GOT LOST REARRANGING YOUR FURNITURE?

All offices have hundreds, if not thousands of pieces of furniture that rarely are thought of as an asset to be noted. Not many even consider that every piece of furniture has other stakeholders than just the person sitting on or at it. There are loads of reasons to consider the office furniture as an investment and as assets, that need to be accounted for.

Leaving the actual user aside we can recognize a couple of stakeholders for the different pieces of furniture every office worker uses daily at work.

1. Company that rents or buys furniture for their office

2. Rental furniture pool owner

3. Facilities management company

WHY DO YOU NEED TO KNOW WHERE YOUR FURNITURE LIES IN YOUR OFFICE SPACE?

A company that rents or buys furniture rarely has the inventory data of their furniture. This might lead to overbuying or overrenting when there might be a perfectly usable chair, desk or a bookshelf available in a storage room. Also, when rental companies come visit the office to count the furniture, it can disturb the working environment. The manual counting of furniture is error prone and you will be getting charged by those numbers. When moving to a new office it can be a pain to keep up with all the furniture.

Knowing the full inventory of furniture at a customer site is most critical for rental furniture pool owners, this is their livelihood. Getting that data without human intervention and manhours reduces the costs significantly, with the benefit of reducing human error as well. To err is human, and sometimes the person counting the furniture can miss one or two at a customer site. Once the error multiplies from customer to another, it can mount up to uncountable amounts of errors. It also helps keep customer relationships smooth, when you can inform the customer that they can spend their working days undisturbed and productive.

A facilities management company can be the rental furniture company or a specialized company. Today they rely on customers to call them if the furniture is broken and needs fixing. They need to rely on that the customer bothers to call them and provides them with specific details to how to find the broken item. In today's world people crave for instant messaging and systems. Therefore, the call is rarely made.

HOW COULD ALL THE INVENTORY AND MAINTENANCE NEED DATA FLOW AUTOMATICALLY WITHOUT HUMAN LABOUR NEEDED?

There are different ways to address the issue of taking inventory of the stock.

1. Completely manual – manhours costs, it is slow and prone to error

2. Barcode – still involves manhour costs, also slow and prone to error

. RFID (radio frequency identification) – still involves manhour costs and human error can occur

4. UWB (ultra-wide band) – centimeter level accuracy can be an overkill for the purpose and infrastructure can be costly

5. BLE (Low Energy Bluetooth) – 1-way communication limits use case applicability and application update efficiency

6. Wide area mesh – fully automated data collection, low cost infrastructure that can be fully battery operated, 2-way communication

NEXT GENERATION FURNITURE MANAGEMENT IN THE OFFICE

Wirepas Connectivity is a wide area mesh network where all the data is gathered from tags and sensors and it travels through the network to a gateway, all automatically. Once every piece of furniture is equipped with a tag or a sensor, the inventory of each piece of furniture is always known. In addition to easily getting inventory data, a maintenance "call home button" functionality can be added. This means that with the simple push of a button ,the furniture user can request assistance with their faulty piece of equipment. With the 2-way communication available from Wirepas Connectivity, a LED light can be lit on the device making it easier to find the furniture in need of repair.

Sometimes location data is also crucial in assuring that the right furniture is in the right room. Wide area mesh network offers an easy solution with very light configuration and installation for this use case. A similar device as is attached to the furniture can be added into each room or area, that requires tracking of the furniture. That device is given a fixed and known location, that then acts as a location definition for the furniture. For this purpose, also lighting fixtures can be used as the fixed location reference points. Nowadays many industrial size buildings use wireless control systems for the lighting solutions and include asset tracking services in offered services.

The chairs can also for example be equipped with pressure sensors or other sensors. This allows gathering of presence data and detection whether e.g. a specific meeting room is used or not. If the usage level is very low, it might make sense to give it up and save money in the office lease.

All the above can also be conceptualized and productized for a complete offering with reports, analysis and dashboards by e.g. a furniture rental company with a monthly fee to the customer, including furniture inventory, maintenance, location services and even the usage levels of different rooms.

EFFORTLESS INVENTORY ENABLES PREMIUM CUSTOMER SERVICE

Wide area mesh as a technology is just an enabler for the uses mentioned above. Only the imagination of the companies offering furniture rental services, is the limit to which heights they can lift their service levels towards their own customers and how they package these services in monthly costs. Ensuring disturbance free inventory data with maintenance services, additional presence, or usage level data to help the customer streamline their own processes is an added service value that will commit the customers closer to their service provider.

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We're changing the face of IoT. To set a new standard. To skip the bullshit. To get infinitely scalable connectivity. Gentle on your wallet and way better than cellular 5G. In a network that never fails. Without middlemen or infrastructure. Totally self-managing. Tailored for commercial and industrial applications. Just more than you need. For less. We give you very very good IoT.