning Workplace
Complexity Into
Operational Clarity

apex42

THE MODERN WORKPLACE FOR LAW FIRMS

For law firms, workplace strategy has moved beyond return-to-office policy. Today's decisions require a clearer understanding of people, space, standards, and demand across the portfolio. As firms recalibrate the role of the office around focused work, collaboration, mentorship, culture, and client-facing needs, reliable space data has become the foundation for planning with confidence.

WHAT WE'RE SEEING

76%

Law firms have formal office attendance policies

CBRE Office Attendance Policy Report, 2025

10.5%

Share of U.S. office leasing activity from law firms through Q3 2025

Savills U.S. Law Firm Activity Report, 2025

3+ days

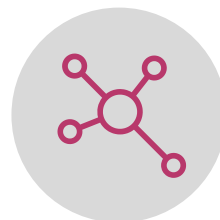
Typical in-office expectation for many law firms

CBRE Law Firm Benchmarking Survey, 2026



ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

Law firms are still formulating in-office expectations while balancing flexibility, culture, and client needs.



ASSIGNMENT COMPLEXITY

Dynamic teams and specialized work require agile space allocation and seamless collaboration.



PORTFOLIO PRESSURE

Economic uncertainty and cost scrutiny demand smarter real estate decisions and measurable performance.

The challenge for law firms is not simply tracking offices or updating floor plans because every space decision carries operational, financial, cultural, and political weight.

Law Firm Space Decisions Require a Different Level of Visibility

Law firm space management is uniquely complex because the workplace reflects far more than physical occupancy. A single office assignment may reflect seniority, practice group structure, client needs, confidentiality requirements, recruiting priorities, historical precedent, and internal expectations. A vacant office may appear to be available but may already be reserved for a lateral hire, visiting attorney, partner transition, or future team expansion. A floor plan may show where people sit, but it may not explain why those assignments matter or how they should inform the next decision.

For law firms, space is rarely neutral. It can signal status, support team cohesion, influence mentorship, shape client experience, and affect how efficiently the firm uses some of its most expensive real estate. As a result, workplace planning depends on more than generic space supply and occupancy demand data. It requires a clear understanding of the relationships between people, roles, standards, spaces, and future demand.

This is especially important as firms continue to adjust to a more deliberate use of the office. Attendance expectations, hybrid work patterns, office utilization, and growth strategies are all influencing how firms evaluate their workplace portfolios. The question is no longer simply whether the office is being used. The more important question is whether the right spaces are available, assigned appropriately, and aligned with how the firm needs to operate.

Reliable space data helps answer those questions with greater confidence. It allows firms to see where capacity exists, where constraints are emerging, how assignments align with firm standards, and how future changes may affect the workplace. It also gives real estate, facilities, operations, and leadership teams a shared source of truth for decisions that are often highly visible and sensitive.

Without that foundation, law firms are left managing space through manual records, outdated floor plans, informal knowledge, and one-off updates. Those tools may support day-to-day work for a period of time, but they become difficult to sustain as the firm grows, consolidates, relocates, or responds to changing workplace expectations.

A stronger approach gives firms the ability to manage space as an active business function. It supports better reporting, more informed planning, clearer communication, and more consistent decision-making across offices. Most importantly, it helps firms move from reacting to space requests to understanding the broader patterns behind them.

THE COMPLEXITIES OF A LAW FIRM SPACE DECISION



PEOPLE

Attorney level, practice group, support teams, visiting attorneys, future hires



STANDARDS

Office size, role expectations, seniority, class year, firm policies, historical precedent



OPERATIONS

Moves, vacancies, requests, floor plan updates, utilization



BUSINESS NEEDS

Confidentiality, mentorship, client service, recruiting, practice growth



PORTFOLIO IMPACT

Capacity, lease obligations, consolidation, expansion, cost control, future demand



Reliable space data connects these factors so firms can plan with greater clarity and confidence.

From Acquisition to Daily Reporting

A TOP 10 LAW FIRM

Following a major acquisition, a global law firm needed a clearer way to plan office transitions, manage occupant movement, and bring consistency to space decisions across its portfolio. **Using Wisp's Scenario modules to plan and transition occupants**, the firm was able to visualize space needs, collaborate through transition planning, and move occupants into the right spaces with greater speed and confidence.

Because law firm space is often shaped by tenure, credentials, and role-specific requirements, Wisp also helped the firm identify whether occupants were seated in spaces designed for their needs. Custom reports and floor-by-floor colorizers gave administrators an easy way to see space types, spot mismatches, and generate current reports in just a few clicks.

Today, **Wisp serves as the firm's foundation for global space and occupancy management**, supported by weekly collaboration with their dedicated Client Success Manager to standardize processes, roll out updates, and keep space decisions aligned across locations.



“What began as a tool for acquisition planning became the backbone for ongoing space and occupancy management across the firm.”

PORTFOLIO AT A GLANCE



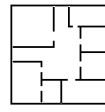
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LOCATIONS



168

FLOORS



2.9M

SQUARE FEET



4,578

OCCUPANTS

WHAT WE DELIVERED

- ✔ Supported post-acquisition space planning and occupant transition using Wisp's Scenario modules.
- ✔ Created interactive floor plan visuals to help teams collaborate, evaluate options, and move occupants into new spaces with greater clarity.
- ✔ Developed custom reports and colorizers to visualize space types, partner office requirements, and occupant to space alignment.
- ✔ Established an ongoing space management process through weekly advisor led meetings, global process updates, and consistent occupancy management practices.

IMPACT

- ⌚ Faster transition planning during a complex acquisition and office integration.
- 📋 Clearer office assignment decisions based on credentials, tenure, and designated space types.
- 🕒 Stronger long-term governance through advisory services and consistent global space management processes.



Read the full story here.
www.apex42group.com

A Five-Day Implementation

A CONFIDENTIAL LAW FIRM

When a client needed to plan seating for a new 100,000+ square foot headquarters, **speed and accuracy** were critical. Their existing process relied on Visio files and PDFs, making it difficult to keep floor plans, seating availability, and employee data current during a major workplace transition.

Wisp was implemented in just five business days, giving the client the tools to finalize seating charts, support move planning, and transition employees into the new headquarters on schedule. The implementation included floor plan standardization, HR data integration, SSO, custom space types, data security accommodations, and daily coordination with the client's team.

Following the initial headquarters rollout, Wisp expanded across the client's broader portfolio of more than 973,000 square feet. Today, the organization uses Wisp for space metrics, customized reporting, wayfinding, directory search, ongoing advisory support, and **accurate floor plans maintained by Apex42's CAD team**.



"In five business days, Wisp moved from implementation to impact, giving the organization the floor plans, seating tools, HR data connection, and reporting foundation needed to manage space at scale."

PORTFOLIO AT A GLANCE



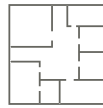
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DAYS



5

FLOORS



973,329

SQUARE FEET



1

SOURCE OF TRUTH

WHAT WE DELIVERED

- ✓ A fully configured Wisp environment in five business days to support headquarters seating and move planning.
- ✓ HR data integration, SSO, data security accommodations, and employee data feeds to support accurate headcounts, seating details, wayfinding, and directory search.
- ✓ Ongoing portfolio support, including expansion across nearly one million square feet, weekly advisory communication, and CAD-maintained floor plan updates.

IMPACT

- 📍 Supported an on-time headquarters move by giving the team accurate seating, floor plan, and employee data in one platform.
- 👁️ Improved space visibility across nearly one million square feet, from portfolio-level metrics down to individual spaces.
- 🏗️ Created a more reliable foundation for ongoing space management, reporting, wayfinding, and floor plan accuracy.



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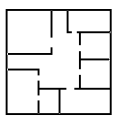
30+ YEARS OF EXPERTISE

Apex42 brings more than 30 years of workplace and real estate portfolio expertise to help law firms plan, manage, and optimize space with confidence.

Law Firm Space Is Harder to Manage Than It Looks

Law firms manage space through a unique mix of hierarchy, policy, practice group needs, client expectations, confidentiality, and cost control. As workplace expectations continue to evolve, the challenge is no longer simply knowing how much space exists. It's understanding how that space is assigned, used, defended, and planned across the portfolio.

KEY QUESTIONS LAW FIRM TEAMS NEED TO ANSWER



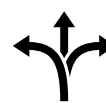
Which offices are assigned, available, shared, or reserved?



How do attorney level, practice group, and office standards affect space demand?



Where do we have too much space, too little space, or the wrong mix of space?



How will growth, lateral hiring, summer associates, or mergers affect office needs?



Can we trust our floor plans, occupancy data, and reports enough to make decisions?

A SPACE MANAGEMENT APPROACH BUILT FOR LAW FIRM COMPLEXITY

These questions rarely have simple yes-or-no answers. In law firms, the answer often depends on who is asking, which office is being discussed, what standard applies, what growth is expected, and whether the space is truly available or only appears that way on paper.

A stronger space management approach helps firms separate assumption from reality. It gives teams a way to distinguish policy from preference, short-term requests from long-term demand, and available capacity (or space availability) from how space is currently assigned. Those distinctions turn space management from a record into a decision-making tool.

The value is not just seeing the space. It is understanding what the space means.

SOFTWARE + ADVISORY, BUILT AROUND OUTCOMES



Platform Capabilities

- Interactive Floor Plans
- Occupancy & Assignment Visibility
- Reporting & Analytics
- Scenario Planning
- Move Management Workflows
- Wayfinding & Employee Access
- Security & User Permissions



Advisory & Data Services

- Implementation & Configuration
- CAD & Drawing Maintenance
- Space Data Standards
- Integrations Support
- Governance & Reporting Strategy
- Ongoing Optimization



Outcomes

- Cleaner Data
- Faster Planning
- More Consistent Reporting
- Stronger Portfolio Decisions
- Less Manual Effort for Your Team

What Trusted Space Data Makes Possible

When floor plans, assignments, and occupancy data are accurate and connected, law firms can make better decisions every day, and plan more confidently for tomorrow.



REAL ESTATE & PORTFOLIO REPORTING

Track occupancy, vacancy, space type distribution, square footage, office ratios, utilization, and portfolio-level trends with reliable, up-to-date data.



ATTORNEY ASSIGNMENT & SPACE STANDARDS

Understand how space is assigned by attorney level, practice group, role, work mode, policy, and business need to support fairness and consistency.



GROWTH, CONSOLIDATION & SCENARIO PLANNING

Model the impact of mergers, lateral hiring, summer associates, practice growth, floor consolidations, and lease decisions before changes are made.



ASSETS, ARTWORK & WORKPLACE DETAILS

Maintain visibility into artwork, specialty spaces, client-facing areas, support zones, and other details that matter in law firm environments.



MOVES, WAYFINDING & OPERATIONAL CONTINUITY

Support move planning, employee navigation, emergency preparedness, updated floor plans, and ongoing workplace change management.



ASSIGNMENT CLARITY

Understand which spaces are assigned, shared, reserved, available, or constrained across offices and floors.



PLANNING CONFIDENCE

Evaluate growth, lateral hiring, summer associates, mergers, and office changes before decisions are made.



PORTFOLIO CONTROL

See space needs across locations, floors, practice groups, and business priorities to guide decisions.

Trusted data turns complex space questions into clear, confident actions.



More Than Software. Decades of Space Management Expertise.

Apex42 combines powerful software with hands-on advisory support from a team that has helped organizations manage space, people, and real estate for more than 30 years. Grown out of an architecture and design firm, the team knows space management unlike any other space management software. We bring the experience, processes, and partnership needed to turn workplace data into confident decisions.

232 3rd Street North, Suite 201
La Crosse, WI 54601
USA
Tel: 608.796.4343

apex42group.com

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