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Engaging a hybrid workforce and optimizing space at Freedom Financial

For decades work was primarily expected to happen within office premises. Accordingly, internal communications were designed for office-based workers. So, when the post-pandemic world settled into a hybrid work model, Freedom Financial Network CIO Mark Tonnesen knew the time had come to transform the way physical space was organized in their buildings, and the way the organization interacted with all of their people, no matter where they happened to sit.

Changing the way things work for good

Freedom Financial Network (FFN) is a leading digital personal finance company, built to help people. It does what traditional banks don't: Put people first and treat them like humans, not account numbers.

With over 2,400 employees across California and Arizona, a successful transformation strategy called for a technology-driven solution that could use data to help inform decisions to:

- Reduce facility expenses
- Increase employee engagement
- Deliver good return-on-investment

FFN partnered with local technology services provider, Immedia Integrated Technologies to design a custom,

freedom
FINANCIAL NETWORK

Key Takeaways

Hybrid work challenges

- Improve the quality and timeliness of communications across the company's distributed network of employees, staff and contractors.

- Space optimization required an accurate understanding of how various areas in the buildings were being used, how often, for how long, and for how many people.

- Cost effective and scalable solution

Business results

- $10M+ in avoided facilities costs
- 13% increase in employee engagement
- 3-4X ROI savings

integrated solution built on Kloudspot's Digital Employee Experience Platform.

Optimize space to drive down expenses and enhance facilities planning

FFN had six facilities, each of which had dedicated spaces for customer service agents, engineers, operations and management, and included numerous configurations of conference rooms, open air spaces, and work environments. When they implemented their hybrid work policy, It was not clear whether these spaces were being used effectively.

> " As we began to consider a major investment in yet another new building, we came to realize we were doing so without the necessary data and space allocation insights to make the best, informed decisions.
>
> **– Mark Tonnesen, CIO, Freedom Financial Network**

Watch this space!

The challenge:

For effective decision-making and space planning, it was critical to understand how various areas in the buildings were being used, how often, for how long, and for how many people. FFN wanted a way to gather building/campus occupancy and traffic information and extract easily accessible and actionable analytics and insights.

The solution:

To achieve this, they utilized and built on the analytics and extensions that Kloudspot provides with its AI and machine learning. Within weeks FFN was able to deep dive into details about its environment: location and GPS information, conference room density, and more. This gave them a clear understanding of the actual and optimal usage of their space.

With a better understanding and use of their space, FFN have improved their facility and safety-related decision making. FFN is now optimizing areas in each building for best usage of floors and spaces. For example, they have been able to discern different activities and usage patterns of engineers, management and customer service agents and adapt spaces to support these teams.

$10M+

savings in avoided facility costs

Tonnesen adds that they have avoided spending on facilities and realized real savings by releasing the empty space "our biggest discovery was not actually needing the expensive next new building we had been contemplating! That was major!"

Improving internal communications across the employee ecosystem

With employees distributed across campuses and working remotely, the internal communications challenge was less about communication than it was about reinventing the way people shared knowledge and information. It was about rethinking how collaboration and innovation could thrive in an increasingly hybrid digital workplace, and reconsidering how best to make communication happen in an engaging way.

Bringing people into the loop

The challenge:

FFN wanted to improve the quality and timeliness of communications across the company's employees, customers, vendors, maintenance personnel, and other stakeholders. In today's world of connected devices, digital displays, and great graphics, relying on email communications alone was outdated – especially when variety, choice, and high-quality communication experiences are table-stakes.

The solution would have to control and deliver prompt, customized messaging that:

- brought together data from disparate sources
- contained rich, engaging graphics
- could be easily or automatically staged and scheduled
- targeted segmented, wide-ranging audiences throughout the company
- worked across multiple personal devices and various environments, including lobbies, open areas, conference rooms, and customer and executive areas.

The solution:

With the Kloudspot platform FFN uses information captured from their CRM system, to rub important messaging and real-time sales leaderboards in customized graphical format on displays throughout the company's widespread geographic locations.

Kloudspot's platform leverages AI to enhance FFN's overall business intelligence, empowering a wide range of data-driven decisions and countless communications on a daily basis. By improving the content and tying all their communications activities together, FFN is proactively meeting the needs of their distributed employee ecosystem to be more centrally connected to the company.

This is reflected in the company's Employee Engagement scores, which have increased from 69.4% to 82.2% between 2019 and 2020 – a 13% Y/Y improvement.

13% increase in employee engagement score

"It's really inspiring to see what full transparency and visibility does to employees…. watching sales numbers grow, watching big deals come in. It really gets employees pumped," said Tonnesen.

3-4x annual ROI savings

I don't spend much with Kloudspot on an annual basis, but it is becoming obvious we'll save 3-4X that amount each year. -Mark Tonnesen, CIO, Freedom Financial Network

The best is yet to come

Whether it's better understanding what's going on in their environment, or how they can communicate to include and engage employees, Kloudspot has given FFN confidence that, moving forward, they will have access to greater insights. Importantly, Kloudspot's platform is economical and can scale to keep meeting the demands of their enterprise, now and for years to come.

Laying the path to the Future of Work

Moving past the disruption and confusion of the last two years., FFN leaders are working with their employees to embrace the Future of Work. The Kloudspot Digital Employee Experience platform has helped them evolve to their workplace strategy quickly. And take advantage of all the benefits that Hybrid Work has to offer:

- $10M in avoided facilities costs
- 13% increase in employee engagement
- 3-4X ROI savings

The leaders at FFN are seeing the benefits of the solution and believe that this is just the beginning. As they experience first-hand how the digital revolution is transforming their business operations, it positively impacts how they manage and articulate the value of their assets – including people, facilities and technology.

Kloudspot is on a mission to take the work out of work.

Our Product

Kloudspot surfaces the important context [people, place, information, apps] and makes it simple for employees to do their best work, alone or together, in person or in immersive virtual spaces.

Intuitive access to communication, collaboration tools, along with performance and well-being insights give business leaders the confidence that employees are productive wherever and whenever they work. Employee engagement and business results are the tangible proof that simplicity works.

Our platform

The Kloudspot employee experience platform digitizes and automates the physical and remote workspace to build your digital HQ.

Our hardware and software agnostic APIs provide seamless out-of-the-box integration with your network and sensor infrastructure, IT software, and business applications, from physical access points to light switches, from SSO to work apps and video conferencing.

Our customizable portal enables remote and in-office teams secure access to a digital HQ for work, collaboration, and communication.

Our intelligent workspace engine delivers analysis and insights in real-time for the optimal blend of in-office and virtual work experiences and real estate management.

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