

A WORKPLACE STRATEGY FOR UNISPACE ITALY

Master Thesis
MS Strategic Product Design

Giulia Verzé



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simplifying a too complex project phase and supporting its
implementation and communication into the company

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MS Strategic Product Design

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Thanks to Erik Jan and Pinar, my thesis supervisors, for always giving motivating feedback, for spending words of encouragement when I needed and for challenging me to do better.

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Thanks to my family, for being always on my side. Mom and dad, you gave me the opportunity to follow my dreams, thanks for the unconditional love. To my younger sister, Anna, thanks for making me smile and feel loved from afar. My elder brother, Mirco, this experience would have never happened without you. You are in all my best Dutch memories.

And thanks to you, Davide, together we learned the deep meaning of love, trust, and patience. We reached this achievement together.



For a quick overview of this work, you can go directly to the executive summary at page 10 or at the conclusion at page 84.



If you're trying to catch key information, scroll the chapters and read only the part written in the dark blue boxes like this one.



If you're really interested in the topic, just go ahead, I hope you enjoy my work!

Key insights and conclusions are highlighted throughout the text in dark blue boxes like this one.

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Preface

This graduation project is executed on behalf of Unispace Italy. The company is trying to introduce strategic design as an asset in workplace design projects.

As an interior and strategic designer, this challenge was the perfect context to explore how to apply design strategies to interior and architectural projects. I enjoyed building a proper work around this topic. Seeing the company implementing and improving its Strategy offering during the thesis process was very rewarding. Currently, we are testing the results of this thesis on real cases, while further improving and refining its results.

I hope you enjoy reading,

Giulia

Glossary & Abbreviations

Unispace Global - Italy - Milan

In order to distinguish the overall organization of Unispace from its Italian studio, when a differentiation is necessary, these two entities will be referred respectively as Unispace Global and Unispace Italy. When a further differentiation is required, Unispace Milan and Rome will be used to distinguish the two Italian studios.

ABW = Activity-based working

ABW is a workplace strategy that provides people with a choice of different settings where performing workplace activities. It allows people to physically locate themselves where it is most convenient for them to complete their work, rather than forcing them to undertake all their tasks at one assigned setting.

AG = Agile working

Agile working is an approach that an organization can undertake to implement flexibility and minimize constraints. Whereas ABW refers primarily to mobility within the office, agile working refers to mobility away from the office. Employees are empowered to choose where and when to perform their work.

RFP Request for proposal

TME Time Money
Engagement

TCM Think Create Make

IN Innovators

EA Early Adopters

EM Early Majority

LM Late Majority

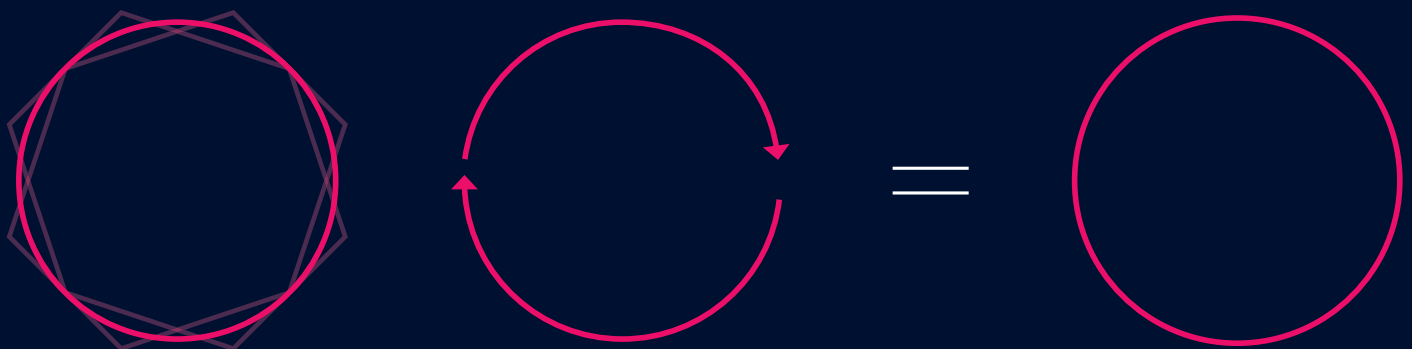
L Laggards

Executive Summary

Unispace Italy wants to expand their service portfolio by offering a strategy phase to clients, before moving to the design and delivery of the client's future office space. This service is already offered by Unispace Global in other countries, and initial materials and information were given to the Milan studio to expand this expertise. Initially, this new stage was integrated as given by Unispace Global in the already running workflow of Unispace Italy. However, as no guidance on the integration was provided, strategy ended up being integrated into the design phase, not providing any additional value to projects.

From the internal and external analysis, some interesting conclusions are drawn. The research confirms that the overlapping of strategy and design does not provide any benefit to the projects. Contrarily, the length of the project extends not following any clear structure and the clients feel lost. Besides this, the analysis shows that the process followed by Unispace Italy lacks the client active engagement. Rich technical consultations are provided thanks to the varied team of experts, however, the active participation of the client can enhance the sense of belonging to the project, that loses its foreign character. When the client is involved, the project is no more something imported from the outside, but something built and tailored together. Finally, from the study it emerges that Unispace needs to be educated to play offense, to anticipate the clients' requests and be the leader of the project. When the project is managed proactively by Unispace, the client perceives the company as a trusted advisor, increasing the chances of entrusting the next project phases to Unispace.

The Process



SIMPLIFYING

ADAPTING

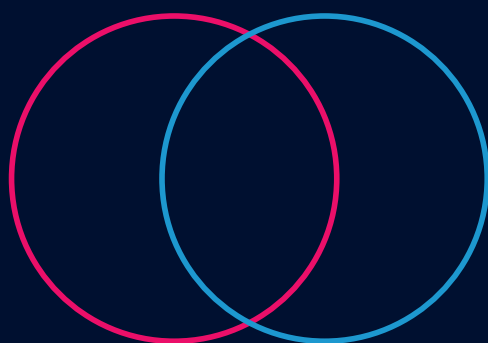
UNDERSTANDING
THE PRODUCT

In the design phase, the product and the customers are clarified, and the service is developed. First, the tools presented in the Unispace Global strategy offering are explored and tested. This allows preparing preliminary files which can be used as templates by Unispace Italy in future projects. Second, once the product of the strategy offering is designed and settled, the customers to whom the product is offered are investigated. Unispace Italy's clients are synthesized into the five innovation adoption categories by Rogers (2010). Then, innovative workplace scenarios are mapped into a grid that, when overlapped with the innovation groups, shows their most plausible future office vision. This tool can be used by Unispace Italy to foresee the client approach to innovation and the office he aims to. Third, the product and the customers are matched: a strategy package is tailored on each adopter category and suggestions are given on the innovation groups Unispace Italy should focus on. To conclude, the strategy phase is defined step by step and a new service blueprint, based on the current workflow of Unispace Italy, is built.

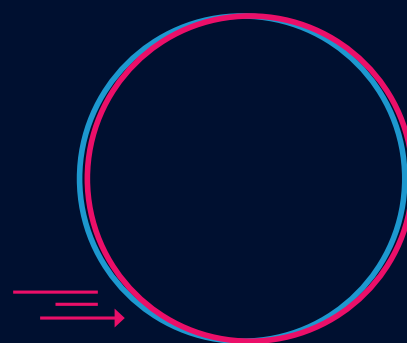
Finally, the goal, structure, and tools of the newly designed strategy phase are simplified and illustrated into a set of strategy cards. These will serve as a communication tool for making clients and Unispace Italy employees aware of the value of design strategy applied to workplace projects. At this point, Unispace Italy has all the tools to successfully integrate the strategy phase into the current workflow: on the one hand, there's a simplified and tested service, on the other hand, there's a strategy to deliver it.



UNDERSTANDING
THE CUSTOMERS



MATCHING PRODUCT
AND CUSTOMERS

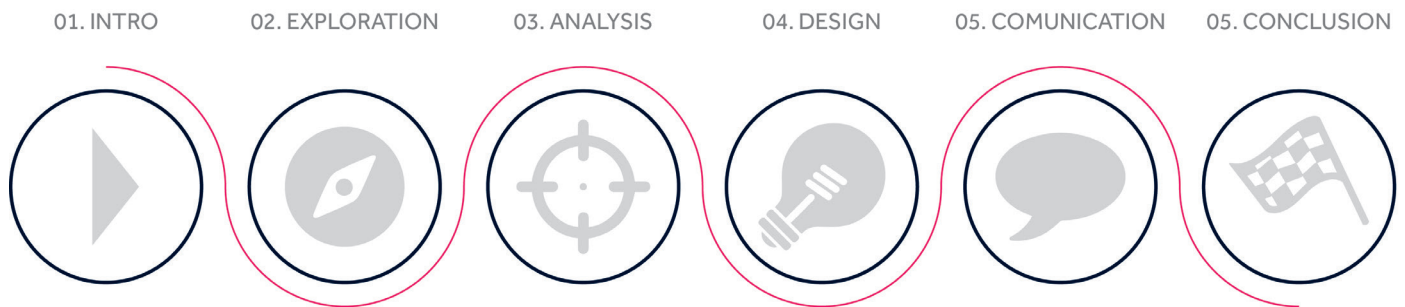


DELIVERING
THE SERVICE

INTRODUCTION



Thesis Work



01. Visual of the thesis structure

In this thesis work, a strategy offering for Unispace Italy is designed and introduced in the current workflow of the company. In order to describe the process of the project in a logical manner, a structure is built and visualized in figure 01.

To deal with the complexity of the assignment, the process have been structured into four phases:

exploration, analysis, design and communication. Each of this theme is explained in detail at the beginning of the corresponding chapter.

To end, a final conclusion is drawn and future recommendations are made. The thesis ends with a personal reflection and acknowledgement.

Introduction

The growing demand for new approaches and designs to support the continuously changing nature of work, and consequently the new business structures, requires constant innovations from manufacturers, designers, and architects. This results in a variety of new concepts, but also the circumstances under which such innovations are effective need to be explored.

New policies, designs, technologies, and products are implemented by companies without deeply exploring their impact. The adoption criterion most commonly used is cost and, when dealing with a workspace, square meters.

To solve this problem, strategic design can be used to identify the solutions, evaluate their impact and study their implementation.

Strategic design assesses the relation among the innovation, the company, the people and the workplace. By providing a strategic support at the beginning of a workplace project, it is possible to evaluate in cooperation with the client the impact in work processes, perceptions, and attitudes that result from the change.

This thesis presents the analysis, design and, in part, the tests that have been conducted on the topic, together with Unispace Italy.

Problem Statement



02. WHAT are the problems to be solved and WHY is it important to solve them?

Unispace Italy has recently implemented its workflow with an initial strategy phase that supports clients in their innovation process. During my internship experience at Unispace Italy, I had the chance to see and experience their work method and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the Italian approach to projects when it comes to workplace strategy.

Such strategy stage was set up thanks to already existing materials received from other Unispace offices. This consisted of several strategy result presentations, case studies and an overall strategy offering booklet, that lists all the possible activities and tools that Unispace Global offer. However, in Italy, no dedicated team is prepared to receive and re-elaborate such material and no clear guidance is given to introduce a new phase into an already working workflow. Therefore, such materials are physically received but not assimilated, resulting in an inconsistent approach that often has no certainty on the results that will be achieved.

Looking at the current strategy offering of Unispace

Italy, two main problems are identified. These problems and their relevance are visualized in figure 02 and explained below. First, the global strategy offering is too complex to be applied as is. The tools need to be simplified, tested and adapted to the Italian market. Second, Unispace Italy employees need to be guided on the implementation of the strategy phase and educated on the value of such approach.

The aforementioned problems are extremely relevant in order to favour a continuous growth to Unispace Italy and to ensure that the Italian studio meets the standards of Unispace Global in terms of service offering and quality.

So on the one hand, there's a strategy offering that needs to be simplified and tested, on the other hand, there's an operational planning that has to be defined in order to deliver the service. To conclude, a communication template has to be developed to explain the value of such strategic approach both internally and externally.

EXPLORATION



In this chapter, the context is introduced and the problem defined.

First, the context of workplace strategy and workplace design are explored. Secondly, Unispace Global, Unispace Italy and their distinctive company methodology are presented. This will give a complete overview of Unispace work and a clear understanding of the application of such methodology in the Milan studio.

At this point, the problem statement is defined.

The Context

As this entire thesis work is based on the concepts of workplace design and workplace strategy, it is important to clarify the meanings of these words in a first place. These are defined below and illustrated in visual 03.

Workplace design

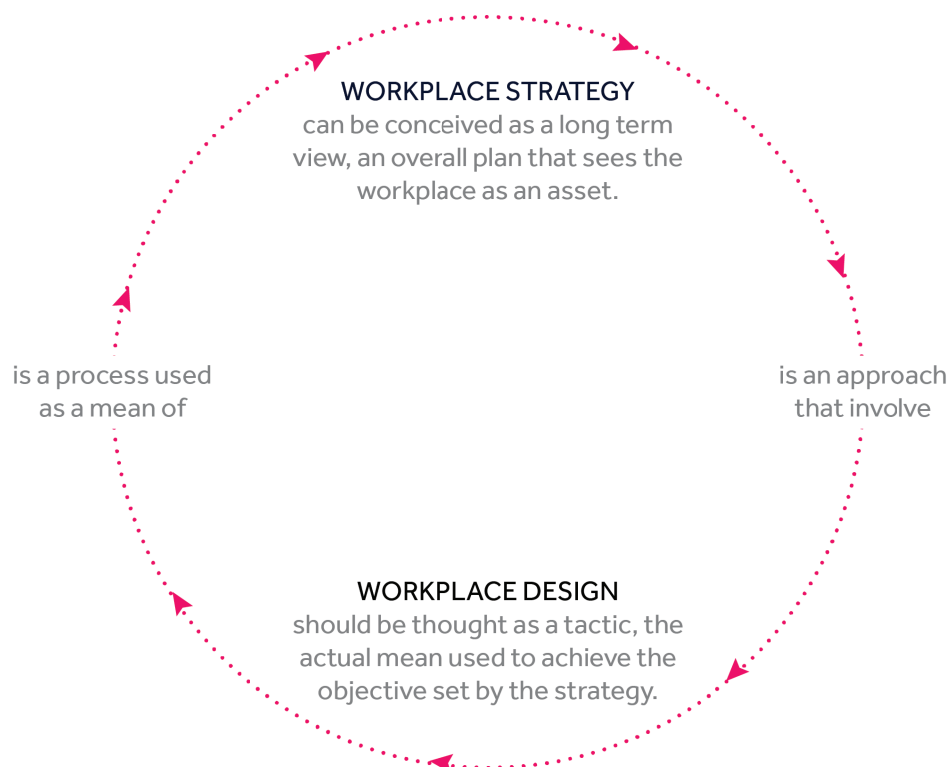
Workplace design refers to the workplace-making process - either creating or modifying the space - and it involves the activities of programming, design, building, maintenance, management and renovation (Horgen et al., 1999). Actors in this field are interior designers and architects, engineers and managers.

Workplace strategy

Workplace strategy is an approach for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of how workspace is used by changing its configuration (Springer,

2010). Workplace strategy takes into account informations coming from all the main departments of an organization and tries to develop an all-inclusive approach. This approach should give voice to all the parts, but also reflect mission, vision and values of whole organization.

In conclusion, workplace strategy can be conceived as a long term view, an overall plan that sees workplace design as an asset. On the other hand, workplace design should be thought of as a tactic, the actual mean used to achieve the objective set by the strategy. A good workplace strategy should lead to a workplace designed to be more efficient and effective, as per definition by Springer (2010). Efficient, meaning to create a workplace that supports people work smarter, and faster. Effective, meaning to evaluate and implement innovations that have a positive impact on the performance of the company.



03. Workplace design is a tactic to achieve the objective set by workplace strategy

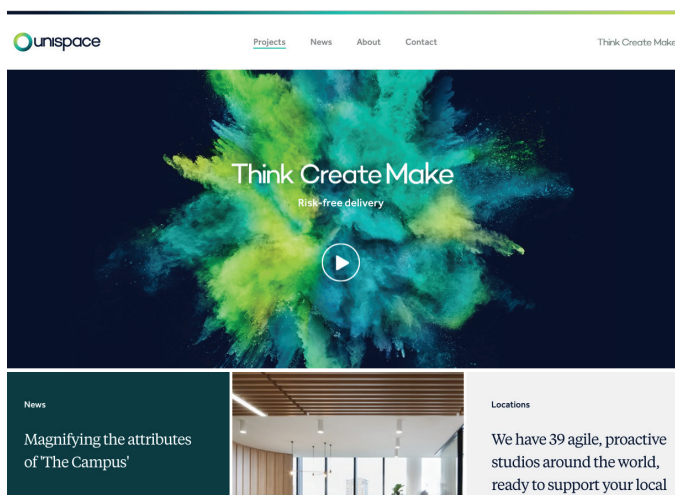
Therefore, it is important for Unispace Italy to develop a well structured and effective workplace strategy offering, where the long term objective, real goals and needs of each project are uncovered, set and defined. With these in mind, the design of the space is used as the tactic to achieve those goals.

The Company

Unispace is a global leader in business interior design and commercial interior design.

The company was founded in 2010 in Australia, by a group of people from around the world. The founders had expertises in different fields and put together a multidisciplinary team with varied backgrounds, knowledge and experience. This heterogeneity is still at the core of Unispace spirit, as the company distinguish itself by offering a seamless service, from strategy, to design, to delivery.

Since then, Unispace has grown a lot and counts now more than 400 people, working in 39 different studios



spread over 18 countries in the world. All the studios are built on clear values and goals, as presented on the company website (see figure 04):

“Unispace’s DNA is fresh, energetic, courageous, humble and loyal, with these values inherent in everything that we do”

Our Story, Unispace website, 2017

Unispace is committed to design healthier and more human workplaces. Every project should express each organization’s unique culture and support their business objectives, balancing human needs, economic requirements and environmental responsibilities.

Unispace believes in the power of strategic design to achieve this commitment.

“We believe that strategic design solutions which enhance wellbeing not only create value in the workplace, but help to attract the best talent and keep your existing workforce healthy and engaged.”

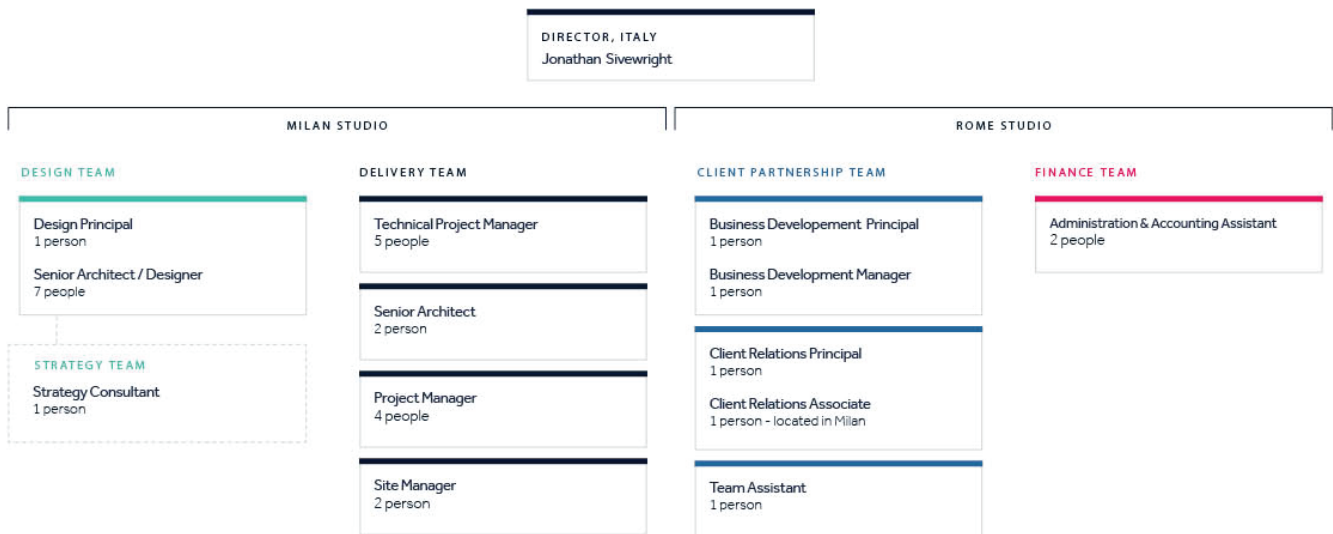
Our story, Unispace website, 2017

Unispace Italy was founded in 2013 as part of Unispace Global. It has been growing exponentially in the past years and it now counts 29 employees distributed among Rome and Milan (data as per September 2017). The office located in Rome functions as a directional headquarter, while the one in Milan as operational. Unispace Italy serve a wide variety of company primarily located in the Northern part of Italy and nearby Rome (see visual 05).

Unispace Milan is structured into two main teams: design and delivery. The design team counts a number of architects that develop concepts, layouts and visual for clients. The delivery team has engineer, architects and managers that take care of technical drawings,

cost and time management and construction sites. Essentially, the design team envisions the future office and draws the concept, while the delivery team makes it reality. The professional figure of a strategist would be part of the design department, supporting the team with graphic material and presentations, but also structure, develop and perform the strategic offering of Unispace Global, that the Italian studio currently struggles to perform. As in Italy no specific person was assigned to these tasks, this role was covered by architects when needed.

And here my role of strategic designer comes in.



05. The organizational chart of the Italian Unispace Team as per December 2017

Unispace believes in the importance of communicating in the same way to all the clients over the globe. One consistent image and methodology make Unispace a reliable partner for clients wherever they are. The mission of the company is to design healthier, more human workspaces.

Besides clear and constant collaboration and communication, the values that describe Unispace spirit and commitment are as presented in the next page.

In Milan, these values can be tangibly felt. The young average age (mostly below 40 years old) of the employees plays a part in the fresh and energetic

spirit of the team. The passion for the field and for expanding the company horizons contribute to challenging convention with courageous choices, when appropriate. At the same time, experienced professionals support the work making sure that what is promised can be also delivered to client, fostering a sense of loyalty towards and from the clients.

<p>FRESH AND ENERGETIC We're passionate, approachable and refreshing. We inspire interest, belief and action. We see a future where others do not.</p>	<p>COURAGEOUS We are proud to challenge convention to create new value. We are courageous and optimistic about our ability to create positive change for our clients.</p>
<p>HUMBLE We're clear, credible, authentic and straightforward in everything we say. We keep our word. Jargon is not our style – neither is cockiness.</p>	<p>LOYAL We always look out for our customers interests. We are on our client's side, first and last.</p>

Our Culture, Unispace website, 2017

Unispace Methodology

In a traditional workplace design model, multiple consultants coming from a variety of fields are involved: designers, architects, constructors, builders... When so many stakeholders have to work together, it leads to an inevitable loss of information, conflicts and delays. The Unispace methodology called Think Create Make overcomes this problem by bringing them all together into one single streamlined process. This allows Unispace to support clients throughout all the project phases (1. visioning and strategy, 2. design development, 3. design documentation, 4. construction) with a complete and solid approach, as explained below and visualized in visual 06.

Think. Global intelligence-led strategy

Unispace believes in workplaces built on human centered approach. By partnering with clients to dig up hard questions and latent problems, it is possible to create solutions for a more effective and human business. In this stage, the company's needs, problems,

and expectations are discovered together with the clients. Then, in concurrence with the start of the second "create" stage, these findings are analyzed by Unispace strategists and designers.

Create. Design-driven solutions

Unispace believes that design brings people together to create ideas and better business outcomes. In this stage the strategy outcome is translated into

engaging, empowering and inspiring environments by design creativity. The data gathered previously is here translated internally by Unispace architects into a

tangible solution. Then, in concurrence with the start of the third “make” stage, these solutions are studied

by Unispace architects and engineers, estimating costs and timing from the very first solution proposal.

Make. Risk-free delivery

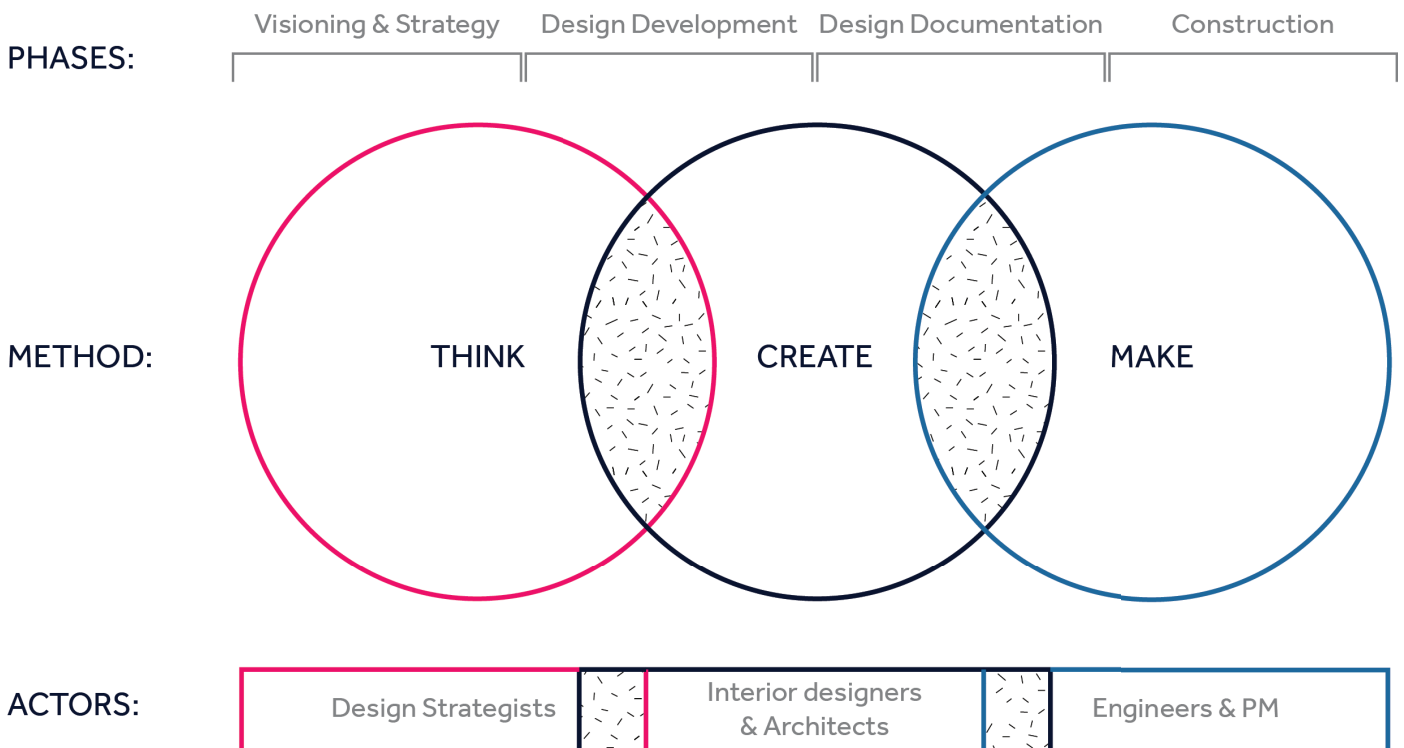
Design and construction teams work at the same time. In this way the work is integrated and proceed simultaneously. The traditional model of translating the design into a built environment is broken, and

with it also the inevitable delays and cost overruns. Conversely, this means cost control and faster delivery. To conclude, project managers and architects take care of the technical and executive parts.

Core characteristics at the base of such methodology are threefold: the importance of strategy and analysis at the beginning of a project, design freedom that goes beyond the traditional thinking of a work environment, and collaboration among disciplines to make projects run smoothly.

This approach is applied to every Unispace project with a workflow that follows four phases: Visioning & Design, Design Development, Design Documentation & Approval, Construction. Each phase is partly integrated into the following one, foreseeing and preventing cost overruns and delays. This also means more communication and collaboration within the team in order to keep everyone up to date as multiple disciplines act at the same time.

As a strategic design thesis, this assignment acts under the **Think** stage of the methodology.



06. Workplace design is a tactic to achieve the objective set by workplace strategy

The Challenge

The **Think Create Make** methodology lies at the heart of what Unispace do. Beyond its methodological significance, TCM means constant collaboration and consultation across Unispace studios and within different disciplines. As collaboration is crucial, Unispace Italy has received many documents, guidelines and examples from other Unispace studios to perform the strategy phase of the project at best.

Although Unispace uses a worldwide standardised work method, this homogeneity does not reflect the specific needs of all Unispace offices. This means that the received materials cannot and should not be taken as is, but need to be adjusted to the Italian studio's

capability and clients, in order to embed the new strategy part into an already working and consolidated approach.

The strategy portfolio of Unispace Global consists of many design tools, techniques and methods that can be applied when defining the client's need and goals. It is structured into a four stages offering (Discover, Explore, Test, Visualize), that aims to support clients in the process of achieving organizational and workplace goals (image 07). The portfolio has a high level of detail, as almost 30 techniques are offered to clients as part of Unispace strategy approach (see picture 08 on the next page).

01

Discover

A shift in workplace can be complicated. The challenges are tangled and the path forward is often dependent on circumstances that are certain to change. To arrive at some shared understanding of the task ahead – and to effectively articulate the problem(s) and business case we need to facilitate conversations that offer a variety of views, including those that provide interdisciplinary perspectives beyond the immediate focus of process.

02

Explore

Research underpins our design thinking approach. Our applied research methods include both quantitative and qualitative techniques providing a rich set of comprehensive and complementary insights. We customise our research methods and tools for every client based on the project objectives as well as factors such schedule, budget and desired level of engagement.

03

Test

We develop design solutions and prototype concepts to illustrate multiple ways to support business objectives and achieve the workplace vision. We test our scenarios against the key business objectives that we captured in our discover and explore phases. We use a project scorecard to track how well each scenario performs against the key business and performance objectives, headcount and space efficiency, budget parameters, risks and change management implications.

04

Visualize

Project teams and stakeholders interpret data and design in different ways. Facility and real estate practitioners understand and appreciate well-thought-out test fits. End users typically need 3D views and more immersive visuals to inspire excitement about their new workplace. Using our design technology, we quickly visualise and 3D model all our concepts so that all users understand the transformative potential of a new work environment.

07. The four steps of the strategy phase: discover, explore, test and visualize

Our process and approach

First we listen. Then we tailor our approach by selecting the appropriate research and design activities that will achieve your organisational and workplace goals.

01 Discover

A shift in workplace can be complicated. The challenges are tangled and the path forward is often dependent on circumstances that are certain to change. To arrive at some shared understanding of the task ahead – and to effectively articulate the problem(s) and business case we need to facilitate conversations that offer a variety of views, including those that provide interdisciplinary perspectives beyond the immediate focus of process.

BUSINESS CONTEXT

- Leasing and property criteria, financial analysis and perimeter scan
- Transit impact mapping

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Executive workshops, interviews, site tours and project scorecard

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- Trend spotting and case studies
- Benchmarking

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

02 Explore

Research underpins our design thinking approach. Our applied research methods include both quantitative and qualitative techniques providing a rich set of comprehensive and complementary insights. We customise our research methods and tools for every client based on the project objectives as well as factors such schedule, budget and desired level of engagement.

SPACE, PEOPLE & CULTURE, TECHNOLOGY

- Staff focus groups and interviews

SPACE

- SpaceData online staff survey
- Space utilization study
- Departmental briefings and paper and storage survey
- Building analysis
- Space prototyping exercise
- Future ways of working

PEOPLE & CULTURE

- Demographic analysis
- Cultural check-up
- Wellness
- Workstyle personas
- Client / customer experience

TECHNOLOGY

- Supporting technology audit
- User experience mapping

03

Test

We develop design solutions and prototype concepts to illustrate multiple ways to support business objectives and achieve the workplace vision. We test our scenarios against the key business objectives that we captured in our discover and explore phases. We use a project scorecard to track how well each scenario performs against the key business and performance objectives, headcount and space efficiency, budget parameters, risks and change management implications.

SPACE

- Brand expression
- Prototyping and visualisation
- Reality modeling
- Space budget, test fit space plan and block & stack
- Workspace pilot

PEOPLE & CULTURE

- Future workstyles
- Skills gap
- Change readiness analysis
- Adjacency mapping
- Organisational and space allocation alignment

TECHNOLOGY

- User experience enhancement

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- Financial analysis of capital spend

04

Visualize

Project teams and stakeholders interpret data and design in different ways. Facility and real estate practitioners understand and appreciate well-thought-out test fits. End users typically need 3D views and more immersive visuals to inspire excitement about their new workplace. Using our design technology, we quickly visualise and 3D model all our concepts so that all users understand the transformative potential of a new work environment.

SPACE

- Building performance brief and evaluation
- UniBIM model

TECHNOLOGY

- Technology roadmap

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- Project scheduling and budgeting



However, the Italian Unispace studio suffers two main problems that impede the proper application of this methodology:

1. The studio often times deals with small-medium clients with whom the strategic phase tends to be left out, as the current one seems too complex, extended and expensive to be applied. In fact, there is no dedicated team in Milan to receive, understand, adapt and apply properly these world standardised strategy tools. Currently, these documents are consulted randomly when needed, resulting in an inconsistent approach that often has no certainty on the results that will be achieved. This results in a superficial understanding of the client clear and latent needs. Also, as the Think stage results in such a weak offering, the unique methodology that distinguishes Unispace from its competitors collapses, making its position vulnerable in the market.

2. A more latent problem lies in the communication of such strategic approach. The communication is meant both internally and externally. Internally, since a new stage is introduced into an already existing working and safe workflow, Unispace Milan employees need to be educated and briefed on the value of such change.

Externally, clients have difficulties in understanding the benefits of these tools and are therefore skeptical about undertaking the process. An example is when the clients look forward to renders to visualize their future office. Rendering is a very practical and concrete tool and sometimes the strategy stage is perceived simply as a longer wait to that moment. It can be inferred that the results of the strategy phase are not perceived as interesting as the result of the design phase. Contrary, whereas the outcome is very insightful, the communication of the strategy package needs to be communicated differently.

These two problems are intrinsically connected for improving the strategy offering of Unispace Italy: on the one hand, there's a service that needs to be simplified and tested, on the other hand, there's a communication strategy that has to be defined in order to deliver such service. The goal of this thesis work can therefore be summarized as follow:

(01) Simplify a framework of strategic tools, (02) adapt it to the company market, and (03) design a communication strategy to illustrate the value of such strategic offering.

The goal of this thesis work can therefore be summarized as follow:

(01) Simplify a framework of strategic tools, (02) adapt it to the company market, and (03) design a communication strategy to illustrate the value of such strategic offering.

The result will be **(01) a sized down but effective strategy portfolio for Unispace Italy**. It will offer a shortlists of techniques and tools, with guidelines on their use. Also, **(02) an operational planning** is designed for Unispace Milan to be able to perform the newly introduced strategy phase. These will raise the Italian studio strategy capability and will ensure a global and unified approach to projects, as per Unispace mission. Furthermore, **(03) a clear and incisive communication** concept will be developed. This will serve as a communication tool for making clients and Unispace employees aware of the value of design strategy applied to workplace projects.

ANALYSIS



In this stage the context of the project is explored with internal and external analyses.

In the external analysis, the context, competitors, their strategy offers and trends are explored. Internally, the company, its stakeholders, product portfolio and target group are analysed.

External Analysis

Market

The evolution of the workplace is rewriting the rules for real estates and facilities management market. New work policies and ways of working like flexibility or activity-based working, that helps retention and attraction of talents, affect the use and design of the space. In fact, compared to traditional office space, new workplace designs use much lower utilization rates (Brinkman et al, 2015). This means that, in terms of squared meters, smaller offices are needed. The real estate and facility management groups find themselves in a new and hard position: on the one hand, they need to sell square meters and, on the other hand, answer the market needs of new non-traditional workspace.

However, as demonstrated by the 2013 Design

Value Index Survey, workplace design and innovation investment are keys to staying at the forefront. Results show that over the past 10 years, design-centric organizations “have maintained a significant stock market advantage, outperforming the S&P (Standard & Poor’s) forecast by an extraordinary 211 percent” (DMI, 2016).

Therefore, it can be concluded that in order to remain - or become - competitive in the hiring market, attracting talents and enhancing employees productivity, it is smart to invest in strategic design in the workplace market. Hence, it is expected that the workplace strategy market will grow in the coming years and it is worth to develop and embed the knowledge to act in such field.

Hence, it is expected that the workplace strategy market will grow in the coming years and it is worth to develop and embed the knowledge to act in such field.

**“What business needs now is design.
What design needs now is making it about business”**

Beth Comstock, SVP GE & CO Chair, DMI Conference 2011

Trends

As mentioned before, workplace is undergoing a radical change. This is due to the growth of new generations entering the world of work, but also new technologies and consequent new work habits. A

trend research is conducted and, below, an overview of the major trends that are driving the workplace design market is given.

Density, Efficiency and Utilization

Research shows that, on average, workers spend only 50% of their time in the office sitting at desks (Millard et al, 2011), for the rest being busy in meetings, phone calls, group works or external works. As a result, companies are making personal space smaller and work policies like agility or ABW are taking the place

of the more traditional 1:1 desk ratio. This doesn't necessarily mean decreasing the square footage is the way, but instead increasing utilization thanks to efficient design solutions tailor made on a company's specific profile.

Culture of Sharing

To accommodate people with fewer desks, solutions like desk sharing and benching are becoming more and more popular. These are possible unassigned desks solutions, that allow doing temporary work with good acoustic and visual supports. Such solutions require the adoption of new technology (like laptops instead of computers, support screens, bookable systems etc) but also the learning of new human behaviours

and work modalities. At the base of this design shift towards providing more we-spaces that support collaboration and benefit more people, there is a growing sharing culture (CallisonRTKL, 2016). Sharing is happening through the use of internal resources by different departments in the same company, but also in the form of coworking facilities and even shared amenities in multi-tenant buildings.

Flexibility in the Workplace

A new idea is making inroads: work zones go beyond the individual assigned or unassigned space, the personal space is not a desk, but the entire office ("Workplace design trends," 2017). Latest open plan solutions balance closed offices and desks in open space, meeting rooms and a great variety of supports: every task has a dedicated place where it can be performed with adequate supports. People are encouraged

to feel free to work where it is convenient for them, being at a desk or around the office. This flexibility concept extends also to new work arrangements, like home working and flextime policies. Since flexibility is encouraged and people are free to choose where to carry out their tasks, companies want to make the workplace an attractive experience, to be their employees' first choice when deciding where to work.

Branded Environment

New technologies, new generations and consequent new needs: nowadays employees expect a productive, engaging, enjoyable work experience. For this, companies are trying to build an inclusive office experience, reinforcing a sense of community and loyalty through the brand. Organizational culture, engagement, and employee brand proposition are top priorities, being ranked as major trends by Deloitte researchers (2017). The office tells the value

and history of a company, representing it through colours, textures and graphics. This, together with new integrated and employees-centred services, strengthens the employees feeling of belonging and gives a strong and cohesive corporate appearance from the outside.

All in all, it is clear that creating an innovative work environment requires more than only architecture and construction. Strategic Design can contribute to this mission thanks to its creative and analytical skills, supporting projects using design techniques,

creativity, business and branding knowledge. By integrating a strategy phase before space design, the project will benefit from a deeper understanding of clients needs and wants, smoothing the next phases.

By integrating a strategy phase before space design, the project will benefit from a deeper understanding of clients needs and wants, smoothing the next phases.

Competitors

Unispace Global is growing exponentially and currently competes both with smaller local realities and bigger multinational organizations. In order to fully understand the panorama of competitors in Italy, the subject of this thesis work, it is important to define competitors of both Unispace Global and the ones of its Italian studio, which partly overlap.

Because of the variety of services offered, Unispace deals with competitors coming from multiple fields.

This and the competitors' service offering were the first parameters used to compare multiple companies toward Unispace.

A summary table is presented in figures 09 and 10. The scheme highlights the main differences between Unispace Italy, Unispace Global and their local and global competitors. Also, some real estates companies are included, as they offer analysis and strategy services.

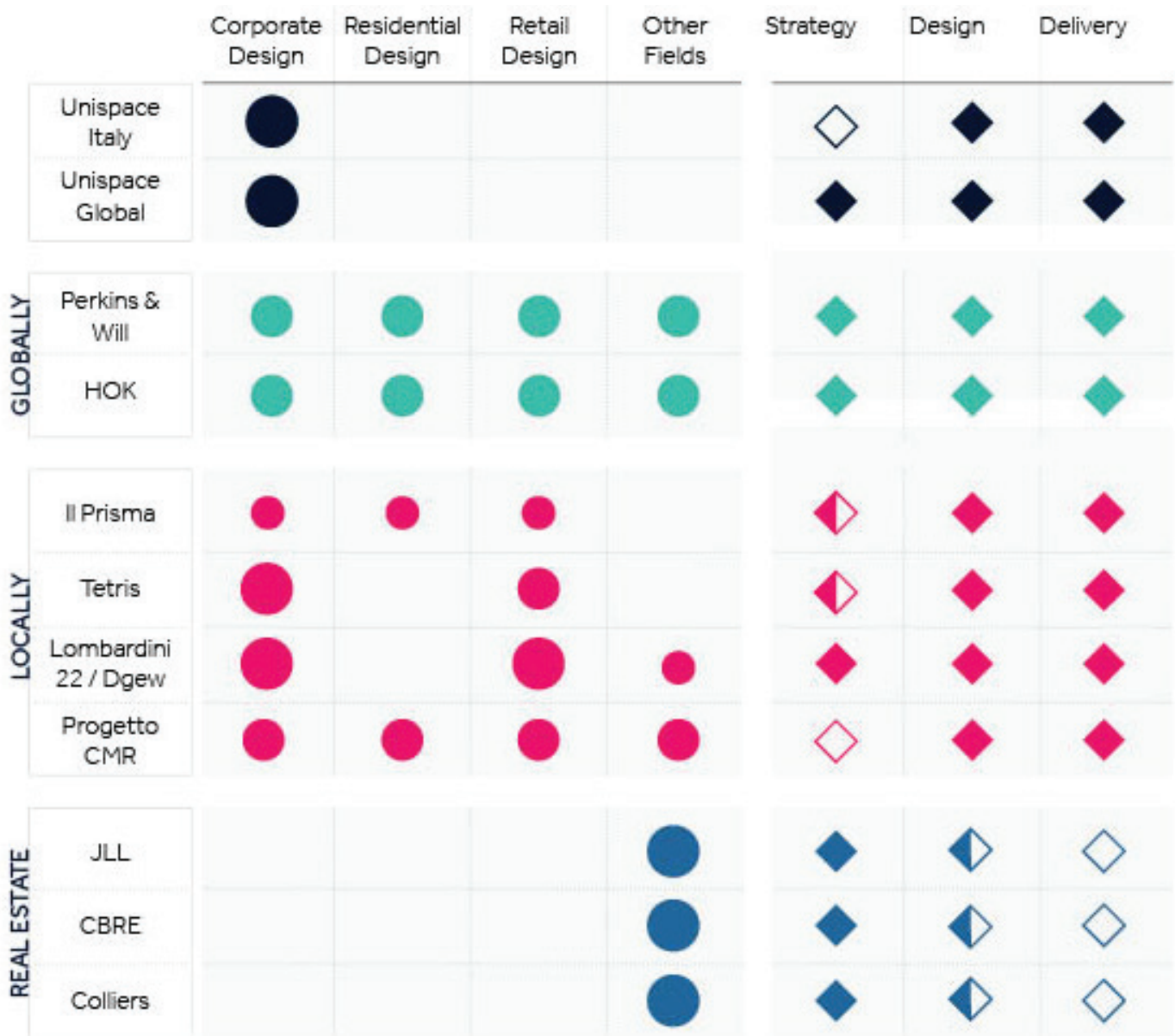
Degree of knowledge/expertise



Service offering



09. The comparative parameters



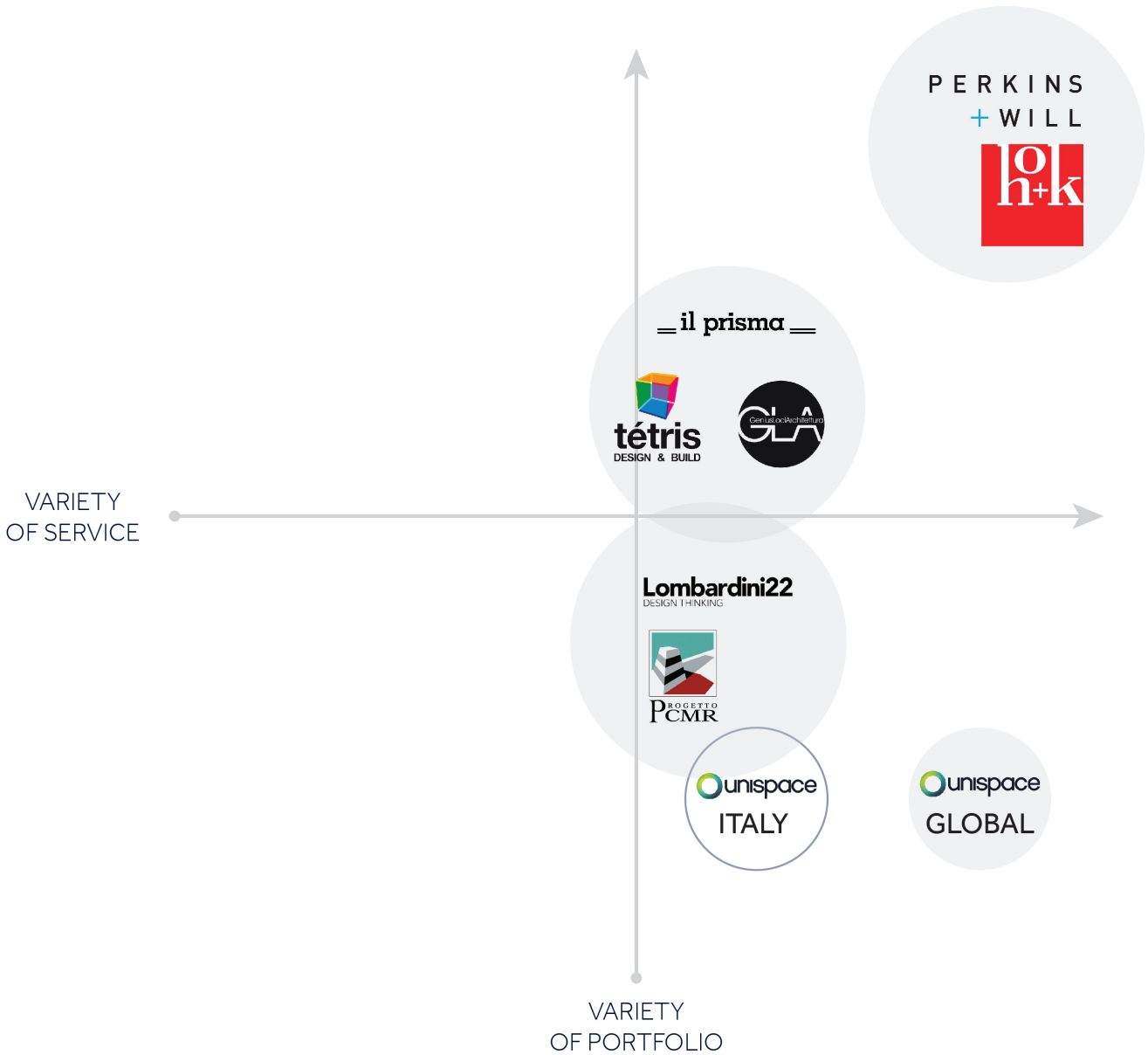
10. The comparative table

Once a general understanding of the competitors is reached, a deeper analysis is conducted and visualized in a competitors chart (see figure 11). Whereas the first table only lists the competitors, the following chart helps to understand the relationship between them. Two axes are defined.

Vertically, the variety of focus area is mapped, i.e residential design, retail design, corporate design,

transport design etc. Being 1 a company with a very specific focus area, and 10 a company who acts in a wide variety of work fields.

On the horizontal axe the variety of services is indicated, rating 1 a company offering only one service and 10 a company that offers the entire spectrum of project phase supports (analysis, strategy, design, delivery etc.).



11. Competitors chart

Globally

On a global view, companies like Perkins & Will or HOK can be considered Unispace Global competitors, because of their global reach and service offering. However, these realities are way bigger than Unispace (1000-5000 employees compared to 400+ of Unispace people) and, when considering the Italian market, they are often not present locally.

Furthermore, they have a very varied focus covering almost all architecture fields, while Unispace cover the specific market of corporate interior. In the scheme, such companies are mainly positioned in the top right quadrant, as they offer both a wide variety of services and a varied market field.

Overall, Unispace's specific focus area and the strong TCM methodology are points of difference within the marketplace.

Locally

On a local perspective, smaller companies should be taken into account. These are more similar to Unispace Global for their dimension (<1000 employees) and to Unispace Italy for the area of work (mainly focusing on Italy). Companies like Il Prisma, Tetris and Genius Loci are all design & built companies, meaning they offer both design and construction services to clients, as Unispace does, but operate in multiple architecture fields. These are positioned in the central area of the scheme.

Similarly to Unispace for dimensions, companies like Progetto CMR or Lombardini22 are focusing only on corporate interiors, as Unispace, but then only offer

Strategy

When looking at competitors with a good strategy offering, real estate companies come into play. Multinational companies like Jones Lang LaSalle, CBRE or Colliers perform the search of operative

Conclusion

Hence, the distinguishing factor that makes Unispace Italy and Global stand out compared to competitors is twofold.

First, the choice of Unispace of focusing on only corporate interiors makes its portfolio very specific and ensures a highly expert image to the clients looking for a corporate design company.

the design phase, partnering with other companies when it comes to construction. However, they do offer the strategy service. For this, they are closely positioned to Unispace Italy.

Sometimes companies hold ideas competitions among selected companies to decide on which one they will rely on. In these cases, Unispace Italy often finds itself competing with Progetto CMR, Il Prisma and Genius Loci. This means that also the client perception of these companies' work quality is similar. This is also supported by the adjacencies of these companies in the scheme.

offices and buildings, but also offer a strategic analysis similar to Unispace. Also, Architecture and Planning firms, like DGEW, offer a well structured service.

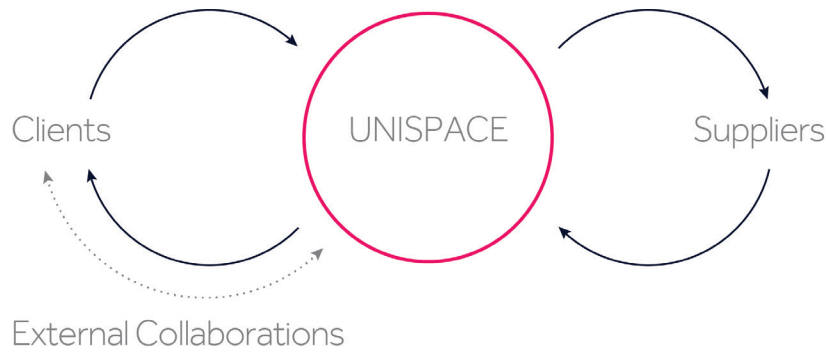
Second, the integrated TCM approach of Unispace allows the client to have only one partner company that takes care of the entire project from strategy to design to construction and delivery. This process is distinctive among competitors, although in Italy strategy is weaker compared to Unispace Global. Overall, the focus area and the methodology are strong points of difference within the marketplace.

Internal Analysis

Stakeholders

As mentioned before, in a traditional workplace model many stakeholders are involved. Unispace Global unify all these professional figures under one single company simplifying and optimising the process.

They interface with essentially two stakeholders (see figure 12): clients and suppliers. Next to this, external collaborations are established time to time, depending on the projects.



12. Unispace stakeholders

Clients

Unispace deals with private businesses of different dimensions, small local companies but also international realities. Sometimes, the companies that contact Unispace want to simply refurbish their office or relocate into another building, but often times they also embark on a transformational journey to align their workplace with the future direction of the company. This means radical changes at the base of the company organizations, adopting new work

policies and mindsets. This is also supported by Chan et al. (2007), who distinguish two perspectives on workplace design. On the one hand, a more traditional viewpoint sees workplace design as a way to align with the existing business values and objectives of an organization. On the other hand, a more innovative perspective sees workplace design as a possibility to meet new challenges and create future options.

Suppliers

Suppliers are highly involved in every project, as furniture, technology and finishing materials are always needed. Unispace acts as a general contractor,

buying and providing all the materials needed for each project from the suppliers in first person.

External collaborations

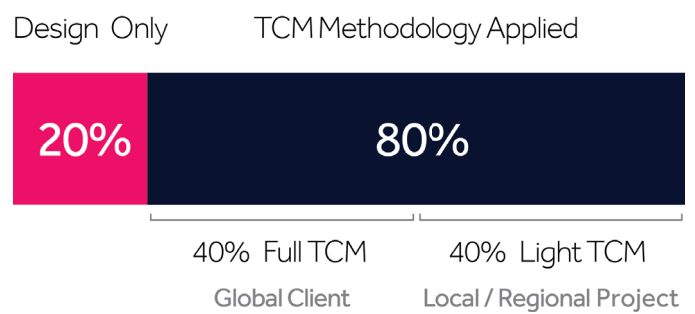
Sometimes external companies or professionals are contacted for a consultancy. For example, when a client seeks specific acoustic systems or advanced technological solutions, external parties are involved

to ensure high quality solutions. In any case, Unispace always act as a coordinator and take care of the project in first person.

Product Portfolio

Unispace offer a service that covers from start to the end a workplace project. Because of this wide offering, clients address Unispace to conduct a part, multiple parts or every part of a project (see figure 13). This means that Unispace can act, for example, only as a design consultant or general contractor in a bigger project, or be in charge of every stage of it.

In terms of numbers, around 20% of the total works conducted sees Unispace involved only in the design phase, while 80% of the times the entire TCM methodology is applied partly or completely.



13. Unispace product portfolio

Strategy. Think

Companies may contact Unispace to get a guidance in the first part of the project. This kind of service helps the clients understand what they really need in terms of space, numbers and work policies. It helps to clarify the fuzzy front end and provide clear guidelines for the subsequent design phase. Workshops, interviews, observations, occupancy and space data surveys are just a few of the techniques and tools that Unispace can offer in this stage.

Design. Create

When only design service is required, Unispace offers creativity and ideas based on the client specific profile. The design of an office is not only an aesthetic choice, but it is conceived as a tool to change the employee's mindset to new work policies, to favour mobility and collaboration within the space for example. In this case, a layout, concept picture and renderings are developed to communicate with the clients.

Construction Management. Make

Sometimes, Unispace is not asked to follow the entire project but to develop the strategy and / or design phase only. This can happen for example when the clients already has a construction company they rely on or when they first want to test Unispace way of working and, only when sure of its reliability, engage Unispace also for the following step.

Unispace Full Methodology

The most positive scenario happens when the entire TCM methodology is applied to a project. This ensures a fluent approach and allows Unispace to show its best capabilities. It is usually asked by and provided to global clients, that need to ensure a coherent image throughout their offices worldwide, requiring good strategy, design and delivery capabilities. On the other hand, a light version of Unispace full package (usually design+make phases) is often provided to local or regional projects that require project management and risk-free delivery.

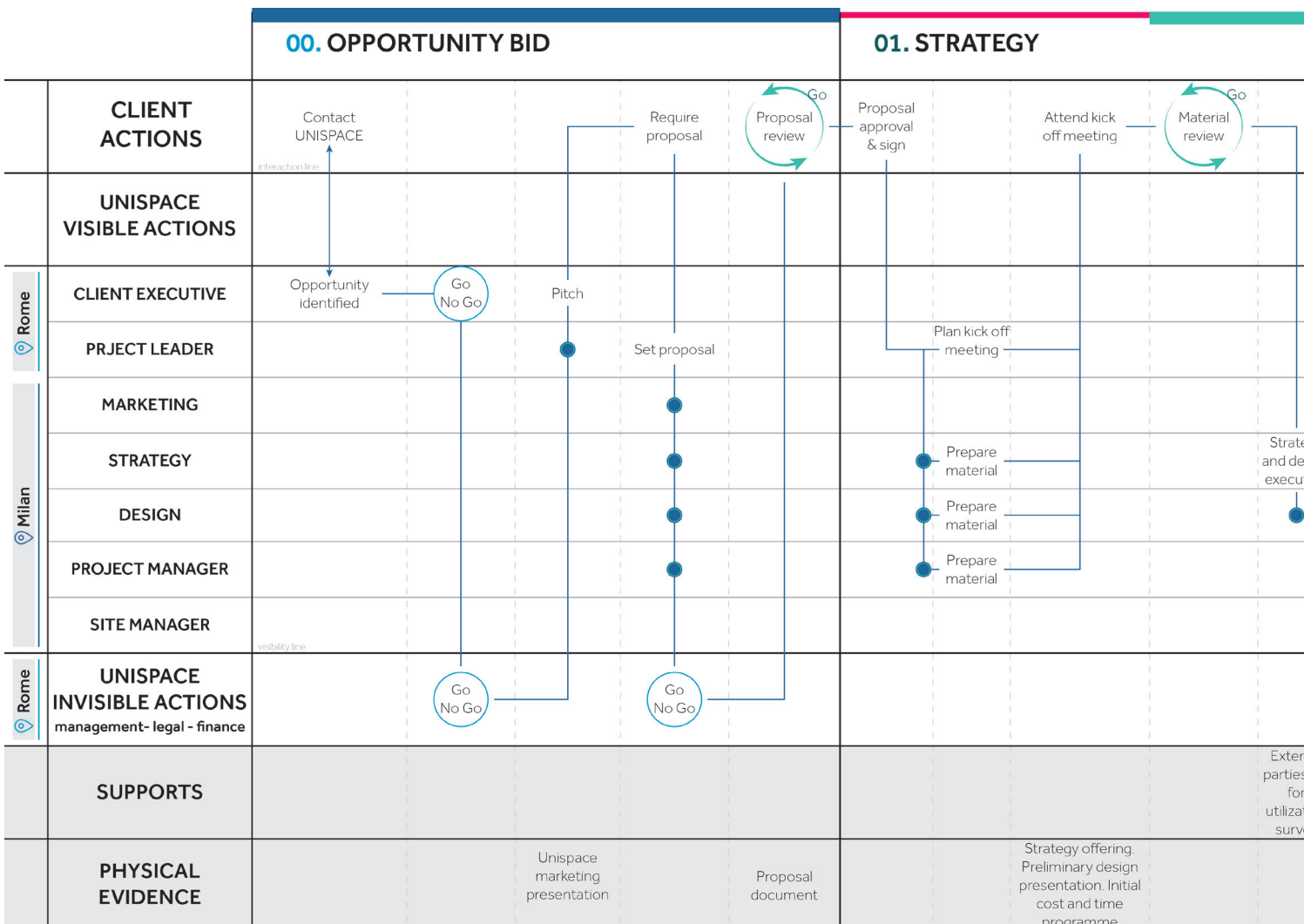
Now that the methodology, the product portfolio, and the stakeholders are clear, it is possible to investigate in depth how Unispace Italy work, probing each action and actor in a service blueprint.

Service Blueprint

The service blueprint is a customer focused approach for service innovation and improvement (Shostack, 1984) and for this it is chosen to investigate the way in which Unispace services are delivered. A standard workplace project conducted by Unispace Italy is mapped in the scheme in visual 14 (see also appendix C).

The service blueprint was structured following the practical technique of Bitner et al. (2007). Horizontally, the process is divided into the 04 phases that a typical project involves: opportunity bid, strategy, design and delivery. Vertically, 05 components are listed: client actions, Unispace visible and invisible actions, physical evidence and supports.

Clients actions include the steps that customers undertake in a workplace project. Unispace visible actions are all Unispace actions of which the client is aware, divided from the client actions component by the line of interaction. The interaction between client and Unispace happens when this line is crossed. Invisible Unispace actions are backstage actions performed by Unispace employees (divided per departments and office locations) in order to serve the customers. Onstage and backstage Unispace actions are divided by the line of visibility. Then, the supports explains external collaborations, systems or programmes that are involved by Unispace to carry out the tasks that need to be performed. To conclude,



14. The service blueprint of a typical project performed by Unispace Italy

Currently, the phases of strategy and design largely overlap. Strategy results presentation happens in the design phase and preliminary design proposal is run during the strategy stage.

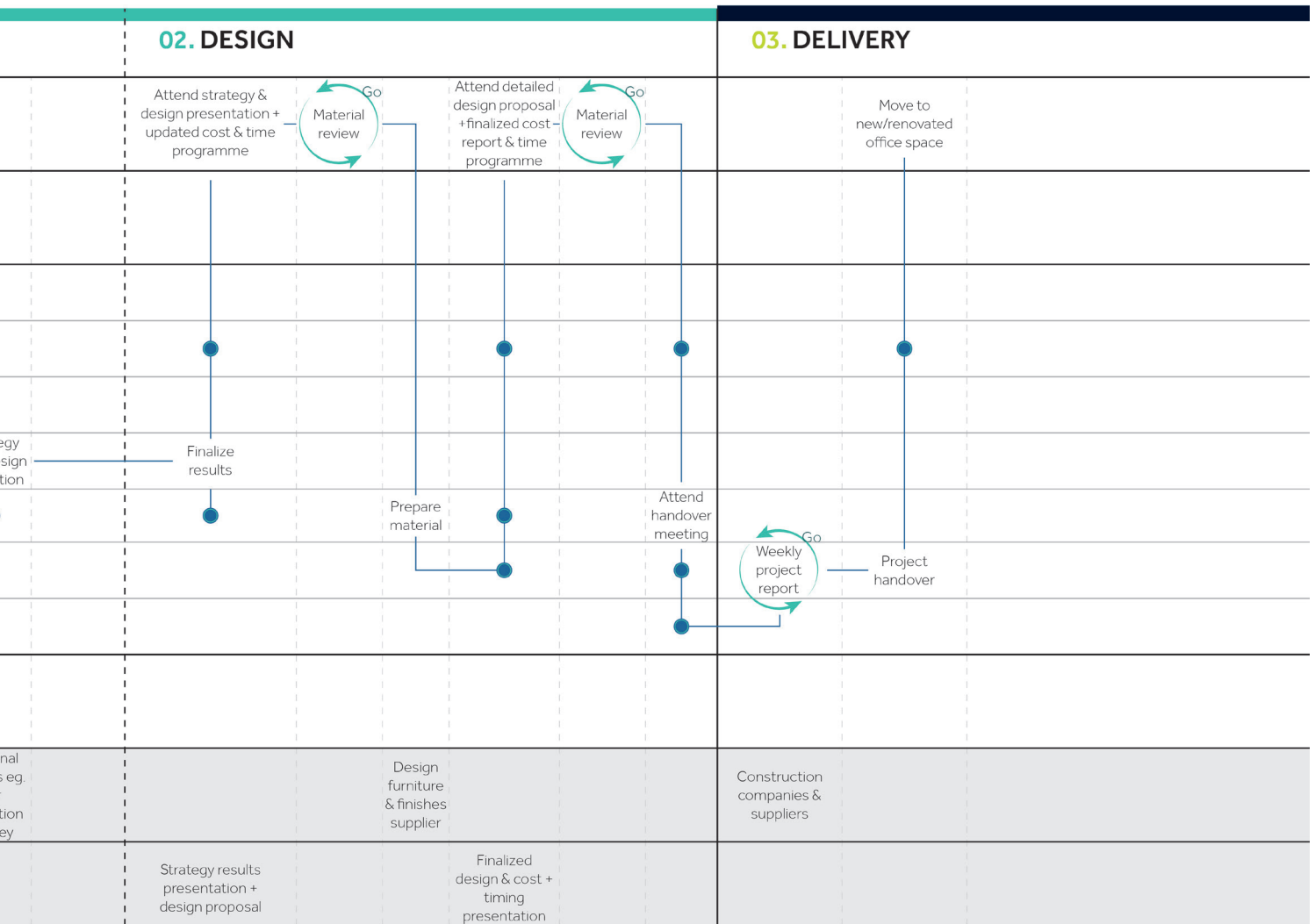
physical evidence is tangible materials the clients is exposed to and that influence his quality perception.

The service blueprint visualization of typical project flow helps to draw some conclusions.

(1) The project leader and the client executive are present in every interaction with clients. This reflects one of Unispace Global distinguishing factor (one clear referring figure for the entire project). As strategy is the first package offered to a client, it has to be presented in a very early stage. Hence, the client executive/

project leader pitch is crucial for the strategy package to happen.

(2) The phases of strategy and design largely overlap, as strategy results presentation happens in the design phase and preliminary design proposal is presented during the strategy stage. Contrary, delivery is a totally separated chapter. From a workflow perspective, this overlap is not beneficial as strategy turns into a simple design tool and the design phase lengthens extensively.



Comparing Unispace Global and Unispace Italy strategy offering

A comparison among Unispace Global and Unispace Italy strategy offering is drawn. The goal is to understand what Unispace Global mean by workplace strategy and how they deliver it to clients. For this, an office where this capability is highly developed is chosen and set as the standard to which the Italian studio should adjust. Below, in order, the Global and Italian strategy offering are investigated.

Unispace Global Strategy Offering

To reach a deep understanding of how the global Unispace strategy offering is actually applied into projects in other countries, an interview is held with a senior strategy consultant from Unispace studio in Sydney. This studio was chosen because it has developed several strategy projects of different sizes, and it was believed to be knowable on the subject. The goal of the interview is to get into the perspective of a Unispace strategist, understanding how strategy is developed, structured and offered to clients in Australia.

The interview was held on Skype For Business and documents were shared on screens when necessary to facilitate the discussion. The conversation was developed following a combined strategy between a guided approach and a standardized format (see appendix A). This means that some key questions were specified, while other topics were explored more freely (see appendix B for the interview transcript).

The key insights emerged from the interview are reported below.

Standard strategy capability

- Unispace standard strategy offering is to be intended as a menu of services, divided into four phases (discover, explore, test and visualize).
- The strategy offering is to be tailored on every client: one or more activities from the full range of services are picked based on the client final objective
- The criteria used to select the activities are essentially three (see figure 15): how much **time** the client has, how much **money** the client wants to invest and how much the client allows Unispace to **engage** with the business.



Strategy offering to clients

- Strategy is offered to client in a very early stage, even a year or more before a property decision has to be made
- Strategy is offered to a client as a mean to solve a business case. It has to give the client a reason to change
- Strategy is about building a strong relationship with the client. For this, Unispace should put itself forward to act as trusted advisor.

Unispace team in a strategy project

- The role of a strategist is to inform and educate the clients on what's possible
- A designer and a project manager are allocated to the project and participate in all the meetings and strategy sessions, to get first hand information and to ensure a smooth flow between phases.

Culture , strategy and change management

- Some cultures may be more open to change than others, but the goal of a strategist is still the same: educate people.
- Change Management is an optional activity that supports the client to deal with change
- Usually an external partner is involved to perform this activity

Unispace Italy Current Strategy Offering

Workplaces built on good strategy and research allow organizations to get the greatest return on their initial investment (Springer, 2011). For this, Unispace Global has developed a very extensive offering to perform this phase at best. Unispace portfolio include a variety of design tools, techniques and methods, that can be chosen consequently the clients specific requirements and needs.

The strategy package is structured into four stages (01 discover, 02 explore, 03 test and 04 visualize). Each of them includes a variety of different techniques, designed to reach the goal of that specific stage. As one of the goals of this thesis project is to simplify and adapt this offering to the Milan studio capability, first it is necessary to understand what Unispace Italy already performs. This is done in two ways, first Unispace Italy strategy offering is compared to Unispace Global

strategy capabilities, and then an illustrative example of Unispace Italy strategy project is reported.

Unispace Italy vs Global strategy capability

An overview of all the techniques offered by Unispace Global is visualized in figure XX. Among them, the ones performed by the Italian studio are highlighted and analyzed. First the activities performed are marked with a green dot and the actors performing those activities are identifies (light blue line for project managers and engineers and orange line for architects). Then activities not performed are analysed distinguishing the ones requiring advanced technological tools not available in the Italian studio and the ones related to the field of change management.

From this comparison, visualized in figure 16, three main conclusions can be drawn:

1. LACK OF CREATIVE OFFERING

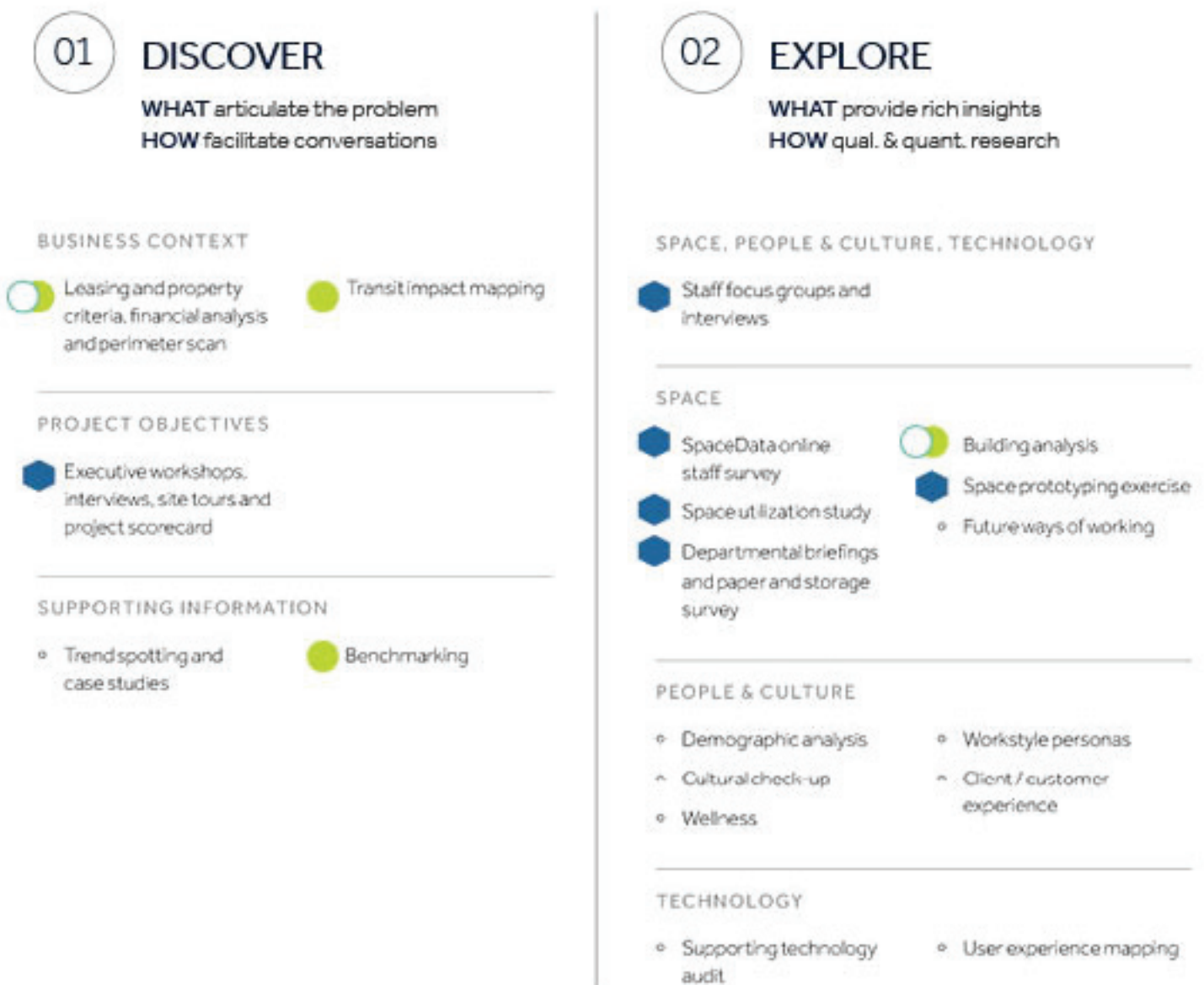
The activities already performed by the Italian studio are the most technical ones within the strategy package. They need the knowledge and expertise of architects (light blue line in the scheme), engineers or project managers (green line in the scheme) to be performed.

2. LACK OF CLIENT ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

All the activities currently performed by the Italian studio involve the client in a passive way. This limits the understanding of client needs to a very technical level. Contrarily, by actively involving the clients and supporting them to uncover their latent problems and necessities, crucial and more sensitive information can be gathered.

3. THE 2ND PHASE IS THE LEAST DEVELOPED

Among the four strategy stages, the second phase is the one where the Italian studio lack the most. This links back to the previous point, as the activities in this stage imply an active participation of the client.



UnispaceItalystrategyofferinglacksactiveclientengagement and focuses too much on technical activities

- Building-related activities performed by architects with real estate companies ○
- Technical activities performed by project managers ●
- Activities performed by Unispace Italy ●

- Activities requiring active client engagement ▬
- Activities not performed because of missing technological support ★
- Activities related to change management ▲

03 TEST

WHAT test scenarios
HOW design & prototype

SPACE

- Brand expression ○ ● Space budget, test fit space plan and block & stack
- Prototyping and visualisation ● Workspace pilot ★
- ★ Reality modeling ★

PEOPLE & CULTURE

- Future workstyles ● Adjacency mapping ●
- ▲ Skills gap ● Organisational and space allocation alignment ●
- ▲ Change readiness analysis

TECHNOLOGY

- User experience enhancement

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- ● Financial analysis of capital spend

04 VISUALIZE

WHAT share design potential
HOW roadmaps & visuals

SPACE

- ● Building performance brief and evaluation ★ UniBIM model

TECHNOLOGY

- Technology roadmap

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- ● Project scheduling and budgeting

Illustrative example

To get a practical understanding of how strategy actually works in the Italian studio, a project involving strategy activities was followed on field. This project, held in July 2017, represents the current strategy offering of Unispace Milan as at the beginning of this thesis project.

A multinational company working in the field of air conditioning manufacturing contacted Unispace to design their future office. As they are currently located in the suburban area of Milan, the client decided to look for a location that would better reflect the image of the company and give them more visibility. For this,

Unispace Client Executive and Project Leader decided to offer a Transit Impact Mapping study to the client.

Transit Impact Mapping is a strategic activity that assists leadership teams considering site relocation to understand the impact of different site locations on staff travel times. Hence, staff postcodes were analysed to calculate travel times to the possible future office locations using both public and private transport options. A report was prepared giving an assessment of the proportion of staff that will have their travel time either increase or decrease compared to the current office location (see figure 17).



17. Pages of the Transit Impact Mapping report

Once the client decided on their future office location, next steps were considered. The client agreed on shifting from a full enclosed offices situation to open space, as they understood its benefit. However, the HR arose the concern on the discontent that such decision would cause and expressed the desire to get all the managers engaged in the project to get shared consensus, as per their company's philosophy. So, in order to capture the managers' feelings to this idea, an executive workshop was organized (see figure 18).

An Executive Workshop is a strategic activity offered to clients to bring all key stakeholders of the project on the same table. The goal is educating the leadership team on the possibilities of how the workplace can support their business objectives. As Unispace Milan team was at its first experience with such workshop, design strategists and architects from Unispace Boston were contacted to better organize the activity. It was decided to structure the workshop into three parts:

01 pros and cons. the office of the future

Participants are asked their feelings and opinions towards several items of the current office (e.g. the break area, their own office etc.) to understand current problems and future expectations.

02 thoughts. the key value of a workplace

Participants are exposed to some key words (e.g. communication, privacy etc.) and asked what these words mean to them. The goal is to catch the values they want to see expressed in their future workplace.

03 cards. express a vision

About 60 emotional, evocative or abstract pictures printed on cards are placed on a working table. Participants are asked to pick the card that best represents the company they work in. The goal is to understand how the employees perceive and express the branding of their company.



18. Leadership workshop

Prior to the workshop, an invite was prepared and sent to all the participants. These included all department managers and the Italian director. Also, a briefing questionnaire was designed and distributed during the session.

Once the activity was finished, questionnaires and boards were collected. A report summarizing the results was prepared and presented together with the preliminary layout proposal presentation prepared by the design team two weeks later. At this point, the strategy stage was closed, several design revisions followed and the project is now being prepared with detailed architectural drawings.

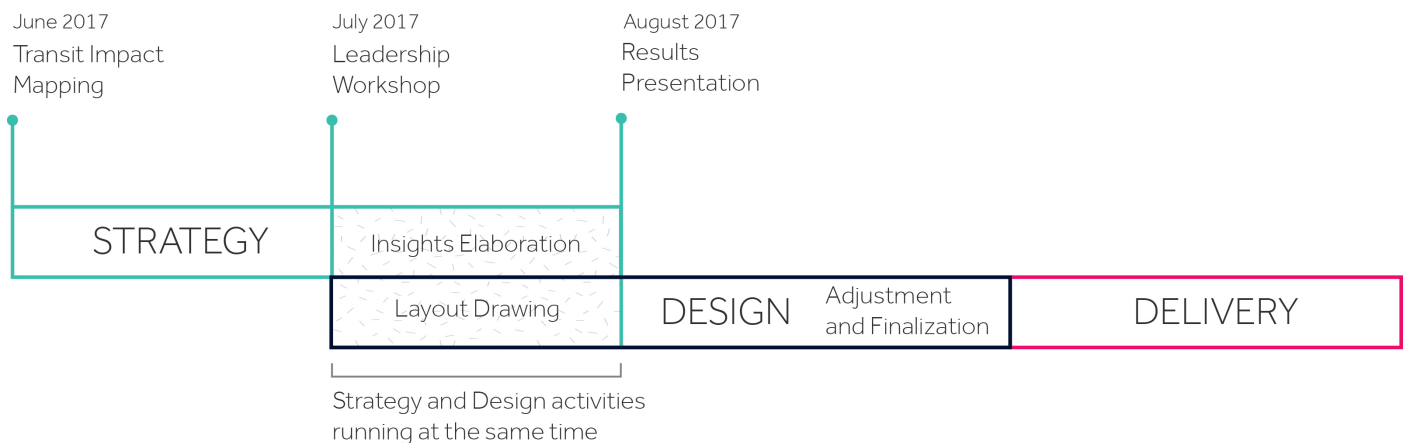
Some considerations can be made after the strategy phase of the project was concluded (see figure 19).

1. CHAOTIC PROJECT PHASES MANAGEMENT

Conducting Strategy and Design at the same time is not beneficial. Most of the results from strategy were not used by architects, as architectural key design decisions were already taken. Also, the design phase lasted longer than it was supposed to. For this, the client did not perceive clear guidance from Unispace.

2. PASSIVE PROJECT LEADING

Unispace had a passive role in the strategic offering. Being proactive (meaning anticipating client's possible needs and offering subsequent activities) allows Unispace to have more control on the project results and timing.



19. Visualization of the process followed in the project

Findings

As emerged in the internal analysis, strategy is an important service offered by Unispace, as it helps the company to differentiate from competitors. Also, trends and market analysis show it is a growing market and it is worth investing in developing such expertise. Below, some final conclusions from the conducted analysis are summarized and indicate what directions the final design should consider:

play offense, not defense: Unispace should be able to anticipate client's needs and requests and offer an adequate support

Currently, Unispace is exploring the strategy stage and is continuously approaching new strategic tools. As these are not fully embedded into the company know-how, Unispace struggle to foreseen their benefits and

therefore it is not fully able to answer client's issues by proposing strategy tools. Therefore, the current behaviour should be **improved** by the future design.

strategy as an independent stage: Strategy should be offered as a separate service, which is not part of design, but leads to it.

Strategy is not design briefing. Strategy should be offered as a separate service, which is not part of design, but leads to it. At the moment, strategy and design stages are performed at the same time, fully or partly. This happens because the team is

not conscious of the benefit that a well developed strategy can bring to the project and merely use it as design briefing. Hence, the future design needs to **change** this behaviour.

need for engagement: it allows the project to lose its foreign character.

Performing activities at the executive and/or business level is important. It allows the project to lose its foreign character. When the client is involved, the project is no more something imported from the outside, but something built and tailored together.

All the current activities performed under the strategy stage do not require the client active participation. This happens because no team member is formed to organize and perform those activity involving the clients. Because of this, the future design needs to **teach** a new behaviour.

KEY INSIGHTS

EXPLORATION

the solution should enable Unispace Italy to perform the strategy phase autonomously.

the solution should be fresh, energetic and straightforward as per Unispace values

the solution should develop the Think stage of the TCM methodology

EXTERNAL ANALYSIS

the competitive advantage of having a single referring figure throughout the process should be taken into account by the final solution

INTERNAL ANALYSIS

the solution should consider the tools offered by Unispace Global strategy offering

the solution should separate the phases of design and strategy

the solution should help the experts acting in the design phase to see the values of strategy

the solution should empower the user to perform an unknown project phase

the solution should enable Unispace to anticipate the client's needs

FOLLOW UP WITH

delivering the service discussion p 62
p 85

communication p 69

understanding the product p 50

new service blueprint p 66

understanding the product p50

conclusion p69

internal communication p70

validation p85

understanding the customers p55

DESIGN



IV

The goal of this thesis is to simplify Unispace Global strategy offering and adapting it to the Italian studio market. In other words, refining a product and clarifying its targeted user. The following design chapter is, therefore, structured into four major sections:

(1.) understanding the product: the strategy tools **(2.)** understanding the customers: the clients' profiles. Following **(3.)**, the defined product and customers are matched together to define the final service. To conclude, **(4.)** a strategy is designed to deliver such service.

Understanding the Product the strategy tools

In light of what emerged in the analysis chapter, the given Unispace Global strategy offering needs to be rearranged and adapted to the Italian studio. So, first, the several technical activities listed in the strategy offering but performed by architects and project managers are left out: these are already well developed in the Milan studio and result out of scope

for this project. Second, the activities that require special equipments, currently not available in the Italian office, were excluded. All the other activities are rearranged, merged together where necessary and presented below (see visual 20) in a lighter strategy offering version.



20. Light Strategy Offering

The activities

For a full understanding of such offering, as many activities as possible were explored and tested individually. This resulted in seven out of ten activities tested with real clients, as visualized in the table below. The objective of such testing is twofold: on

the one hand, testing in first-person allows a deeper comprehension of the activities in terms of limits and potentials and, on the other hand, this allows to prepare materials that can be used as templates by Unispace Milan in future projects.

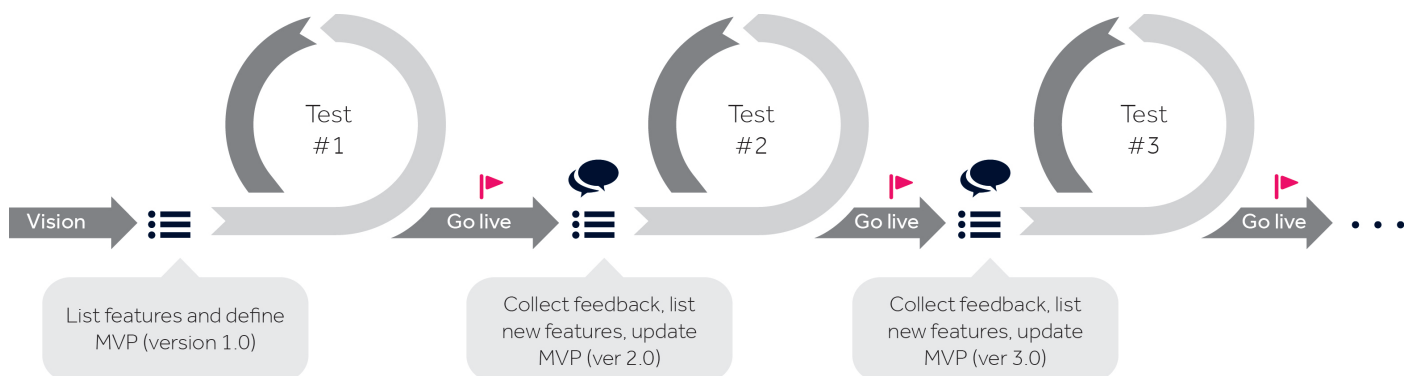
DISCOVER	EXPLORE	TEST	VISUALIZE
<p>Transit Impact Mapping</p> <p>Site Tours</p> <p>Executive Workshop</p> <p>Executive Interviews</p>	<p>Staff Focus Group</p> <p>Staff Interviews</p> <p>Space Data Online Survey</p> <p>Space Utilization Study</p>	<p>Adjacency Mapping</p> <p>Rapid Prototyping</p>	<p>Final Report</p>

the tested activities are written in pink

The Process

A method consisting of testing and reviewing was followed and is visualized in figure 17. Testing means that each activity was set up and performed multiple times (two to three depending on the activity) with real clients. Reviewing means that internal (Unispace comments) and external (clients comments) feedback were collected and took into consideration

in the following test. The first test functioned as a MVP, meaning it had enough feature to satisfy the client and to provide evaluation for future product development. The activities took months to be defined: as they were fully dependent on the project running at that time in the company and the client availability, the tests were staggered over time.



21. Strategy Activities development

Following such process, the activities were tested individually several times, where possible, and with a different client. On the one hand, this iterative method allowed to continuously maximize the value of Unispace Italy strategy offering through constant development. However, on the other hand, the activities were tested every time with different clients. The heterogeneity of the testing users forced all the final templates to be universal and generic.

The tests and the feedbacks collected per each

activity are used to design a final template, for Unispace Italy to be able to set and run these techniques independently. Each tool profile explains the objective, the target group, the deliverables and the necessary steps to perform it. Also, the TME values are specified, to facilitate the activities selection on the client's resources and availability. A blank template, on which all the tool cards are built, is presented below (see figure 22). The final cards are fully developed later, in the communication chapter.

The form is a large rectangular template divided into several sections. At the top, there are three main boxes: 'GOAL:' with a target icon, 'TARGET GROUP:' with a group of people icon, and 'DELIVERABLES:' with a clipboard icon. Below these are 'TOOLS:' with a gear icon. Below the 'GOAL', 'TARGET GROUP', and 'TOOLS' boxes are three progress indicators labeled 'TIME', 'MONEY', and 'ENGAGEMENT', each with six small circles. At the bottom, there are two large sections: 'INSTRUCTIONS' with a bar chart icon and 'NOTES' with a speech bubble icon.

22. Blank template

The Results

The tests helped to get a full understanding of the objective, the target and the potential of each activity. An overview of such achievement is provided below. As the strategy phase and its activities are structured by Unispace Global into four steps (discover, explore,

Discover

The first stage, discover, aims to articulate the business case. This means getting a deep understanding of the company structure, functions, values and future office visions. This information is investigated at an executive level where, together with a selected project team, the future business needs are investigated through workshop and interviews. Such workshops are also a great tool for educating the leadership team on the possibilities of how the workplace can support

Explore

Once the business case is set, further insights are investigated in the explore stage. This is done through again workshop and interviews, but then run at a business level. Engaging the staff in such activities early in the project makes the change process much easier. It is also the occasion to gather data from the final user of the space, where feelings, fear and expectations

Test

In the third stage, preliminary design solutions are developed and tested against the business objectives defined in the prior steps. Together with the project architect, possible layout with different degrees of

Visualize

The final step, visualize, reviews and summarizes all the gathered insights and draws conclusions on the design of the future company office. Here a final report

test and visualize) the same structure is preserved to provide a coherent image from a studio to another when interfacing with global clients. Below, a description of each strategy step and a personal understanding of the benefits of the tools is given.

their business objectives. To be able to understand and get concrete examples of possible workplace scenarios, site tours can be organized to other companies, where Unispace successfully designed innovative workspaces. Transit Impact Mapping is a very straightforward but effective tool to support the client selection process. The shortlisted site locations under consideration are compared based on the employees' necessities.

can be detected. The Space Data Online Survey is a great tool to make every person feel participant in the project, empowering the staff but also gathering relevant information on people workstyles. Also, the Utilization study collects precise data and statistics on space utilization and develops key metrics to inform potential agile working concepts.

innovation are built and discussed together with the client in the Rapid Prototyping activity. To conclude, the adjacency mapping tool is used to understand and visualize the departmental requirements.

presenting all the gathered information, insights and data is presented to the client.

The activities proposed by Unispace strategy offering are explored, tested and developed into standardized templates. This process allowed to reach a clear understanding of each strategy tool's structure and benefits.

With a clearer understanding of the Unispace offering in mind, some conclusions can be drawn.

When full strategy is not required by the client, it is still possible to support the design phase with some of the strategy activities presented above, like the adjacency mapping and site tours. These provide great benefits with little effort: the site tours give Unispace the occasion to showcase its best projects, while adjacency mapping highlights Unispace commitment in understanding and listening to the client.

When the client agrees on undertaking the strategy phase, relevant insights can be gathered by the workshop and interviews performed at the executive level, as in these situations the project goals and direction can be set.

When more precise data are needed and out of the box solutions sought, the Utilization survey provides numbers and statistics and, in general, very surprising and unexpected results.

Understanding the Customers

the client profiles

To better refine Unispace Italy strategy offering it is important to understand to whom it is addressed. For this, Unispace Italy clients are the basis for designing a set of client ideal types. Each grouping represents specific companies' needs and goals in a workplace project scenario, conceptualized based on observations of reality and designed to make comparisons possible.

To start, client profiles are developed. The goal is to understand who Unispace Italy is designing for by collecting a detailed description of these user's attributes (Courage & Baxter, 2005). Client profiles are created on the main companies that engaged with Unispace Italy from April to November 2017. This results in 10 clients coming from a variety of fields: pharmaceuticals and medical, information, electric and water technologies, software development, and entertainment). The project sizes also vary from 1000 to 13k sqm and all had different requirements and project modalities. A more detailed description of each client analysed can be found in appendix D.

To find similarities and differences between the 10 cases analyzed, a comparison table has been made. The comparison is developed on several criteria that can be clustered into three main topics. First, "current client situation" summarizes key information about the current office and working methods of the client. Second, "client's desired future" represents the goals and changes that the clients aim to adopt in the future. Third and last, "project information" map the client's approach to the project. This table can be found in appendix E.

Once all the information for each profile were filled in, similarities and differences emerged, were clustered, and led to the definition of five client scenarios. Such grouping is a simplification that aims to a better understanding, although it loses data. As the differentiating factor between these five groups turned out to be essentially their approach to innovation, Roger's adopters classification (1963) was used to classify them (see figure 23).

"Innovativeness is the degree to which an individual or other unit of adoptions is relatively earlier in adopting new ideas than other members of a system"

Unispace' clients

Rogers, 2010

open plan, ABW etc.



Rogers states that individuals adopt innovation in time sequence. And the same applies to companies, as they are essentially systems of individuals who work together towards common goals (Rogers et al, 1976). Describing such adopters categories allows addressing specific strategies to each client audience. Below, the five client types are presented. An overview of the company (C), project (P) and attitude (A) characteristics is given.

INNOVATORS The venturesome

C This company has a long term vision. Although the final objective may not be fully clear in their mind, they are open to get inspired and be the change initiator.

P The goal of the project is to reach full ABW, a flexible work policy that will benefit both the company and the employees.

A It has a visionary approach to the project and is not afraid to risk nor fail.

EARLY ADOPTERS The respectable

C A medium-large international company ready for innovation. The company has since time evolved from traditional working environment and policies, and it is ready to take a step further.

P The goal of the project is to adopt or implement agile working or activity based working and the company is looking for a trusted advisor to achieve this goal.

A They face the project with an open and enthusiast approach and appreciate exploring possible future visions.

EARLY MAJORITY The deliberate

C A medium size company keeping up to date. The company is open to change, after having carefully weighed pros and cons.

P The goal of the project is to get maximum benefits with minimum risk. They have to deliberate for some time before completely adopting a new idea.

A They have a very pragmatic approach to the project and need to be convinced on every step before accepting the change.

LATE MAJORITY The Skeptical

C This group approaches the change out of necessity. They have to change because of bigger cause, as the join of two companies with different cultures.

P The goal of the project is to keep the status quo as much as possible.

A They have a skeptical approach towards the project and accept any change only if its benefit is proven.

LAGGARDS The Traditional

C These companies are either small local realities or operate in very traditional fields (e.g. law). They do not ask for change nor are interested in it.

P The goal of the project is very straightforward: make architectural change if necessary and or renovate the look.

A They are open to discuss on the status quo possibilities, but get suspicious when introduce to any change.

Each adopter category is defined by a set of general characteristics. These characteristics shape that company's approach to innovation (see figure 23) and therefore have an influence on its future office vision.

To be able to envision a company's future office, a grid is created showing possible configuration of an office space (see visual 25). It is built on driving elements of office design: relative openness, relative seatings and number of support spaces. These factors also emerged to be driving trends in the analysis phase and are therefore considered, at their maximum application, a desirable scenario for innovators. As

a further step, the client types defined above are positioned in a vision-mapping grid to be able to match each adopter category to their most plausible future office vision.

The scheme showing possible configuration of a space is built on three axes, visualize and explained below (see visual 24). These are three driving variables that currently impact and define most the configuration of a space : the degrees of openness and the degree of flexibility, that emerged as a result of the trend analysis and projects observation.

X AXE LEVEL OF OPENNESS



Fully enclosed office space



Mixed of closed + open space



Fully open office space

Y AXE LEVEL OF FLEXIBILITY



Fully assigned office space



Fully unassigned office space



Z AXE QUANTITY OF SUPPORT SPACES



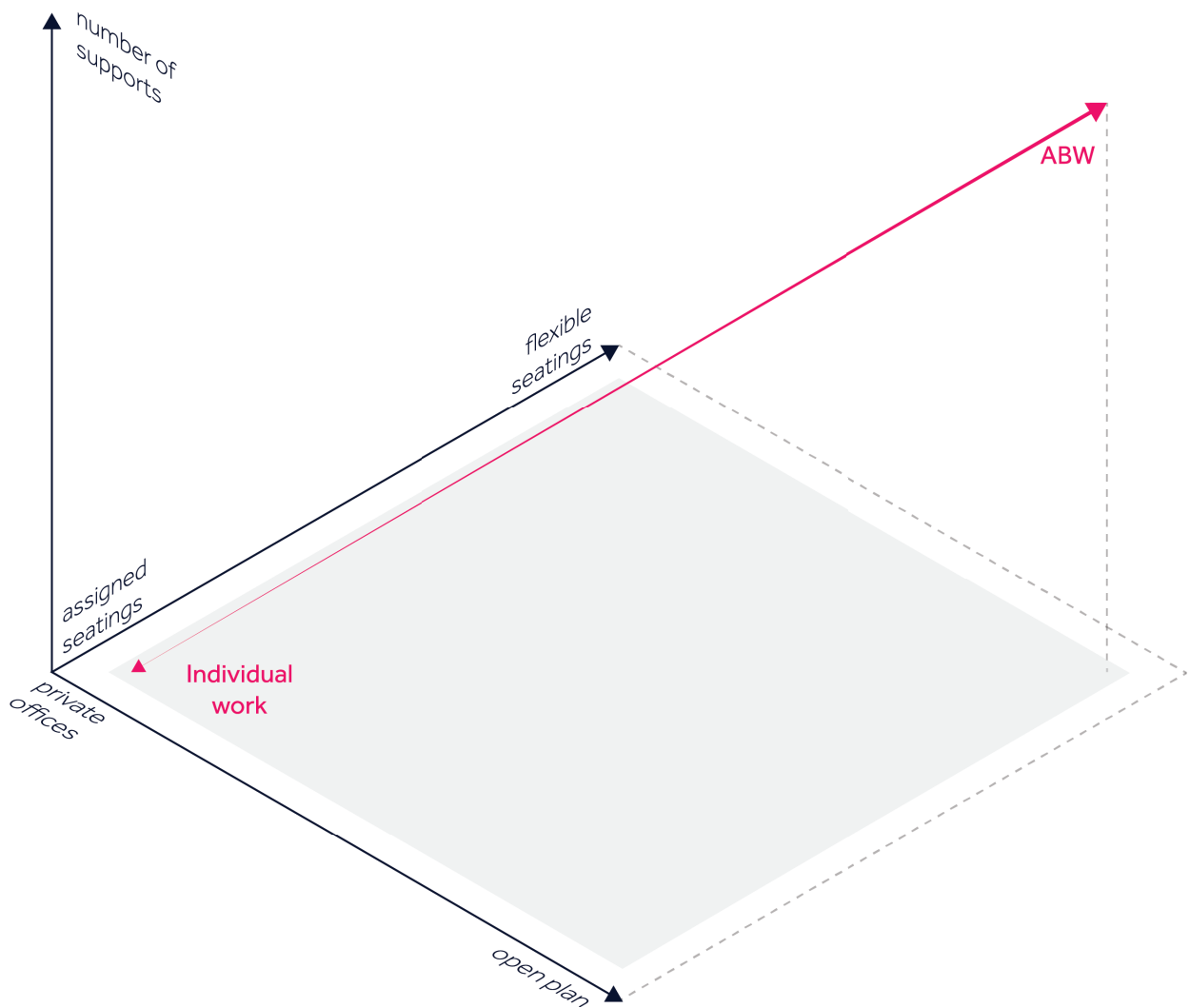
Few support spaces

Richness of support spaces

On the x-axis, the level of openness refers to the number of workstations placed in closed offices: the fewest it is, the higher the degree of openness is. On the y-axis, the degree of flexibility refers to the number of non assigned workstations, where work zones go beyond the single individual desk: the most the

unassigned desks are, the higher the level of flexibility.

To conclude, a third resulting variable on the z axis measures the quantity of support spaces, which is directly proportional to the growth of the other two axes.

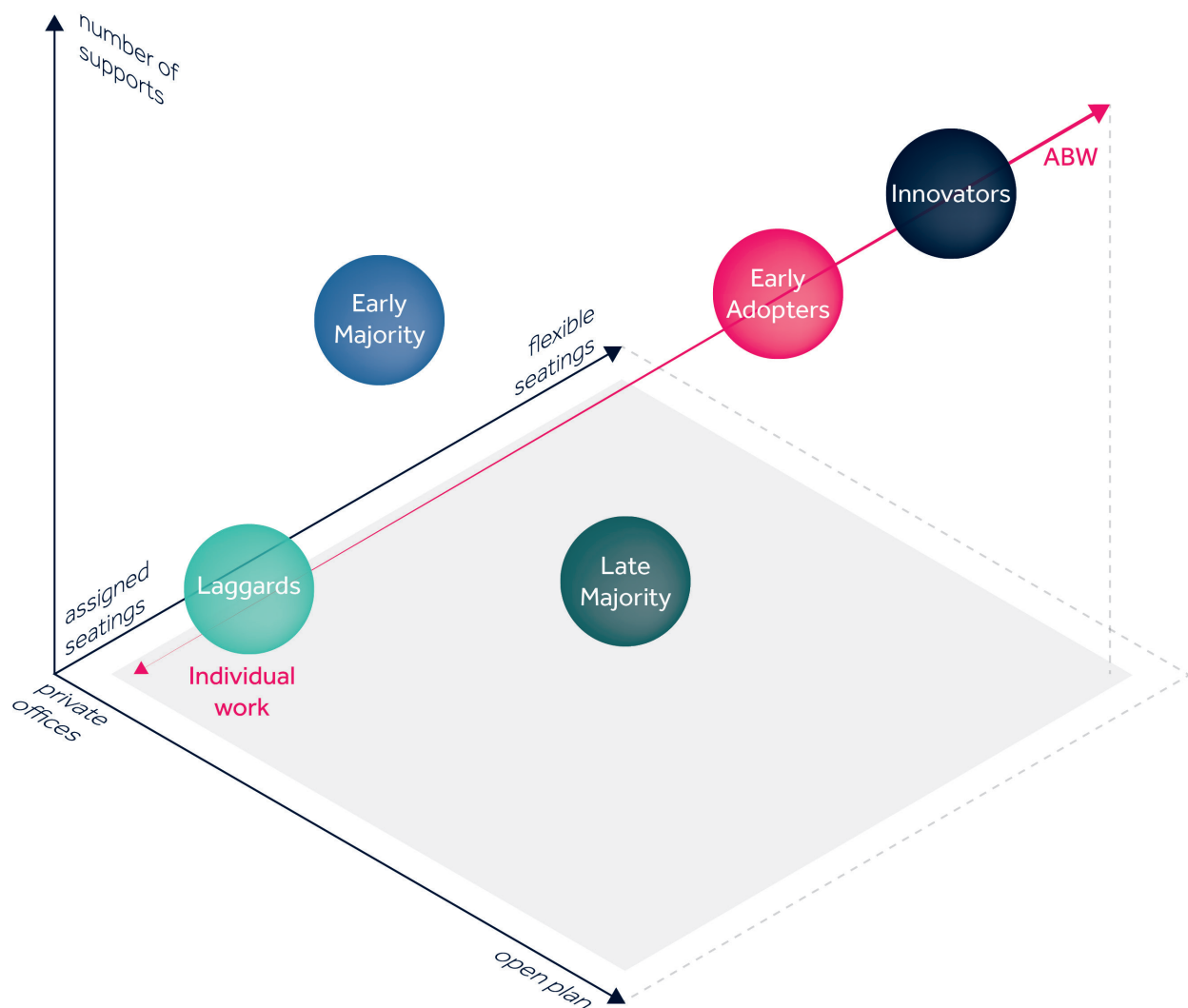


25. Possible configuration of a space

Once the cartesian plane is built, the 5 innovation adoption categories are placed on it and matched to the office type that fits them the most (see visual 26). The innovators, as the most venturesome group, are positioned together with the early adopters on the top right quadrant of the scheme, viceversa the laggards are placed in the "safe zone" of the opposite corner.

The remaining two groups are located in the middle: the late majority favouring openness to flexibility, whereas the early majority prefers flexibility. This simply because the idea of the open plan has been circulating for some time now and is not perceived anymore as totally disruptive, as the newer concept of unassigned seatings is, which therefore may be

Unispace, as a change agent, should follow a strategy of audience segmentation (Rogers, 2010). This means designing the most effective and efficient strategy for helping each audience category adopt innovation



26. The vision mapping grid: adopters categories and their future office visions

favoured by the EA.

Since the five groups have intrinsic characteristics and aim at different goals, a different approach should be used with each adopter category. Hence, Unispace, as a change agent, should follow a strategy of audience segmentation (Rogers, 2010). This means designing

the most effective and efficient strategy for helping each audience category adopt innovation.

By understanding these groups' fears, needs and approach to innovation, it is possible to craft ad hoc strategic offerings that match each targeted group.

Building the Service

matching products and customers

At this point, Unispace is able to understand the client's priorities, fears and approach to the project, but how to link this to the correct strategy offering?

Roger's research (2010) suggests that an audience segmentation strategy should be followed for each adopter category. However, at the same time, it is also important to define the best performing audience to appeal to, avoiding to lose time and money on a too broad target. Although the clients analyzed in the timeframe of this thesis work are more or less equally

distributed throughout the 5 adoption category, the ones that are of most interests for Unispace to target belong to EM, EA and IN. The EA, especially, is the category where most Unispace Milan clients belong to, and also represents the greatest degree of opinion leadership in most social systems. In general, it is smart to invest time in developing and performing a strategy program when clients belong to one of these three groups, exploring new possibilities and being more open to innovative projects: this results in higher revenue and greater market exposure for Unispace.

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So, first, the five innovation adoption groups (and in particular the defined target audience) are matched with the most appropriate strategic approach and tools. The matching is presented in visual 27. The goal of such segmentation is to provide Unispace with a

solid foundation on which developing a full strategy capability. The following table aims to be the starting point on which the full strategy offering for each individual client can be drawn.

As mentioned above, EM, EA and IN are the categories on which Unispace should focus its strategy offering. (1) Among these three groups, the EM is the most hesitant when it comes to adopting the newness. However, it still feels the fire of innovation burning inside. This group needs to be encouraged by taking away all its doubts and answering all its questions. The discussion is the key to opening the innovation door. So, in terms of strategic tools, site tours to other companies that already adopted the innovation can



27. The most appropriate strategy packages for each adoption categories

be performed to seduce the EM innovative spirit, while workshops and interviews are the right floor of discussion to push the change further. (2) On the other hand, the EA feels the urge to innovate, in order to keep owning its peer's esteems. They have a great imagination and see advantages in adopting the change. However, they are judicious on the innovation to adopt. Therefore, an executive workshop can be used to draw a future vision and illustrate new possibilities, while a utilization survey, as a more innovative tool and with often unexpected results, can be offered to make them take that final decision. (3) To conclude, the IN is an enthusiast, venturesome and open to risk. This is the right category with whom testing a novelty and going out of the box. For

this, utilization study and staff online survey are the strategic tool to be performed.

On the other hand, performing a strategy package with clients belonging to L or LA categories is not much beneficial for none parties when looking at time spent and gained results. However, still some basic activities like adjacency mapping and site tours can be performed and, based on the client approach to their results, further implementation can be considered. Perhaps a client that initially was considered a LA can reveal to be a great opportunity: Roger's categories are to be intended as a guiding tool, not sealed compartments.

Delivering the Service designing a strategy

Up to this point, Unispace clients were considered as individuals for simplification and conceptualization purposes. However, companies deal with a higher level of complexity than individuals when it comes to innovation: as multiple individuals are involved in the decision process, many barriers and resistance need

to be overcome before opening to the change. This complex procedure is defined by Rogers (2011) in five stages, where later ones cannot be undertaken until the earlier ones have been settled. These five steps are visualized in figure 28 and briefly presented below.

STAGES IN THE INNOVATION PROCESS

I. INITIATION

Information gathering, conceptualizing and planning

1 AGENDA SETTING

the organization identify an important problem and then seek an innovation as a mean of coping with it

2 MATCHING

a sort of reality test: the organization attempts to test the feasibility of the innovation in solving the found problem

PROBLEM IDENTIFIED

II. IMPLEMENTATION

events, actions and decisions to put an innovation into use

3 REDEFYNING

the innovation starts to lose its foreign character. It can be adjusted to accomodate the company's needs and structure

4 CLARIFYNG

gradually the innovation is put into wider use in the organization. The new idea becomes clearer to the organization's members

5 ROUTINIZING

innovation becomes incorporated into the regular activity of the organization. The innovation loses its foreign character

DECISION TO ADOPT

28. Stages in the Innovative Process in Organizations

01. Agenda Setting

an important problem is identified in an organization and an innovation is sought to cope with it

02. Matching

a match between the found problem and an innovation is identified and the organization tries to understand its feasibility.

The business case is set and a feasible way to solve it is found. At this point, the organization decides whether or not to adopt the innovation and to further implement the project. This decision is key to move the project further to the next step.

03. Redefining

the innovation imported from the outside starts losing its foreign character. The innovation can be modified to better fit the organization, but also the organization may adapt to the innovation.

04. Clarifying

the innovation becomes clearer to the organization and arrangements are made for the new project to take place.

05. Routinizing

the innovation loses its foreign identity and become incorporated into the organization

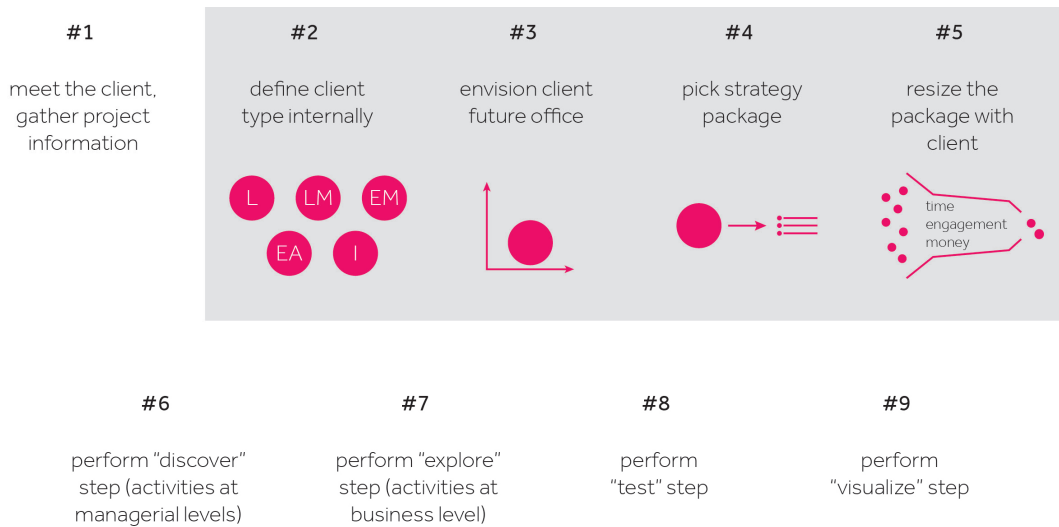
The above steps describe the innovation process from the point of view of the organization adopting the innovation. However, this thesis project focuses on the opposite perspective, that is the company providing the innovative solution (Unispace). Therefore, the same process is followed and used as a map to draw the steps that Unispace should follow to assist the innovation implementation.

First, the basic steps that Unispace Global takes when performing strategy are defined. This, as emerged in the analysis phase, consists of 5 actions:

- meet the client
- perform discover step
- perform explore step
- perform test step
- perform visualize step

Then, this basic workflow is enriched with the new tools designed to support the process: the client types identified before, the vision-mapping grid, the strategy packaged and the filter are included in the process at different stages.

An overview of the Unispace actions and the supporting tools is given in figure 29.



29. Current Unispace actions and new Unispace actions (in the grey box)

To conclude, the full process is studied. A table is drawn where the client actions and Unispace actions are related. A simplified version of such process is

visualized in figure 30 and explained below, while a more detailed version of the table can be found in appendix F.

INITIATION		
	1. AGENDA SETTING	2. MATCHING
CLIENT	#1 contact Unispace	#2 set a team to follow the project #3 explore innovation at high level
UNISPACE	#1 meet the client, gather project information #2 define client type internally #3 envision client future office	#4 pick strategy package #5 resize the package with client #6 perform "discover" step (activities at managerial levels)
----- ACTORS -----		
	project leader	strategist

30. Stages of the Innovativion Process in Organizations

In the first step "**Agenda Setting**", the organization identifies an important problem and contact Unispace as a possible solution to innovate. A business case is set.

(1) Unispace meet the client and gather project information. (2) The client is mapped internally into one of the innovation categories: IN, EA, EM, LM or L. As a consequence, (3) the future vision grid helps to envision the client's desired future. This allows Unispace to play offence: by foreseeing what the client will ask for, Unispace is able to tailor a strategy proposal that will help building the client's business case.

In the second step "**Matching**", the organization defines the executive team that has a decisional role in the project, listens to Unispace approach and ponders the proposed solutions. Finally, decides to partner with Unispace to further explore the project

at an executive level.

(4) Unispace propose the strategy package that better fits the client's profile. Together with the client, (5) the activities are evaluated depending on the client TME (level of time, money and engagement). (6)Activities planned under the DISCOVER stage are set and run.

At this point, the executive team decides whether to continue with the innovation and to communicate to all levels of the organization. This is a crucial moment to test the business reaction to the innovation because, as the senior strategist from Unispace Sydney stated during our Skype meeting, "as soon you start talking with the business, you suddenly set an expectation that something is going to happen."

In the third step "**Redefining**", the organization shares the new project internally. The executive level has set a

IMPLEMENTATION

	3. REDEFINING	4. CLARIFYING	5. ROUTINIZING
	#4 communicate project internally #5 explore innovation at business level	DESIGN STAGE DELIVERY STAGE	
	#7 perform "explore" step (activities at business level) #8 perform "test" step #9 perform "visualize" step		

vision of the future office and wants to understand to what extent it is achievable by exploring the innovation at the business level.

(7) Unispace is ready to run the activities planned under the EXPLORE stage at a business level. Following, (8) the test stage is performed in close collaboration with the project architect. The results of the entire strategy package are elaborated, (9) visualized and presented to the client.

In the fourth step "Clarifying", the innovation becomes clearer to the organization and arrangements are made for the new project to take place. The organization starts getting a clearer idea of the innovation and explore the possibilities to make it feasible.

Unispace set and perform the Design and Deliver

phases. The strategy stage is concluded, design is implemented and, once finalized, the new office is built.

To conclude, in the fifth step "Routinizing", the client has adopted the innovation: it loses its foreign identity and become incorporated into the organization.

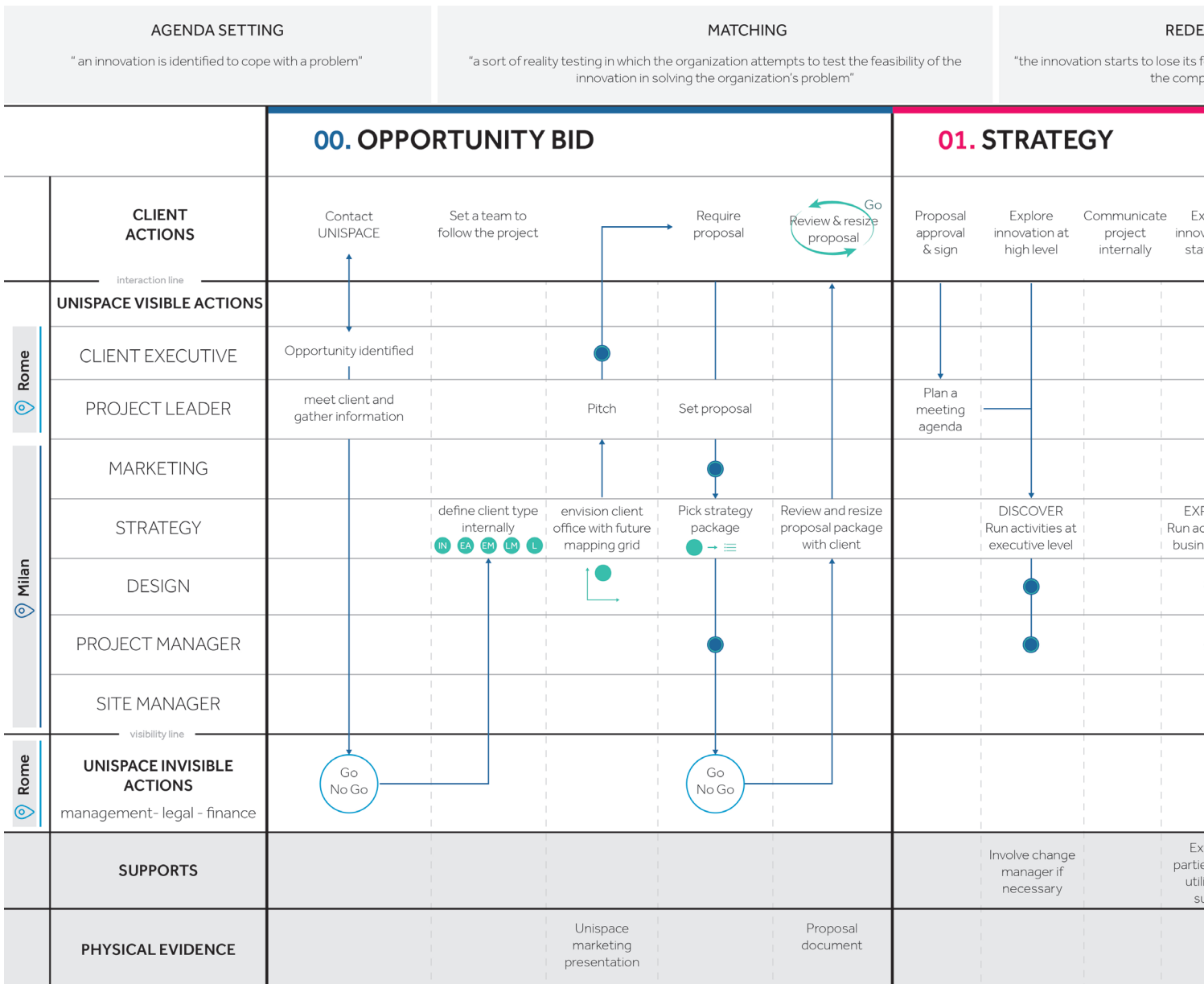
Legend
 Blue text = Unispace actions
 Black text = Client actions

New Service Blueprint

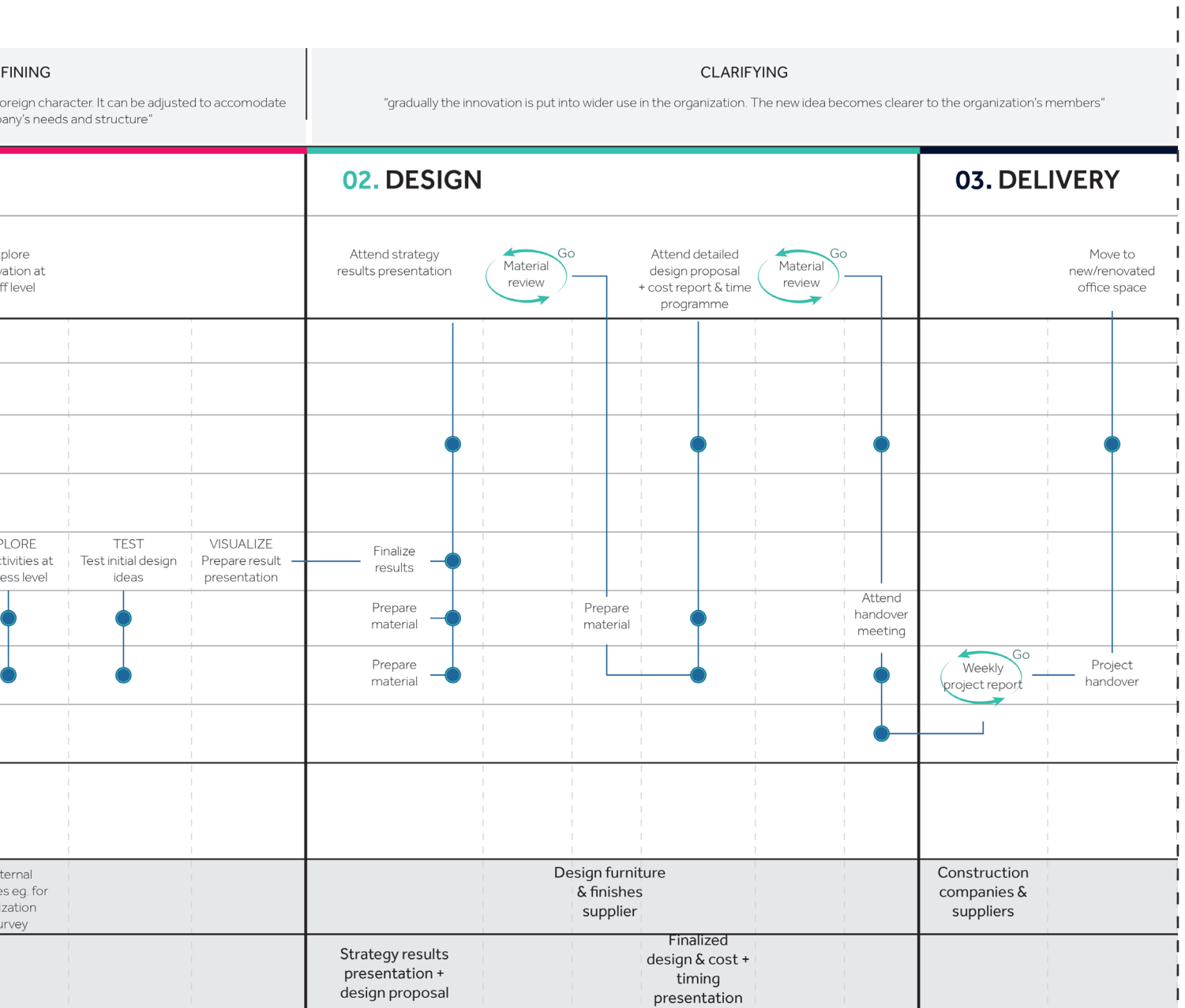
To define and visualize such process, a service blueprint is designed (see figure 31 and appendix G). This is a customer focused approach for service innovation and improvement (Bitner et al., 2007) that allows to visualize the activities, the points of contacts with the customers, the physical evidence and the actors involved in the process.

The service blueprint designed in the analysis chapter

is implemented and adjusted to be able to perform a fully developed and self-sustaining strategy phase. In fact, compared to the initial workflow of Unispace, strategy and design are now two separate phases that contribute to the business case. Also, the competitive advantage of having a single referring figure throughout the process is used to anticipate the clients needs prior the execution of the strategy phase.



31. New service blueprint for Unispace Italy



COMMUNICATION



This entire thesis work explores how the strategy phase can be developed and structured and it proves its benefits and positive results on projects.

However a more immediate transmission is needed to communicate the strategy offering both internally, to Unispace employees, and externally, to Unispace clients.

For this, two templates are developed. The content are presented in a clear way for an easy and immediate understanding: colors, tables, icons and short sentences are used to communicate complex information. The overall graphic feeling is fresh and energetic, like Unispace.

Internal Communication

The first template aims to explain to Unispace Milan what strategy is all about. The goal, the structure, the stages and the tools of the strategy offering are summarized, simplified and visualized for an easy and immediate understanding by non-designers. The first strategy card present the strategy stage's structure and steps. It works as a sort of vademecum for Unispace Italy to perform the new project phase autonomously and successfully. Following, seven

strategy tools are simplified and communicated through the creation of strategy cards. These cards are offered to Unispace as a starting point, a guidance in the learning process of new techniques. Each activity can then be developed and adapted to the project specific case. In the following pages, such tools are presented. Figure 32 presents an overview of the cards, which are then presented individually in the next pages.



32. Strategy Cards

External Communication

The second tool, visualized in figure 33, is designed to communicate with external clients. A visual overview of what workplace strategy means and the concrete actions that can be taken to support the client's business case is given.

This is translated into a flyer that showcases the activities proposed by Unispace and their key benefits. The brochure tries to embed Unispace values through

the use of colors, images, and words. The flyer is clear and straightforward and is designed to communicate Unispace fresh and energetic character.



33. Flyer for external communication

WORKPLACE STRATEGY

WHAT IS IT ?

Workplace strategy is a project approach that assesses the relationship between the innovation, the company, the people and the workplace. Its goal is to align an organization values, needs, and objectives to their future work environment. It does so by setting a business case, identifying the solutions and evaluating their impact through the use of design tool and techniques.



HOW DOES IT WORK IN THEORY?

- 1 Gather project information
- 2 Understand client's approach to innovation
- 3 Envision client's desired office
- 4 Offer strategy package
- 5 Resize package with the client
- 6 Perform strategy phase

HOW DO I DO IT IN PRACTICE?

1 Gather project information

Example: What is the reason for the change? What kind of vision do they have for the future office? What is the size of the project? What is the approach to new technologies and work policies?

Understand client's approach to innovation by (2) matching its character to one of the below categories. Consequently, (2) the client's desired future office is envisioned and (3) a basic strategy package is proposed.

2	TRADITIONAL want to feel safe	SKEPTICAL need to understand	DELIBERATE need to be convinced and discuss	RESPECTABLE want to feel innovative	VENTURESOME want to be surprised
3	Renovating the look of the office while preserving current work policies and enclosed offices.	Forced to change. Fearful to open space. Vivid discussion to find internal accord. May move to a light open space solution.	Need to be guided to the change. Intensely weight pros and cons. Gradually open to open space and agile.	Need a trusted advisor to rely on. like being informed on the latest tech. Open to become agile.	Willingness to adopt new work policies and try new technologies. Aim to ABW.
4	PACKAGE #1 Adjacency mapping	PACKAGE #2 Adjacency mapping Site tours to other companies	PACKAGE #3 Workshop executive Workshop staff Interview executive Interview staff Site tours to other companies	PACKAGE #4 Workshop executive Utilization survey	PACKAGE #5 Staff online survey Utilization survey
	<i>little strategy opportunities</i>		<i>promising strategy opportunities. smart to invest time and money</i>		

5 Resize the package with the following variables together with the client

..... TIME ENGAGEMENT MONEY

6 Perform Strategy Package

EXECUTIVE WORKSHOP



GOAL: Educating the leadership team on the possibilities of how the workplace can support their business objectives. It is an opportunity to test the company attitude to innovation, in a very preliminary stage of the project.



TARGET GROUP: The activity has value when performed with a group of up to 8-10 people with a leadership position in the company. These people should be involved in the project as decision makers, their company roles enable them to speak for their teams.



DELIVERABLES: Report with guiding workplace vision and objectives for endorsement by executives.



TOOLS: Activities boards, post-it, cards.

TIME



MONEY



ENGAGEMENT



INSTRUCTIONS

01. Send an invitation email with the agenda and the workshop booklet at least 5 working days in advance
02. Introduce the workshop presenting the agenda and present the project and Unispace to the audience to Unispace to ensure everyone is on the same page. **(time 10 min)**
03. Activity 1: warm-up activity. The goal is to allow the participants to present themselves and the company they work in. This is done with post it or emotional cards: everyone is asked to write down key words / pick a card with a picture that embodies his own perspective on the company. At the end of the activity, hold a discussion on the contents emerged. **(time 15 min)**
04. Strategist and project architect/designer make an evocative presentation on how the workplace has been changing in the past years and latest trends. **(time 10 min)**
05. Activity 2: Keep, Toss, Create. The audience is asked the following questions once at time: think about your current office, what would you keep with you in the future? What would you rather toss? What would like to create/see in your future office? Answers are written on post-it and placed on the boards. **(time 30 min)**
A discussion is set on the notes written on the post-it.
* optional activity 3: when the future location is already agreed and the departments are clear, it is possible to play with the layout to discuss on adjacencies. This requires the help of the project architect/designer. Print a plan of the space and prepare blank cards. Each participant writes his name on the card and tries to position its card on the layout
06. collect the booklets



NOTES

03. This activity enables Unispace to understand which are the core values of the company (ie. communication, privacy etc), what they stand for and how they want to be seen by external parties.
04. It opens the eyes of the audience on the future, giving sparks for the next activity
05. This activity enables Unispace to understand the direction of the project, is the client open to change? where they want to go in the future?

* This fun closing activity makes the client feel active participation in the design.



"Keep, Toss, Create" poster



Group discussion



Post-it activity

ADJACENCY MAPPING



GOAL: This activity analyses the company departments, their functions and needs, to design a space configuration that supports them. This activity functions as a link between strategy and design, as it provides architects the information to design a preliminary layout.



TARGET GROUP: This activity does not necessarily require active participation by the client. It can be performed by Unispace alone analyzing the information gathered. If there's lack of information, questionnaires or executive interviews can be performed.



DELIVERABLES: Report with company departmental analysis and final adjacency chart.



TOOLS: List of department, company organigramme.

TIME



MONEY



ENGAGEMENT



INSTRUCTIONS

01. Collect information: names of departments, sizes, functions, typical work day flow, required tools per department, current adjacencies, current issues etc.

*ask for a company organigramme. It helps to understand how the company works and its structure.

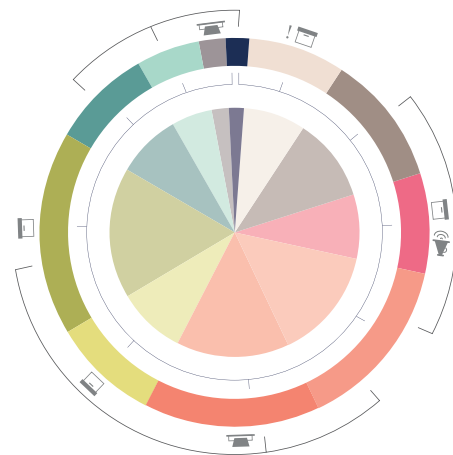
* if the information is lacking, a questionnaire or f2f interviews with departmental managers should be settled

02. Put together all the information: link the departments with similar characteristics. list the ones that work closely and the ones with special needs.

03. put the data in the pie chart, adjust the colors and icons

EXAMPLE

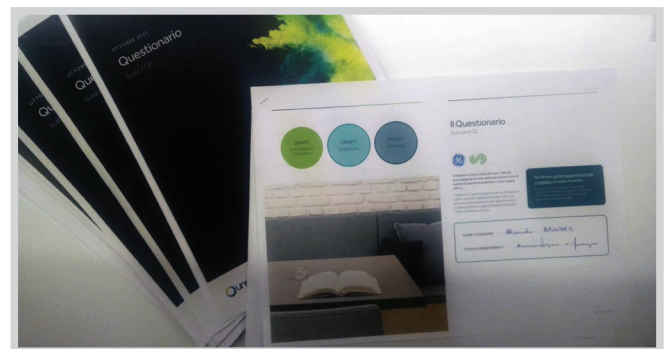
Below an example of an adjacency mapping visualization.



— Working together	Dep. 01	Dep. 06
! Working Alone	Dep. 02	Dep. 07
📁 Larger Storage	Dep. 03	Dep. 08
🔊 Noise Management	Dep. 04	Dep. 09
🖨️ Plotter	Dep. 05	Dep. 10a Dep. 10b



Questionnaire Template



Filled in Questionnaires



SPACE UTILIZATION STUDY



GOAL: This tool is designed to capture a holistic view of how the workplace is actually being used. A team of observers is located full time within the client's office to gather statistics on the work activities taking place.



TARGET GROUP: The activity does not directly involved people from the company. It is focused on the space and the way the staff uses it.



DELIVERABLES: Report with a comprehensive analysis of how each type of space is used with data presented by department and areas of the office space

TIME



MONEY



ENGAGEMENT



INSTRUCTIONS

01. Clearly define with the client the objectives of the study and the space to be observed: the activity can be performed on the entire space or only on specific areas (es. meeting rooms analysis) depending on the project goal. Contact an external consultant to perform the observation. **(1st week)**

02. Prior the start of the survey, Unispace or client's HR to inform the staff of the study to be conducted. It is important to clarify that the observers won't capture the quality or quantity of their individual work, but simply count how the space is being used (how much phone calls at a desk, how much meetings per departments etc). **(2nd-3rd weeks)**

The observation usually lasts from 5 to 10 working days. during these days one or more observers, depending on the size of the space to analyze, are located in the client's office and walk a predetermined route which passes every work point, meeting and social space and capture:

- whether spaces are in use or empty;
- how many people are present;
- the activities underway;
- the tools being used.

Repeat the process over 5-10 days, as agreed with the client.

03. Receive accurate data and statistics (such as averages, peaks and troughs of headcount within the office and usage of workstations, offices and meeting rooms) and analyze it following the Unispace template. **(4th week)**

04. Prepare a presentation with the collected data and discuss with the clients around future ways of working. **(5th week)** The results are statistical data on which base a shift to an agile policy.

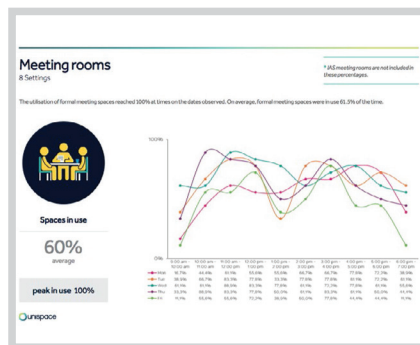


NOTES

It is important to clarify the objective of the study with the client at the very beginning of the project, and to be very specific on what you require from the external consultant. This will ensure you won't encounter difficulties when the time comes to write the report on the data



Example heatmap of support spaces



Example page of the results report



Utilization Survey

EXECUTIVE INTERVIEWS



GOAL: This activity will elicit feedback and build a deeper understanding of the specific needs of each part of the business. It allows leaders to be candid about how they see the needs of the business changing and what support their people need to reach their outcomes.



TARGET GROUP: This activity has value when performed with senior leadership team.



DELIVERABLES: Report with company departments analysis, guiding workplace vision and objectives.

TIME



MONEY



ENGAGEMENT



INSTRUCTIONS

This activity can be performed with one-to-one interviews, written questionnaires or a combination of the two. With the information collected, adjacency mapping can also be performed.

01. Send an invitation email explaining the goal of the activity and attaching the questionnaire to fill in. Ask everyone to bring the questionnaire to the next meeting or send it back by email

02. Leave 5 working days to fill in the questionnaire

* optional: set up a one to one discussion session on the topic of the questionnaire. It is important to get an understanding of the company structure and internal functions, how they work and how the leadership team envisions the future office

03. Collect the questionnaires

04. Analyse and compare answers



NOTES

This activity can be combined with the adjacency mapping tool, as the information gathered allows you to perform both.

When time is short and one to one interviews get difficult to organize but still a face to face discussion is necessary, then an executive workshop on the topic can be performed (see picture below).



Executive workshop to collect information

Privacy

Per la natura del tuo lavoro, tratti quotidianamente informazioni riservate che richiedono privacy?

SI NO

Per la natura del lavoro da svolgere, il tuo team / dipartimento richiede uno spazio isolato?

SI NO

Commenti: HR data - conference calls manager e employees fanno accesso al nostro ufficio

Filled in Questionnaires

STAFF INTERVIEWS



GOAL: Employees input is key not only as it provides data from the end users of the space, but also because having employees involved early in the process offers a sense of greater contribution and influence in the project. This can make the change process easier.



TARGET GROUP: This activity should be performed with small groups of employees, 2 to 5 people, coming from the same department (one group at a time)



DELIVERABLES: Report with interviews' key results and personas overview. These are then used to tailor space, behaviors and technology requirements in the new workplace.

TIME



MONEY



ENGAGEMENT



INSTRUCTIONS

01. Receive a list of people and groups that will participate in the interviews session, set a time for each group and propose a timetable to share and define with the client.
02. Send a sensitizing questionnaire for the participants to start thinking about their current work environment and the one they'd like.
03. Discuss with each group a list of questions defined beforehand together with the project architect. Take notes and/or record the interviews.
04. Analyse the information collected and try to find patterns to develop staff personas (see template) based on working styles.

TIMING

The overall timing and length of the activity cannot be estimated, as it depends on the number of people and groups involved in the project. Approximately, a timeslot of 15-20 minutes can be reserved for each group.



NOTES

Involving the project architect in the activity is beneficial both for the client and for Unispace. On the one hand, the staff has the possibility to talk with the person in charge of redesigning their office and, on the other hand, the architect has the possibility to listen and ask questions to the end users of the space.



Staff Interviews in small groups

A persona is a fictional character who represents a user type in the office space. Each persona is constructed to be representative of specific work habits and needs.

<p>TEAMER The Teamer is a collaborative resident, mostly interacting with their own immediate and on-located team. E.g. developer, designer, product team</p>		<p>TRAVELER The Traveler has many face to face meetings outside of their office, resulting in long time spent off site. He frequently collaborates virtually. E.g. global resources, consultant</p>	
<p>BUTTERFLY The Butterfly has a daily schedule heavy on face-to-face meetings. They also often engage in heads down work early or late in the day. E.g. project and general manager, HR</p>		<p>INDEPENDENT The Independent often engages in focus work, working alone and collaborating virtually. This profile frequently chooses to work from home when enabled to do so. E.g. analyst, data scientist, IT support</p>	
<p>SEEKER The Seeker often engages in heads down work and frequently seeks quiet workspaces around the office. E.g. consultant, IT manager, engineer</p>		<p>ANCHOR The Anchor often engages in focus work and is very desk bound due to preference or lack of alternative. E.g. admin, associate, analyst</p>	

Personas presentation slide

SITE TOURS



GOAL:

(Executive) Guided site tours will educate leaders on what is possible rather than what they have today. The successes and pitfalls that these organizations faced can also be shared and discussed with the client.

(Staff) Showing the staff their future office location and sharing general information on the project timing, concept etc. This will make them feel involved in the project and can also facilitates the change process.



TARGET GROUP:

(Executive) This activity has value when performed with executive team.

(Staff) The staff site tours have value when performed with either a group of employees or the entire head count. This activity is usually a support that Unispace can provide in a corporate event organized by the client.

TIME



MONEY



ENGAGEMENT



INSTRUCTIONS

Executive site tours

01. Understand what workplace environment, among Unispace completed projects, could be inspiring for the client to visit.
02. Plan the tour and perform.

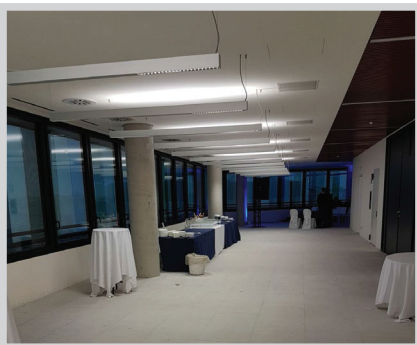
Staff site tours

01. This activity can be organized in multiple ways, as it is majorely a company event organized by the client. A tested and successful contribution Unispace can propose consists of organizing a presentation in the future office location where people are free to walk around the office and imagine the future space with the help of visuals printed and placed around.

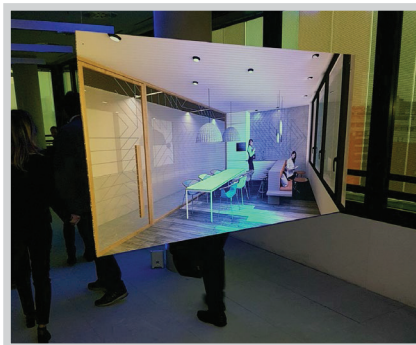


NOTES

This activity can be used as a tool to elevate the client future office vision to the "next level". Usually, when clients see what agility or open space mean in practice, the doubts and uncertainties towards such concepts get overcame. The goal of this activity goes beyond showcasing good design or finishes, but to open the client's eyes to new possibilities.



Staff site tour event



Staff site tour event



Staff site tour event



TRANSIT IMPACT MAPPING



GOAL: This activity assists the leadership team to get an understanding of the impact to staff travel times for the site relocations they are considering. Once staff postcodes are analysed, residential densities guide the selection of geographical areas to narrow property search parameters.



TARGET GROUP: The activity has value when companies are considering a relocation process.



DELIVERABLES: Report detailing estimated travel times for public and private transport options using staff home postcodes.



TOOLS: Staff postcodes, shortlisted locations or buildings.

TIME



MONEY



ENGAGEMENT



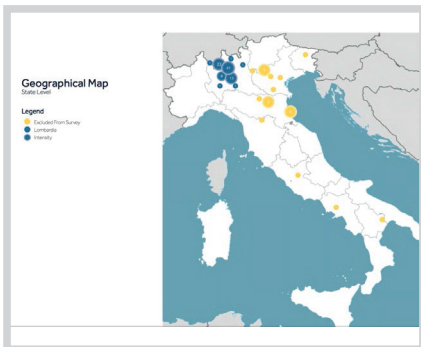
INSTRUCTIONS

01. Get preferred locations or properties under consideration by the clients
02. Collect all staff postcodes and analyse them for each option
03. Create charts and infographic following the Unispace template
04. Draw conclusion and a location / property suggestion based on the data emerged

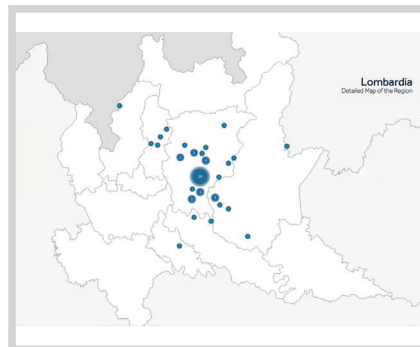


NOTES

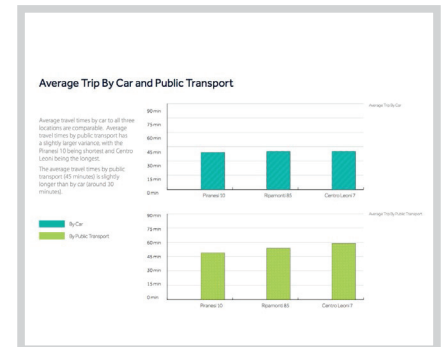
The analysis provides an assessment of the proportion of staff that will have their travel time either increase or decrease compared to the current office location. Changes in transport preference can also be taken into account such as the likelihood of staff changing from private to public transport if moving from a suburban location to the center, where public transport is readily available.



Results presentation



Results presentation



Results presentation





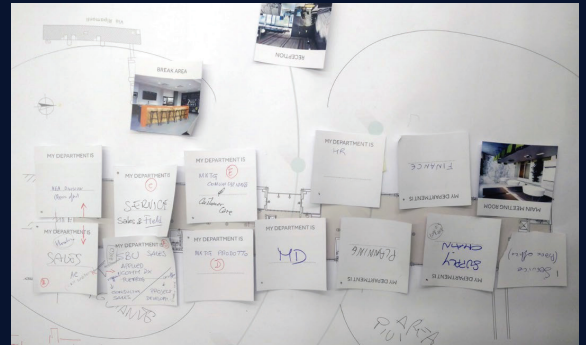
How can your office support your business objectives?

EXECUTIVE WORKSHOP



What is the most productive space configuration for your departments?

ADJACENCY MAPPING



What are the specific needs of each department?
How is the changing perceived by the leadership team?

EXECUTIVE INTERVIEWS



What are your employees' feelings towards the upcoming change?

STAFF INTERVIEWS



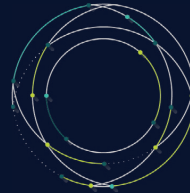


How is your office being used?
Is it utilized in the right way?

SPACE UTILIZATION SURVEY



WORKPLACE STRATEGY



First we listen.

Then we tailor our approach by selecting the appropriate research and design activities that will achieve your organisational and workplace goals.



What is the right location
for your future office?

TRANSIT IMPACT MAPPING



How does an agile office work in practice?
What are the possibilities for the future workplace?

SITE TOURS



CONCLUSION



VI

In the next pages, an overall conclusion of the work is given, summarizing the problem statement, the conducted analysis, and the final design.

This is followed by a validation chapter with Unispace comments and feedback on the thesis deliverables.

Then a critical discussion and recommendation on future possibilities are presented.

The thesis ends with a personal reflection on the biggest learnings achieved during the project.

X, Y = problem definitions

1,2,3 = thesis goal

a,b,c = design objectives

• = final design

Conclusion

At the beginning of this thesis work, an initial exploration identified two main problems that impede the proper application of the strategy stage, part of Unispace Global methodology, in the Italian studio.

On the one hand, (X) a need for simplification and adaption emerged. The current strategy offering is too complicated to be taken as is and used by the Italian team, as no guidance on the use and application of such phase was provided. The strategy package needs to be redesigned for an easy application into an already running workflow. On the other hand, (Y) a second problem lies in the communication of such strategic offering. In fact, the addition of a new project phase needs to be properly communicated to ensure a successful integration. Unispace employees need to be educated on the values of workplace strategy and guided through its structure to learn applying it themselves. The thesis goal was therefore articulated as follow:

(01) Simplify a framework of strategic tools, (02) adapt it to the company market, and (03) design a communication strategy to illustrate the value of such strategic offering

A deeper analysis was developed and highlighted what directions the final design could follow to reach the aforementioned final objectives. It emerged that (a) a greater engagement of the clients during the strategy phase had to be provided, as only technical activities were performed in the studio. This enables the projects to lose its foreign character and it supports Unispace in building a relationship with the client, enhancing the chance of being entrusted for the next project phases. For acting as a leader, Unispace team needs to have a clear understanding on the strategy steps to follow, as a confused guidance does not express confidence. Therefore, (b) the structure had to be implemented, separating the phase of strategy and design, which currently largely overlap. Also, the final design had to (c) support Unispace playing offence, anticipating clients' needs, offering adequate support and acting as a project leader.

Having identified the problems, set the thesis goals and identified the design objectives, the final design was developed. This resulted in multiple tools for Unispace Italy to successfully perform strategy as an independent stage:

- An easy to understand and simplified strategy offering, with clear explanation on the value of workplace strategy and a set of cards to organize and perform all the strategy tools offered to clients by Unispace. Also, InDesign and Illustrator template files are given to the company to have the basic materials to perform the strategy tools. These serve as a beginner guide for any Unispace Italy employees approaching to strategy. It is an internal communication tool for making Unispace Italy employees aware of the possibility of design strategy applied to workplace projects.
- Based on Unispace Italy clients analysis and scholar research on Roger's innovation adoption categories, a new tool is designed. This helps to identify the client's approach to innovation, understand if it is worth investing strategy in the project and, where necessary, it suggests the correct strategy package to offer. Also, a new service blueprint is outlined. These enable Unispace Italy to play offence, anticipating client' needs and confidentially leading the project.

At this point, Unispace Italy has all the tools to successfully integrate and perform the strategy phase into the current workflow.

Validation

The developed strategy and the tools were presented to Unispace Italy director and two members of the team to gather feedback and comments. For this, informal discussions were held presenting the thesis topic, the overall results and showing the printed strategy cards.

Feedback on the cards

The first reactions to the strategy cards were enthusiastic and curious. The cards were explored with a positive attitude and the participants felt empowered by the tool: one of them exclaimed "but then the cards can be used by everyone in the studio!".

The content and graphic proved to be effective, as information was easily read and understood. This proves that the developed cards are a useful and immediate tool to communicate strategy to Unispace employees. The cards are designed to be a communication tool of the strategy services

for Unispace internally and the validation test demonstrated their effectiveness as such. However, the practical usage of the cards by non-designers was not subject to validation due to time constraints. Running such test is recommended to further ensure the card effectiveness not only as a communication tool but also as a practical guide.

Feedback on the overall process

Together with the cards, the strategy service introduction and development were presented to Unispace Italy director, Jonathan Sivewright. Although the service introduction would need further exploration in terms of costs, roles and actions, Unispace sees great value in the service, the tool, and the overall research.

"Workplace strategy was one of Unispace Italy weaknesses and this is developing it into one of the strongest areas of our practice."

Discussion

Below critical evaluations and reflections divided per project phases are made.

Assignment

My experience at Unispace began with an internship opportunity. Unispace clarified they were looking for a designer to perform their strategy offering and to support the graphic representation of their work. However, during the first months, few and little strategy opportunities arose and the idea behind the graduation opportunity started to get shaped. From their side, the company did not present any problem to be solved in the form of an assignment. Without an urgent problem to be solved and with little information on Unispace Global strategy offering, a lot of scoping was needed. This was conducted independently for

a couple of months to define the thesis goal. Also, multiple revisions were made to the original problem statement during the analysis phase. Involving the company more broadly at the beginning could have helped to define the thesis goal more quickly.

Analysis

An internal and external analysis was performed to investigate the company and the market. The information used in this chapter were gathered through observations, free open sources and from the global company server. In this stage, active interaction with Unispace employees happened only at the end in the form of an interview. Curiously, I was making the same error I highlighted in Unispace workflow: lack of active engagement. This was due to

the previous intern experience, where I used to work in the company as a employee and not as an external consultant. A change of mindset was needed to be able to see things from a different perspective and not being bias by my own feelings and perceptions. The approach was improved in the following design chapter, where multiple interactions with internal employees and external clients took place. This imbalance, however, may have had an influence on the analysis results.

Design

the design phase was hard to structure. This is probably linked to the initial difficulty of defining a clear problem statement in the previous phases. As multiple goals are settled for the project (simplify, adapt and communicate), many different steps were taken to reach such objectives. However, no clear connection was seen at the beginning, while

Recommendations

The analysis and the results presented in this report were explored in the timeframe settled for this thesis work, but further research and implementation is still possible and recommended. Below, possible future project directions are suggested.

Further Research

As stated in the introduction chapter, this thesis work aimed to simplify and adapt Unispace Global strategy offering to the Italian studio capability and needs, and to support its communication in and outside the studio. The content of such strategy package were widely explored and also its communication was designed and validated. However, the strategy phase implementation in the current workflow of Unispace Italy was studied only in theory, as no test was developed to verify its design. Therefore, it is suggested to further explore such topic before

everything merged together later in the process. This entailed a full readjustment of the reasoning flow, to make the project clear also to the reader.

Deliverables

The cards presented in the internal communication chapter do answer the design goals but were not subject to validation due to time constraints. As already mentioned, running such test is recommended to further ensure the card effectiveness not only as a communication tool but also as a practical guide. Also, the service implementation strategy was designed but not tested. In fact, the approach to the solution was focused on the current Unispace global offering simplification first and only secondly to its implementation in the Italian market. For this, this second tool would need further testing and discussions.

applying the proposed implementation strategy on a real project.

Future Application

The analysis and research conducted is focused specifically on Unispace Italy, and therefore the final results are crafted based on this studio's characteristics. However, as Unispace Global is a growing reality, it is possible that other small studios will find themselves in the same circumstances as Unispace Italy when trying to expand their service offering. This thesis work can be used as a case study to explain how the Italian studio developed its strategy offering. Also, part of the final deliverables can be shared with other studios. In fact, while the service blueprint is very specific on the Italian workflow, the strategy cards are usable by all.

Personal Reflection

The personal goal I set for myself at the beginning of this thesis work was to manage the project as independently as possible. Most of the projects of my student career were performed in groups, and developing a six months project all alone has definitely been a challenge. Setting deadlines and prioritizing the steps helped me to structure the work and deliver in time.

This thesis also helped me understand that asking questions and getting feedback is not something to be scared of. I tend to share only advanced or finished works, but this stopped me from getting constructive feedback from the company. It especially happened at the beginning of this thesis process. This taught me to focus on the present, rather than always trying to get

too far away. It has been a little life lesson: results are made of little steps.

My lack of self-confidence had much impact on the development of the work. In many occasions, I was too insecure and shy to dare to share my work. However, the enthusiastic comments and appreciation to the project I received from the company proved me that the knowledge and the passion I always admire in other people can be part of me too.

This graduation project and the work opportunity that came with it are a perfect way of concluding my master studies. I am definitely ready and excited for the next chapter.

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