

UNLOCKING THE ADVANTAGE

How leading Chinese companies are using office strategy
to drive high-quality development
on the Chinese mainland

September 2026

Better never settles

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The office market on the Chinese mainland is entering a more selective phase. After decades of expansion-led growth, occupiers are now prioritising productivity, cost discipline, resilience and long-term value creation.

In this environment, office real estate is moving from a fixed cost to a strategic business tool. The workplace is increasingly expected to support productivity, talent attraction, innovation, sustainability and business continuity while helping companies manage cost and risk.

Based on a survey of senior corporate decision-makers across industries, this report examines how leading Chinese companies on the Chinese mainland are adapting their location, leasing,

workplace, sustainability and advisory strategies to support high-quality development.

The findings show a clear shift in occupier priorities. Productivity improvement and operational efficiency have overtaken expansion as the leading corporate objectives, while total occupancy cost and portfolio flexibility are becoming central to real estate decision-making.

Location strategy is also becoming more sophisticated. Companies continue to weigh cost, but increasingly assess access to skilled labour, industry clusters, transport connectivity, customer proximity and government policy support.

Workplace quality has become another important differentiator. Many companies believe their offices meet functional needs, but fewer see them as distinctive assets for recruitment, retention or productivity. This creates opportunities for occupiers to improve performance and for landlords to strengthen tenant value.

Sustainability is moving from compliance to business value. Green buildings, energy efficiency and better operational management are increasingly viewed as ways to reduce costs, support ESG objectives and manage future risk.

Decision-making is becoming more integrated. Senior leadership remains closely involved, while companies are using broader evaluation

frameworks that balance financial performance, workforce needs, operational flexibility and long-term resilience.

Although most respondents are confident their current office strategies can support growth, many also see room for optimisation. The next stage will require better alignment between real estate decisions, business strategy, talent priorities and risk management.

The companies best positioned for the next phase will be those that treat office strategy as an integrated business capability – one that improves productivity, attracts talent, strengthens resilience and creates sustainable competitive advantage.

INTRODUCTION

The transition towards high-quality development on the Chinese mainland is reshaping corporate decision-making across every aspect of business operations, including office real estate. As economic growth becomes increasingly driven by innovation, productivity and technological advancement, leading Chinese companies are re-evaluating how their workplaces contribute to organisational performance.

Historically, office decisions were largely influenced by rental costs, prestigious business addresses and anticipated headcount growth. While these considerations remain important, they no longer fully address the challenges facing today's occupiers. Businesses must now respond to changing workforce expectations, accelerating digital transformation, evolving sustainability requirements and increasing pressure to optimise operating costs while maintaining organisational agility.

Against this backdrop, office portfolios are becoming strategic assets rather than simply operational necessities. Workplace decisions increasingly influence employee attraction and retention, collaboration, customer engagement, innovation and business resilience. The ability to adapt portfolios quickly in response to changing market conditions has become a competitive advantage in its own right.

These changes are occurring at a time when the Chinese mainland office market is also undergoing structural adjustment. New supply continues to enter many major markets while occupiers adopt more selective leasing strategies, resulting in greater competition among landlords and a stronger emphasis on tenant value creation. Buildings that provide high-quality amenities, sustainability credentials, digital infrastructure and flexible leasing solutions are increasingly distinguishing themselves from conventional office stock.

This report examines how leading Chinese companies on the Chinese mainland are responding to these developments. Through analysis of survey responses from senior corporate decision-makers, it explores the changing relationship between business strategy and office real estate, highlighting the factors that are influencing location decisions, leasing strategies, workplace effectiveness and long-term portfolio planning.

Rather than focusing solely on current market conditions, the report seeks to identify the structural trends that will shape office demand over the coming years. Its objective is to provide occupiers, investors, developers, landlords and policymakers with practical insights into how office strategies can support business success in an increasingly dynamic operating environment.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY



The findings presented in this report are based on a survey of leading Chinese companies operating across the Chinese mainland, representing a broad range of industries, organisational sizes and stages of business development.

The survey was designed to assess how organisations are aligning office strategies with broader business priorities. Twenty-four questions explored eight strategic themes covering growth priorities, location strategy, office demand, leasing practices, workplace effectiveness, sustainability, corporate decision-making and the use of external advisory services.

Survey responses were analysed by industry sector, company development stage and

organisational characteristics to identify both common market trends and sector-specific differences. While the research focuses primarily on occupier behaviour rather than office market performance, the findings offer valuable insight into how corporate real estate strategies are evolving in response to changing economic and business conditions.

Throughout this report, survey findings are interpreted within the broader context of the office market on the Chinese mainland and the transition towards high-quality development, providing strategic implications for occupiers, landlords, developers, investors and policymakers.

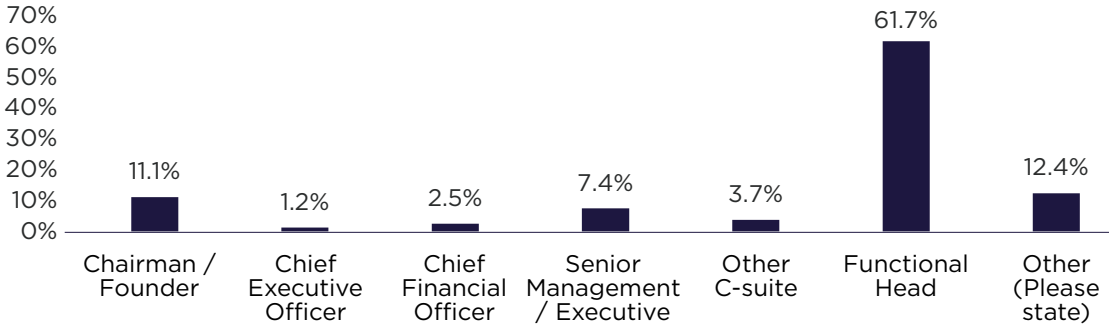
RESPONDENT PROFILE

The survey attracted responses from senior decision-makers responsible for corporate strategy, business operations and office real estate decisions.

Respondent Seniority

Functional department heads represented the largest respondent group, accounting for 61.7% of all participants. Chairmen and founders comprised 11.1%, while members of senior management teams and boards of directors represented a further 7.4%. The remaining respondents included executives from finance, administration and corporate support functions.

Figure 1: Company seniority



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

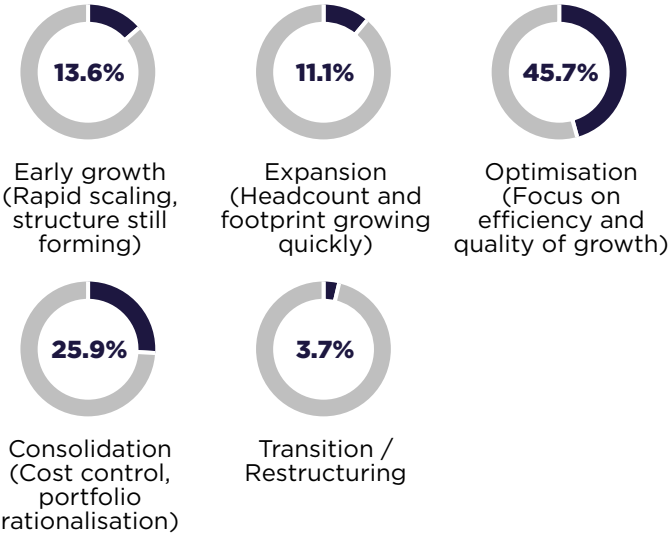
This distribution provides a balanced perspective that combines strategic leadership with operational experience, reflecting how office decisions are increasingly influenced by multiple business functions.

Company Development Stage

Companies in the optimisation phase accounted for the largest proportion of respondents (45.7%), followed by businesses in the consolidation phase (25.9%). Organisations in the early growth stage represented 13.6%, while companies pursuing expansion accounted for 11.1%. Only 3.7% of respondents were undergoing significant restructuring or transformation.

The composition reflects the current priorities of many Chinese companies, where improving efficiency, strengthening competitiveness and optimising resource allocation have become more important than aggressive expansion.

Figure 2: Company development stage



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

Industry Representation

The survey reflects a broad cross-section of the Chinese mainland's modern economy.

Financial services and fintech companies represented the largest industry group, accounting for 21.0% of respondents. Technology and internet companies followed closely at 18.5%, while professional services accounted for 17.3%.

Figure 3: Industry representation



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

The remaining participants included companies operating in life sciences, advanced manufacturing, retail and trade, consumer goods, logistics, media, new energy, new materials and other knowledge-intensive sectors.

Collectively, these industries represent many of the sectors driving demand for premium office accommodation across the Chinese mainland, providing valuable insight into the evolving priorities of modern occupiers.

A Representative Perspective

Across industries, respondents consistently highlight operational efficiency, flexibility, talent attraction and the strategic role of office real estate.

These themes provide the foundation for the analysis presented throughout the remainder of this report.

CHAPTER 1

GROWTH PRIORITIES & RISK AWARENESS

01

Unlocking the Advantage

How leading Chinese companies are using office strategy to drive high-quality development on the Chinese mainland

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FROM EXPANSION-LED GROWTH TO EFFICIENCY-DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT

The operating environment for leading Chinese companies on the Chinese mainland is undergoing a fundamental transformation. Following a prolonged period of rapid expansion, many organisations are now entering a more mature phase of development where productivity, profitability and resilience are becoming the primary measures of success.

This transition reflects broader economic and business trends. Slower growth expectations, evolving consumer demand, technological disruption and increased competition are encouraging companies to reassess how they allocate resources and manage long-term commitments.

Office real estate is directly impacted by this shift. Historically, corporate expansion was closely associated with larger office footprints, additional locations and increasing headcount. Today, companies are taking a more strategic approach, focusing on how workplace environments can improve operational efficiency, support innovation and enhance organisational performance.

The survey findings demonstrate this change clearly. Over the next 24 to 36 months, companies are prioritising productivity improvement and cost optimisation over expansion-driven strategies. This indicates that the next phase of office demand will be shaped less by the need for additional space and more by the ability of workplaces to deliver measurable business value.

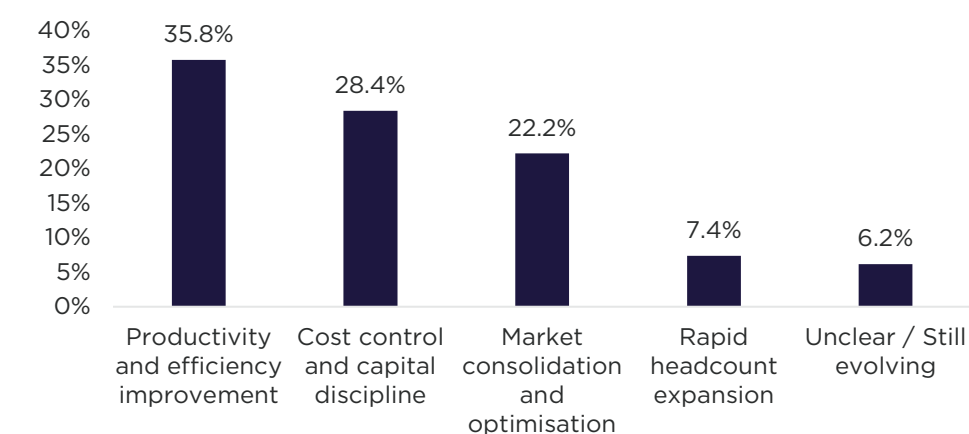
PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY BECOME CORE GROWTH PRIORITIES

Among surveyed companies, 35.8% identify improving productivity and efficiency as their primary growth priority, while 28.4% highlight cost control and capital expenditure reduction. Together, these priorities account for 64.2% of responses.

This reflects a decisive shift away from growth models centred on scale expansion towards a more disciplined approach focused on operational excellence.

Companies are therefore seeking to achieve more with existing resources through:

Figure 4: Company growth priority



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research



**DIGITAL
TRANSFORMATION**



**PROCESS
OPTIMISATION**



AUTOMATION



**IMPROVED
WORKFORCE
EFFECTIVENESS**



**MORE EFFICIENT
CAPITAL
ALLOCATION**

THE DECLINING IMPORTANCE OF HEADCOUNT EXPANSION

Only 7.4% of respondents identify rapid headcount expansion as a major growth priority, highlighting the declining importance of workforce growth as a standalone measure of corporate success.

This does not suggest reduced investment in talent. Rather, companies are increasingly focused on improving the effectiveness of existing teams and maximising per capita productivity.

For knowledge-intensive industries such as technology, financial services, professional services and life sciences, competitive advantage increasingly depends on the quality of talent, collaboration capabilities and innovation capacity rather than workforce size alone.

This shift has important implications for office demand.

Future workplace requirements will increasingly depend on:



THE ABILITY TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN SKILLED EMPLOYEES



THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COLLABORATIVE ENVIRONMENTS



THE INTEGRATION OF TECHNOLOGY INTO WORKPLACE OPERATIONS



THE QUALITY OF EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Companies are therefore treating offices less as accommodation and more as platforms for productivity, collaboration and better business outcomes.

OFFICE STRATEGY IS BECOMING A STRATEGIC BUSINESS DECISION

While 45.7% of respondents continue to view office decisions primarily as a cost issue, 43.2% now regard office strategy as a strategic decision directly connected to business operations, expansion and long-term development.

As a result, office decisions increasingly influence:



TALENT ATTRACTION AND RETENTION



EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT



BRAND POSITIONING



CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS

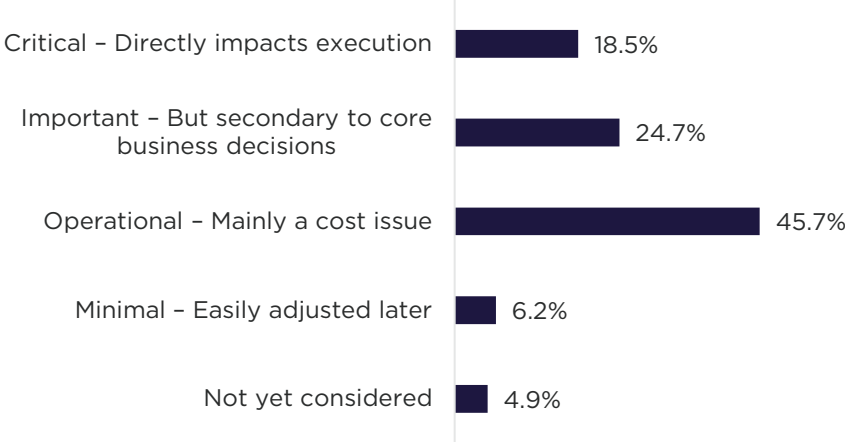


BUSINESS COLLABORATION

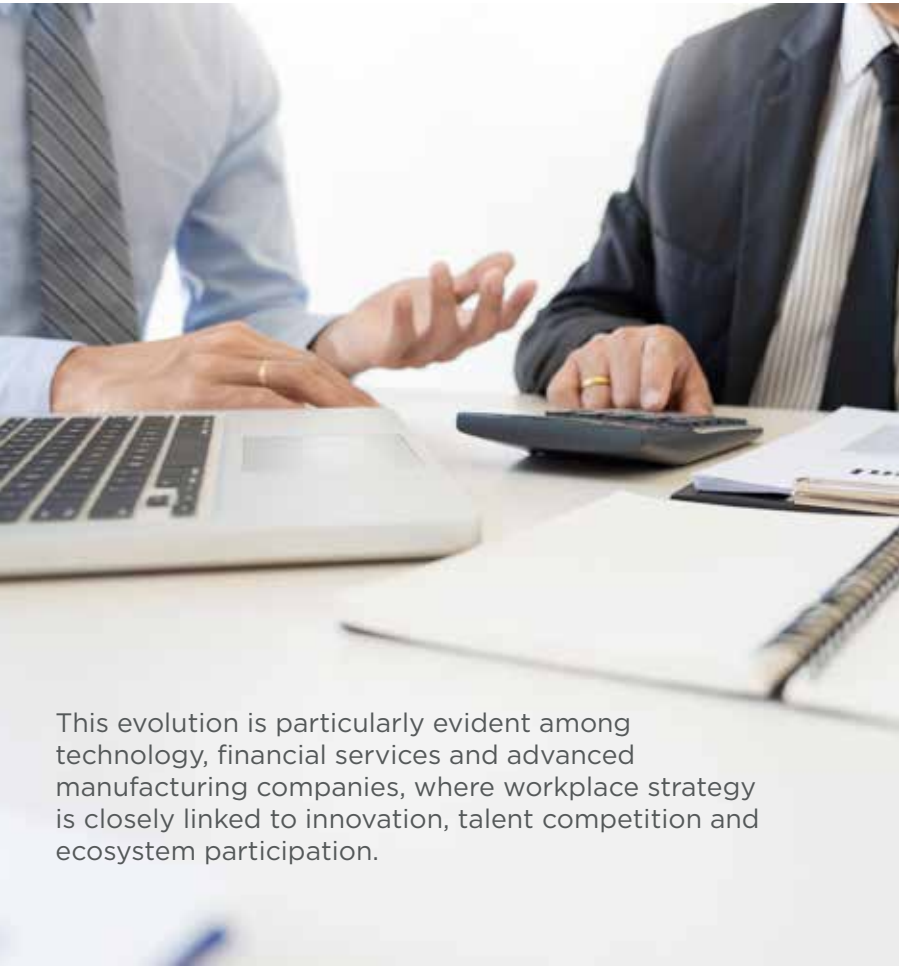


OPERATIONAL RESILIENCE

Figure 5: Significance of office decisions to achieving growth



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research



This evolution is particularly evident among technology, financial services and advanced manufacturing companies, where workplace strategy is closely linked to innovation, talent competition and ecosystem participation.

TOTAL COST OF OCCUPANCY REPLACES RENTAL-ONLY EVALUATION

One of the strongest indicators of more sophisticated corporate decision-making is the growing adoption of total cost of occupancy (TCO) analysis.

Companies are increasingly moving beyond simple rental comparisons and evaluating the broader financial implications of office decisions.

The TCO approach considers:

**FIT-OUT AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE**

**EMPLOYEE COMMUTING IMPACT**

**RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION COSTS**

**BUSINESS TRAVEL EFFICIENCY**

**BASE RENT AND OPERATING EXPENSES**

**WORKPLACE PRODUCTIVITY**

**LONG-TERM FLEXIBILITY**

This approach reflects a recognition that the lowest rental option does not always represent the most cost-effective solution.

For example, a lower-cost location may create additional costs through longer commuting times, reduced employee satisfaction or difficulty attracting specialised talent.

Conversely, a strategically located office may generate broader business benefits that justify a higher occupancy cost.

As companies continue to adopt more data-driven decision-making processes, TCO analysis is expected to become a standard component of corporate real estate strategy.

FLEXIBILITY EMERGES AS A KEY RISK MANAGEMENT PRIORITY

The survey highlights increasing concern regarding the flexibility of existing office commitments.

Nearly half of respondents believe their current office commitments offer some flexibility but remain constrained by contractual requirements. A further 34.6% believe their office commitments are largely fixed and difficult or expensive to modify.

This reflects a growing tension between traditional leasing structures and today's more uncertain business environment.

Long-term leases provide stability, but they can also create challenges when companies experience:

**UNEXPECTED CHANGES IN BUSINESS PERFORMANCE**

**PHASED OCCUPATION STRATEGIES**

**ORGANISATIONAL RESTRUCTURING**

**EXPANSION AND CONTRACTION RIGHTS**

**MULTI-LOCATION PORTFOLIOS**

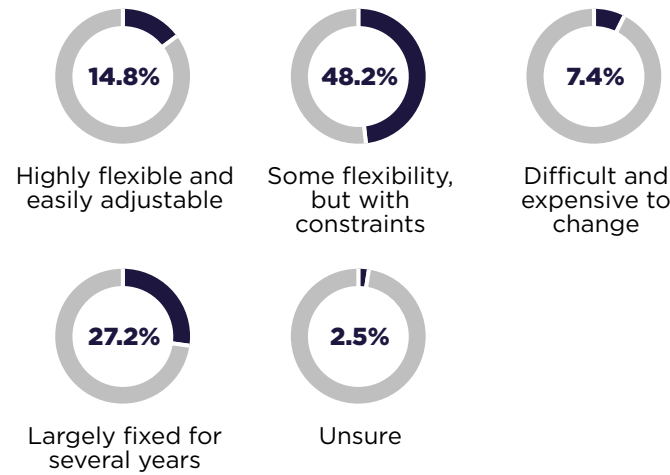
**RAPID GROWTH OR CONTRACTION**

**FLEXIBLE LEASE STRUCTURES**

**ACCESS TO ADDITIONAL FLEXIBLE WORKSPACE**

**CHANGING WORKPLACE PREFERENCES**

Figure 6: Reversibility of office commitments



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

For many organisations, flexibility is becoming an essential component of risk management rather than simply a leasing preference.

Companies are increasingly seeking solutions such as:

These approaches enable organisations to maintain agility while reducing exposure to long-term fixed costs.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE OFFICE MARKET

The findings suggest that the future of office demand on the Chinese mainland will be increasingly shaped by quality, efficiency and flexibility.

For occupiers, office strategies will need to align more closely with business objectives, focusing on productivity, talent and operational resilience rather than simply securing additional space.

For landlords and developers, competitive advantage will increasingly depend on the ability to provide adaptable leasing solutions, high-quality workplace environments and services that support tenant performance.

For investors, assets that demonstrate strong occupier relevance, efficient operations and the ability to accommodate changing business requirements are likely to show greater resilience in a more selective market.

The office market is therefore moving towards a new model in which value is created not through scale alone, but through the ability of real estate to support corporate success.

LOCATION, POLICY & TALENT ALIGNMENT

02

Unlocking the Advantage

How leading Chinese companies are using office strategy to drive high-quality development on the Chinese mainland

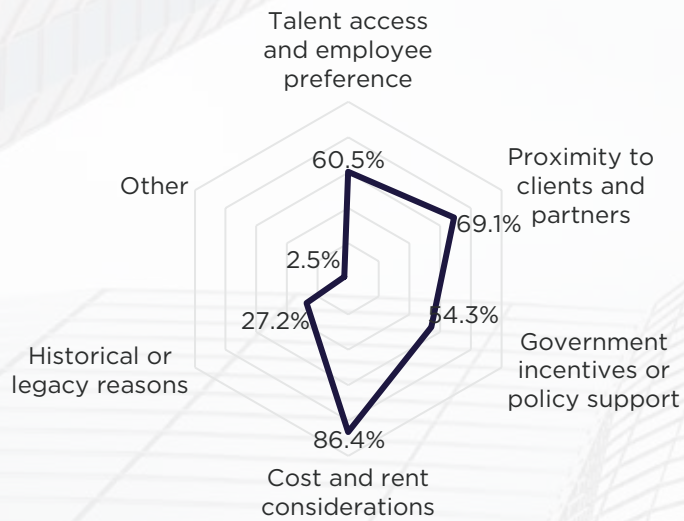
THE EVOLUTION OF OFFICE LOCATION STRATEGY

Office location decisions on the Chinese mainland are becoming more strategic, with leading Chinese companies weighing cost alongside talent access, industry ecosystems, customer connectivity, policy support and long-term resilience.

COST REMAINS THE PRIMARY CONSIDERATION, BUT VALUE IS DEFINED MORE BROADLY

The survey confirms that cost and rental considerations remain the most important factor influencing office location decisions, with 86.4% of respondents identifying them as a key consideration.

Figure 7: Primary reasons for choosing office space



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

This reflects continued corporate focus on financial discipline. With businesses facing greater uncertainty and pressure on profitability, controlling fixed operating expenses remains a priority.

However, value is increasingly defined beyond rent, incorporating the following factors:



EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION



PRODUCTIVITY LEVELS



CUSTOMER ACCESSIBILITY



BUSINESS TRAVEL EFFICIENCY



BRAND PERCEPTION



COLLABORATION EFFECTIVENESS

This shift from rental cost to total business value is a defining characteristic of more mature corporate real estate strategies.

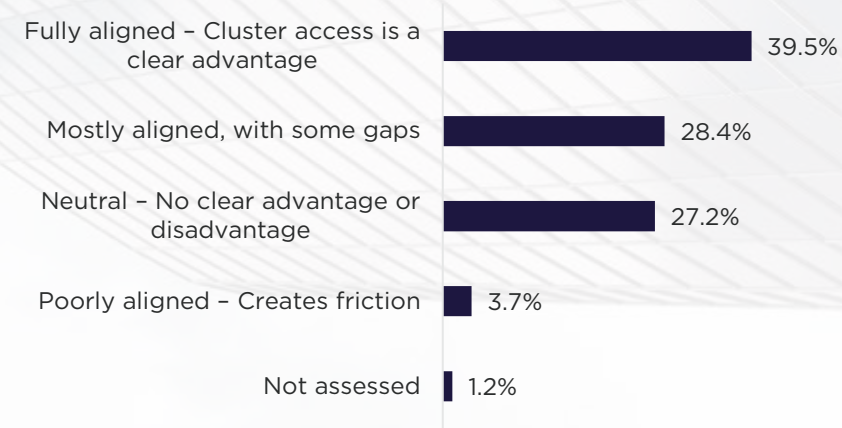
INDUSTRY ECOSYSTEMS ARE RESHAPING LOCATION DECISIONS

The survey highlights the growing importance of industry clusters in corporate location strategy.

Approximately 67.9% of respondents believe their current office locations are fully or mostly aligned with the industrial clusters relevant to their businesses.

This demonstrates that companies increasingly view location as an opportunity to participate within broader economic ecosystems.

Figure 8: Office location alignment with key industry clusters



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

For many industries, proximity creates significant advantages through access to:



SPECIALISED TALENT POOLS



RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS



CUSTOMERS AND SUPPLIERS



PROFESSIONAL SERVICE PROVIDERS



INDUSTRY NETWORKS



GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

This is particularly important for sectors where innovation, collaboration and knowledge exchange are central to competitiveness.

Technology companies benefit from proximity to innovation networks and specialised talent. Life sciences companies rely on connections with research institutions, laboratories and healthcare

ecosystems. Advanced manufacturing businesses benefit from supply chain integration and access to specialised infrastructure.

The result is a growing preference for locations that offer ecosystem advantages rather than simply physical office accommodation.

FROM OFFICE BUILDINGS TO BUSINESS PLATFORMS

The changing expectations of occupiers are also influencing landlord strategies.

As office markets across many Chinese mainland cities experience increased competition, landlords are recognising that buildings must provide more than high-quality physical space.

Successful office assets are increasingly evolving into business platforms that support tenant growth through:



INNOVATION COMMUNITIES



INDUSTRY NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES



DIGITAL BUILDING SERVICES



TENANT ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMMES



WELLNESS AND EMPLOYEE AMENITIES



SHARED FACILITIES



SUSTAINABILITY SOLUTIONS

This represents a shift from traditional asset management towards ecosystem management.

Buildings that successfully connect occupiers with business opportunities, talent resources and industry networks are more likely to achieve stronger tenant loyalty and long-term competitiveness.

For landlords, the challenge is moving beyond providing space towards creating meaningful value for occupiers.

As workforce expectations continue to evolve, companies are increasingly recognising that office strategy is closely connected to talent strategy.

A poorly located workplace may increase recruitment difficulty, employee turnover and operational inefficiency. Conversely, a well-positioned office can strengthen employer branding and support organisational stability.

TALENT ACCESSIBILITY BECOMES A CRITICAL LOCATION FACTOR

The survey demonstrates that talent considerations have become a central component of office location strategy.

A total of 60.5% of respondents identify talent access and employee preference as important factors when selecting office locations.

This reflects the increasing competition for skilled professionals across the major economic centres on the Chinese mainland.

For many industries, particularly technology, finance, professional services and advanced manufacturing, attracting and retaining talent is one of the most important determinants of business success.

Office locations influence this directly through:



COMMUTING CONVENIENCE



ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



PROXIMITY TO RESIDENTIAL AREAS



AVAILABILITY OF AMENITIES



WORKPLACE ATTRACTIVENESS



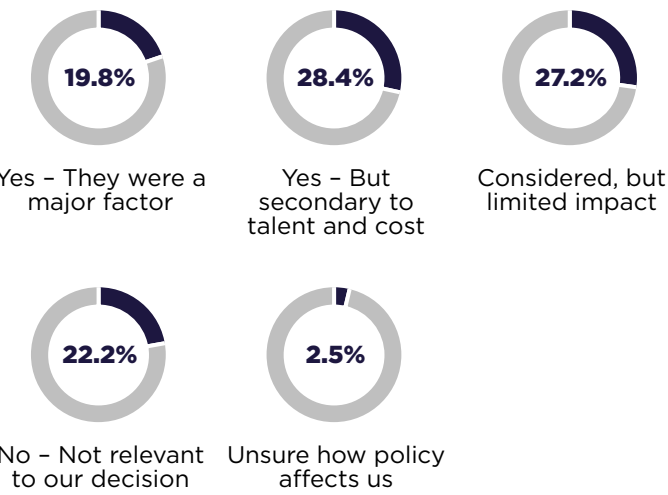
ALIGNMENT WITH EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS

GOVERNMENT POLICY CONTINUES TO INFLUENCE STRATEGIC LOCATIONS

Government incentives and policy support remain important drivers of office location decisions, particularly for technology-intensive industries.

Approximately 48.2% of respondents consider government incentives or policy support to be major or secondary influences on office decisions.

Figure 9: Degree to which local government incentives or policy considerations materially influence office decisions



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

The importance of policy varies significantly by sector.

High-tech industries demonstrate the strongest dependence on government support. Among companies involved in life sciences, advanced manufacturing, new energy and new materials, 76.9% identify policy support as an important factor.

This reflects the characteristics of these industries, which often involve:

HIGH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENT

LONG COMMERCIALISATION CYCLES

SIGNIFICANT INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

STRATEGIC NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Government support through subsidies, tax incentives, industrial parks and supporting infrastructure can significantly influence location decisions.

DIFFERENT INDUSTRIES PRIORITISE DIFFERENT LOCATION DRIVERS

The survey highlights that location strategies vary considerably by industry.

TECHNOLOGY AND INTERNET COMPANIES

Technology companies typically prioritise:

ACCESS TO SPECIALISED TALENT

INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS

COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES

PROXIMITY TO CUSTOMERS AND PARTNERS

For these companies, being located within a strong technology cluster can provide competitive advantages beyond cost savings.

FINANCIAL SERVICES AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Financial and professional services firms tend to place greater emphasis on:

CLIENT ACCESSIBILITY

CORPORATE IMAGE

BUSINESS CONNECTIVITY

ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY TALENT

Major financial centres and established commercial districts remain attractive because of their ability to support client relationships and business networks.

LIFE SCIENCES AND ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

These sectors place greater importance on:

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE

INDUSTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS

SPECIALISED FACILITIES

For these industries, location decisions are closely linked to broader economic development strategies.



IMPLICATIONS FOR THE OFFICE MARKET

The evolution of location strategy has significant implications for the Chinese mainland office market.

For occupiers, successful office decisions will require a more comprehensive assessment of cost, talent, ecosystem access and long-term business objectives.

For landlords and developers, competitive advantage will increasingly depend on creating locations that support business communities rather than simply providing office space.

For investors, assets positioned within strong industry clusters, transportation networks and talent centres are likely to demonstrate stronger long-term resilience.

The future of office demand will increasingly be shaped by the quality of the surrounding ecosystem as much as the quality of the building itself.

Office location has therefore become a source of strategic advantage. Companies that select locations aligned with their growth objectives will be better positioned to compete in the next phase of economic development on the Chinese mainland.

GROWTH OUTLOOK & OFFICE DEMAND

03

Unlocking the Advantage

How leading Chinese companies are using office strategy to drive high-quality development on the Chinese mainland

THE EVOLUTION OF CORPORATE OFFICE PORTFOLIOS

The relationship between corporate growth and office demand is undergoing a fundamental transformation on the Chinese mainland.

In previous growth cycles, expanding businesses typically translated into larger office requirements. Increasing headcount, entering new markets and establishing regional operations often resulted in significant increases in leased space.

Today, leading Chinese companies are approaching office portfolios with greater discipline. While business growth remains an

important driver of demand, organisations are increasingly focused on improving space efficiency, enhancing workplace effectiveness and ensuring that office commitments remain aligned with evolving business strategies.

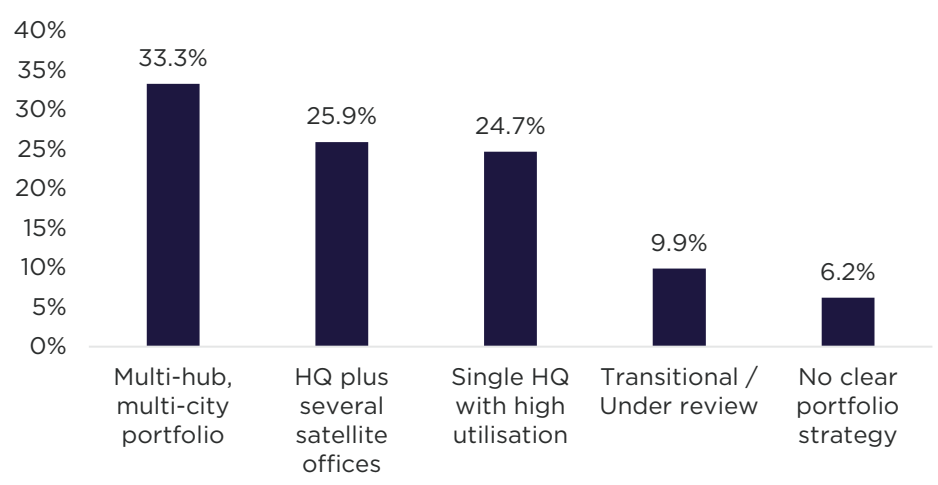
The survey findings demonstrate that most companies have established mature office strategies, but many continue to seek opportunities to optimise their portfolios. The focus is shifting from expansion of physical footprint towards improving the strategic value generated from existing and future office investments.

MULTI-CITY AND MULTI-SITE STRATEGIES BECOME THE DOMINANT MODEL

The survey indicates that corporate office strategies are increasingly characterised by geographic diversification.

A multi-centre, multi-city office portfolio is the most common model among respondents, accounting for 33.3%. This is followed by the headquarters plus satellite office model at 25.9%, while a single headquarters with high utilisation represents 24.7%.

Figure 10: Current office footprint



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

Together, these three models account for more than 83% of surveyed companies, demonstrating that organisations are increasingly adopting structured and deliberate approaches to workplace deployment.

The rise of distributed office strategies reflects several important business considerations:

**ACCESS TO
BROADER
TALENT POOLS**

**PROXIMITY TO
CUSTOMERS AND
PARTNERS**

**REGIONAL
MARKET
OPPORTUNITIES**

**COST
OPTIMISATION**

**BUSINESS
CONTINUITY**

**OPERATIONAL
RESILIENCE**

Rather than concentrating all corporate functions in one location, companies are increasingly designing office networks that reflect the geographical realities of modern business operations.

HEADQUARTERS ARE EVOLVING FROM ADMINISTRATIVE CENTRES TO STRATEGIC HUBS

While distributed office networks are becoming more common, headquarters remain strategically important.

The role of headquarters is evolving from a traditional administrative centre into a platform for:



CORPORATE CULTURE



LEADERSHIP COLLABORATION



INNOVATION



CLIENT ENGAGEMENT



BRAND REPRESENTATION

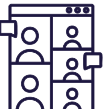
For many companies, headquarters continue to serve as the physical expression of corporate identity.

However, the function of headquarters is changing. Instead of accommodating every employee on a daily basis, modern headquarters are increasingly designed around collaboration, creativity and high-value interactions.

This is driving demand for workplaces with:



FLEXIBLE COLLABORATION AREAS



TECHNOLOGY-ENABLED MEETING SPACES



PREMIUM EMPLOYEE AMENITIES



SUSTAINABLE BUILDING FEATURES



STRONG CONNECTIVITY

The future headquarters is therefore likely to be smaller in terms of dedicated workstations but more valuable in terms of employee experience and strategic function.

OFFICE DEMAND IS BECOMING MORE QUALITY-FOCUSED

The survey highlights a clear movement away from purely quantitative measures of office demand.

Companies are increasingly evaluating office requirements through the lens of quality, utilisation and effectiveness.

This means that future demand will not simply be determined by:



NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES



HISTORICAL SPACE RATIOS



TRADITIONAL WORKPLACE ASSUMPTIONS

Instead, companies will consider:



HOW FREQUENTLY EMPLOYEES USE THE OFFICE



WHICH ACTIVITIES REQUIRE PHYSICAL COLLABORATION



HOW SPACE SUPPORTS PRODUCTIVITY



WHETHER THE WORKPLACE ATTRACTS TALENT



WHETHER THE OFFICE REFLECTS CORPORATE VALUES

This transition is particularly important as companies continue to refine hybrid work approaches and digital collaboration tools.

The office remains important, but its purpose is changing.

MOST COMPANIES BELIEVE THEIR CURRENT OFFICE STRATEGIES SUPPORT GROWTH

The survey indicates a generally positive outlook among occupiers.

More than 70% of respondents believe their current office strategies strongly or substantially support business growth.

Specifically, 53.1% state that their existing office premises strongly support growth, while an additional 17.3% believe they provide substantial support.

This suggests that most organisations believe their current workplace strategies are broadly

aligned with business needs.

However, confidence is accompanied by recognition that further improvement is required.

Approximately 23.4% of respondents indicate that their current office locations provide limited support and may begin to constrain business expansion.

This highlights an important distinction between having an operationally functional workplace and having a strategically optimised workplace.

Figure 11: Confidence in current office strategy to support growth without locking in risk



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

THE CHALLENGE OF SPACE OPTIMISATION

The proportion of companies experiencing space constraints suggests that office optimisation remains a significant priority.

As business models evolve, companies are reassessing:



SPACE ALLOCATION



COLLABORATION NEEDS



EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE



WORKPLACE DENSITY



FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Some organisations may require additional high-quality collaborative areas despite maintaining similar overall footprints. Others may discover opportunities to reduce underutilised space while improving workplace quality.

This creates a more complex office planning environment.

The future question is unlikely to be simply:

“How much office space does the company need?”

Instead, companies are increasingly asking:

“What type of workplace best supports our business objectives?”

FUTURE OFFICE DEMAND DRIVERS

Looking ahead, office demand on the Chinese mainland is likely to be shaped by several structural trends.



INDUSTRY GROWTH AND ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

Growth sectors including technology, life sciences, advanced manufacturing and financial services will remain important sources of office demand.

However, demand will increasingly favour locations and buildings aligned with specialised industry ecosystems.



WORKPLACE QUALITY

Companies will continue to prioritise higher-quality environments that support productivity, employee experience and corporate positioning.



FLEXIBILITY

Flexible workplace solutions will become increasingly important as companies seek to manage uncertainty and optimise commitments.



SUSTAINABILITY

Environmental performance, energy efficiency and green building standards will increasingly influence occupier decisions.



TALENT COMPETITION

Locations and buildings capable of supporting recruitment and retention will have a competitive advantage.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE OFFICE MARKET

For landlords, the changing nature of demand requires a stronger focus on tenant value creation.

Successful assets will need to provide:

For developers, future projects will need to consider not only building specifications but also ecosystem positioning, connectivity and industry relevance.

For investors, the most resilient office assets are likely to be those capable of adapting to changing occupier requirements and maintaining relevance through different market cycles.

The office market is moving from a model based on physical occupation towards one based on strategic usefulness.



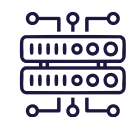
HIGH-QUALITY AMENITIES



STRONG SUSTAINABILITY CREDENTIALS



FLEXIBLE LEASING OPTIONS



DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE



TENANT ENGAGEMENT SERVICES

Companies will continue to need offices, but the offices that succeed will be those that provide measurable advantages to the businesses that occupy them.

COST, FLEXIBILITY & LEASE STRATEGY

04

Unlocking the Advantage

How leading Chinese companies are using office strategy to drive high-quality development on the Chinese mainland

THE CHANGING APPROACH TO OFFICE COST MANAGEMENT

As leading Chinese companies navigate a more complex economic environment, office cost management is shifting from rent minimisation to total value optimisation.

TOTAL COST OF OCCUPANCY BECOMES THE STANDARD EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The survey highlights a significant evolution in how companies assess office costs.

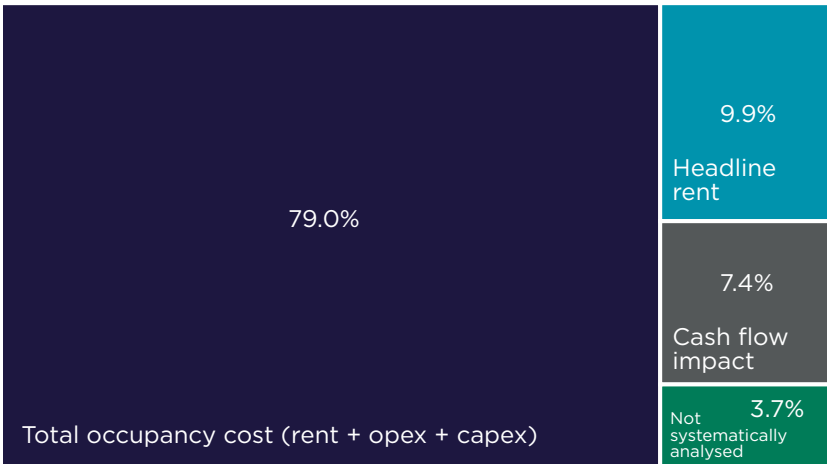
A total of 79.0% of respondents state that they evaluate office decisions based on total occupancy costs, including rent, operating expenses and capital expenditure, rather than focusing solely on headline rental levels.

This represents a substantial change from traditional leasing approaches.

Historically, office selection processes often placed considerable emphasis on rental comparisons. However, companies increasingly recognise that the true cost of occupying space extends beyond monthly rent.

A comprehensive cost assessment may include:

Figure 12: Primary focus when evaluating office costs



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research



This broader evaluation enables companies to make more informed decisions by considering both direct and indirect financial impacts.

COST DISCIPLINE REFLECTS A MORE CHALLENGING BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

The strong focus on cost management reflects broader economic realities.

Companies across sectors are under increasing pressure to:



Office commitments represent significant long-term financial obligations, making real estate strategy an important component of corporate financial planning.

The survey also shows that 90.1% of decision-makers are concerned about paying above-market office costs when approving office decisions.

This makes cost control the most significant risk consideration among surveyed companies.

However, cost discipline does not necessarily mean reducing office quality. Instead, leading organisations are seeking greater alignment between expenditure and business value.

Figure 13: Risks of greatest concern when approving office decisions



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research





FLEXIBILITY BECOMES A CORE REQUIREMENT

THE NEED TO REDUCE LONG-TERM COMMITMENT RISK

Traditional lease structures remain a source of risk when business requirements change, particularly where long terms, limited adjustment rights or high exit costs restrict portfolio agility.

GROWTH COMPANIES FACE THE GREATEST FLEXIBILITY CHALLENGE

Companies in rapid growth stages face particular challenges when planning office requirements.

The survey indicates that businesses experiencing expansion are more likely to view traditional office commitments as insufficiently adaptable.

For these organisations, uncertainty is often higher because:



EMPLOYEE NUMBERS CAN CHANGE QUICKLY



BUSINESS MODELS MAY EVOLVE



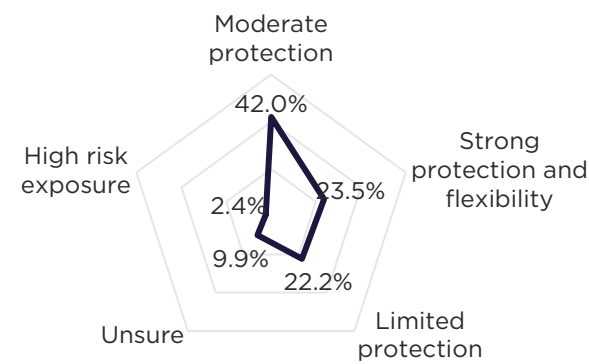
NEW MARKETS MAY EMERGE



ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES MAY SHIFT

Overcommitting to office space can create unnecessary financial pressure, while insufficient space can limit growth opportunities.

Figure 14: Whether current lease structures protect downside risk



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

Flexible office strategies therefore become an important tool for balancing growth potential with financial discipline.

LEASE NEGOTIATIONS AND DECISION TIMING

REDUCING THE IMPACT OF TIME PRESSURE

The survey suggests that most companies are managing lease negotiations effectively, with 82.7% indicating that they only occasionally or rarely compromise on terms due to time pressure.

However, a minority of organisations continue to face challenges when negotiating office commitments.

Time pressure can reduce negotiating leverage and may result in:



LESS FAVOURABLE LEASE TERMS



LIMITED FLEXIBILITY PROVISIONS



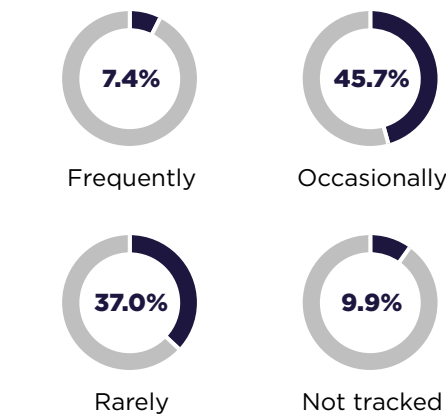
HIGHER OCCUPANCY COSTS



REDUCED STRATEGIC OPTIONS



Figure 15: Office negotiations and compromised terms due to time pressure



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

This highlights the importance of beginning office planning well in advance of lease expiry or relocation decisions.

Early preparation allows companies to:



UNDERSTAND MARKET CONDITIONS



EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES



NEGOTIATE FROM A STRONGER POSITION



ALIGN DECISIONS WITH BROADER BUSINESS STRATEGY

IMPLICATIONS FOR LANDLORDS AND INVESTORS

The changing approach to cost and lease strategy has significant implications for office owners.

Landlords must increasingly recognise that occupiers are evaluating buildings through a broader value framework.

Successful assets will need to demonstrate:

Simply offering discounted rents may not be sufficient to attract and retain high-quality occupiers.

Instead, landlords will need to demonstrate how their buildings help companies achieve broader business objectives.



OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY



LEASING FLEXIBILITY



COMPETITIVE TOTAL OCCUPANCY COSTS



HIGH-QUALITY TENANT SERVICES



STRONG WORKPLACE PERFORMANCE



IMPLICATIONS FOR OCCUPIERS

For occupiers, the evolution of cost and lease strategy creates opportunities to improve portfolio performance.

Leading organisations should consider:

The most effective office strategies will balance financial discipline with the need to support productivity, talent attraction and organisational resilience.



TOTAL COST OF OCCUPANCY ANALYSIS



FLEXIBLE LEASING STRUCTURES



REGULAR PORTFOLIO REVIEWS



SCENARIO PLANNING



ALIGNMENT BETWEEN WORKPLACE STRATEGY AND BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE OFFICE MARKET

The Chinese mainland office market is moving towards a more sophisticated leasing environment.

Occupiers are becoming more analytical, landlords are facing greater competition and investors are placing greater emphasis on asset adaptability.

Future success will depend on creating alignment between:



COST EFFICIENCY



WORKPLACE QUALITY



FLEXIBILITY



BUSINESS PERFORMANCE



TALENT, PRODUCTIVITY & WORKPLACE EFFECTIVENESS

05

Unlocking the Advantage

How leading Chinese companies are using office strategy to drive high-quality development on the Chinese mainland

THE WORKPLACE AS A STRATEGIC TALENT ASSET

The office is increasingly viewed as a talent asset, influencing employee experience, organisational culture and productivity alongside cost efficiency and flexibility.

FROM FUNCTIONAL WORKPLACE TO COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

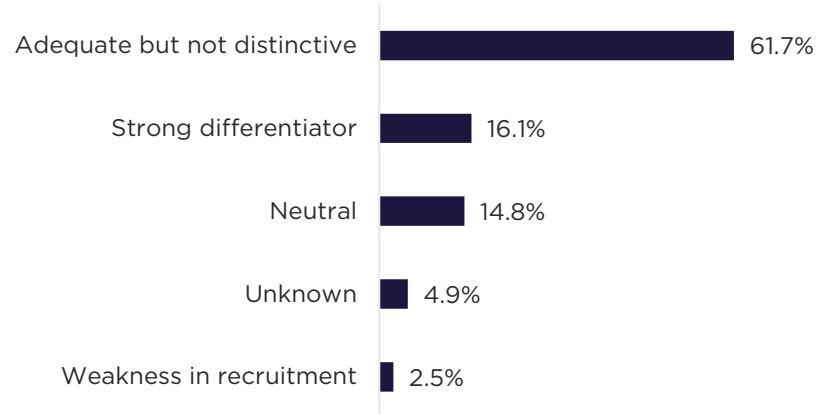
The survey shows that 61.7% of leading Chinese companies on the Chinese mainland believe their office environments generally meet employee needs but lack distinctive characteristics that attract and retain talent.

This finding highlights an important challenge.

Many workplaces today provide the basic requirements expected by employees, including appropriate facilities, reasonable comfort and functional working environments. However, fewer organisations have successfully developed workplaces that create meaningful competitive advantage.

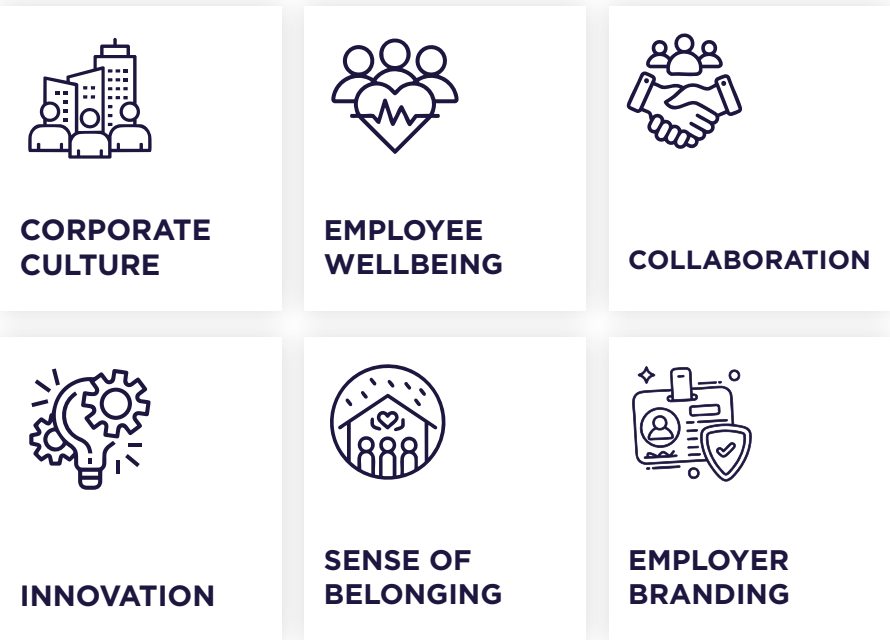
A workplace that simply meets expectations may no longer be sufficient in a market where companies compete aggressively for skilled professionals.

Figure 16: The extent to which your office environment supports talent attraction and retention



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

Leading organisations are increasingly considering how workplace design can support:



The office is becoming part of the overall employee proposition.

THE RISK OF WORKPLACE DIFFERENTIATION GAPS

While many companies recognise the importance of workplace quality, the survey indicates that some organisations have yet to fully understand the connection between workplace investment and talent outcomes.

Nearly 20% of respondents believe their office environment has no impact on talent attraction or are uncertain about the relationship.

This represents a potential strategic blind spot.

In competitive labour markets, workplace shortcomings may create disadvantages that are difficult to measure immediately but can influence:



Companies that fail to consider workplace strategy as part of talent management may miss opportunities to strengthen organisational performance.



EMPLOYEE FEEDBACK HIGHLIGHTS THE NEED FOR WORKPLACE IMPROVEMENT

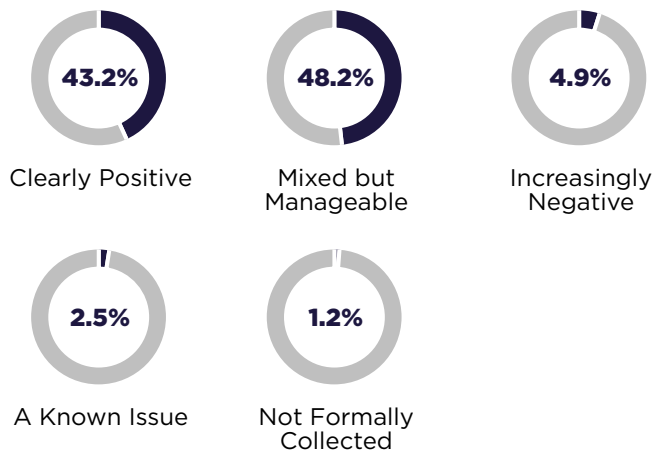
The survey findings show that employee perceptions of workplace quality remain mixed.

Approximately 48.2% of respondents report that employee feedback is generally mixed but manageable.

This suggests that many workplaces are functional but have room for improvement.

The challenge for companies is moving from workplaces that are merely acceptable towards environments that actively enhance employee experience.

Figure 17: Office workplace quality



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

Future workplace strategies are likely to focus increasingly on:

BETTER COLLABORATION SPACES

IMPROVED COMFORT AND WELLBEING

GREATER FLEXIBILITY

ENHANCED TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION

MORE PERSONALISED ENVIRONMENTS

The objective is not simply to create attractive offices, but to create workplaces that enable employees to perform at their best.

PRODUCTIVITY AND THE CHANGING PURPOSE OF THE OFFICE

The increasing focus on productivity is reshaping how companies approach workplace design.

As businesses prioritise efficiency and innovation, offices are expected to support activities that cannot easily be replicated remotely.

These include:

TEAM COLLABORATION

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

PROBLEM SOLVING

INNOVATION SESSIONS

CLIENT ENGAGEMENT

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The office is becoming less about providing a permanent workstation for every employee and more about creating an environment where high-value interactions can occur.

This shift has important implications for workplace planning.

Companies are increasingly evaluating:

WHICH ACTIVITIES REQUIRE PHYSICAL PRESENCE

HOW TEAMS COLLABORATE MOST EFFECTIVELY

HOW SPACE CAN ENCOURAGE INTERACTION

HOW WORKPLACE DESIGN SUPPORTS BUSINESS OBJECTIVES



HYBRID WORK REMAINS IN AN EXPLORATORY PHASE

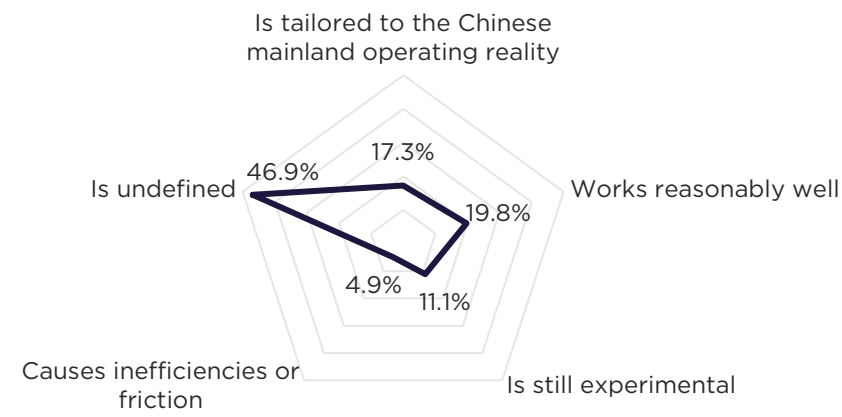
The survey indicates that hybrid working adoption on the Chinese mainland remains relatively cautious.

More than one-third of companies are experimenting with hybrid working models to some degree, while only a small proportion have fully implemented hybrid strategies across the organisation.

This reflects the unique characteristics of the Chinese mainland market.

Unlike some overseas markets where hybrid working has become more established, many companies continue to place significant value on physical workplace interaction, particularly for:

Figure 18: Current hybrid work model



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

Rather than adopting hybrid models universally, many companies are developing approaches that reflect their specific business requirements.

Successful hybrid models will require:

CLEAR PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

EFFECTIVE DIGITAL COLLABORATION TOOLS

STRONG COMMUNICATION PROCESSES

APPROPRIATE WORKPLACE DESIGN

LEADERSHIP ALIGNMENT

WORKPLACE DESIGN AND THE NEXT GENERATION WORKFORCE

Changing workforce expectations are likely to accelerate workplace transformation.

Younger employees increasingly place importance on:

PURPOSE-DRIVEN ORGANISATIONS

COLLABORATIVE ENVIRONMENTS

EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

TEAM COHESION

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS

CORPORATE CULTURE

The survey indicates that hybrid work adoption is influenced by several factors:

MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY

INDUSTRY CHARACTERISTICS

EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS

TECHNOLOGY CAPABILITY

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

FLEXIBILITY

TECHNOLOGY-ENABLED WORKPLACES

As younger generations become a larger proportion of the workforce, workplace expectations will continue to evolve.

Companies that provide modern, engaging environments will have stronger opportunities to attract emerging talent.

This does not mean every workplace must become highly experimental or informal. Instead, successful workplaces will be those that understand employee needs and align design with organisational objectives.

IMPLICATIONS FOR OCCUPIERS

For companies, workplace strategy should increasingly be integrated with talent and business strategy.

Key considerations include:



UNDERSTANDING EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS



MEASURING WORKPLACE EFFECTIVENESS



ALIGNING OFFICE DESIGN WITH ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE



USING DATA TO OPTIMISE SPACE UTILISATION



CREATING ENVIRONMENTS THAT SUPPORT COLLABORATION

The objective should be to move beyond providing office space towards creating workplaces that improve organisational performance.

IMPLICATIONS FOR LANDLORDS AND DEVELOPERS

For landlords, workplace expectations create both challenges and opportunities.

Buildings that support occupier talent objectives will become increasingly attractive.

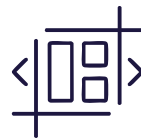
Competitive advantages may include:



HIGH-QUALITY AMENITIES



WELLNESS FEATURES



FLEXIBLE SPACES



COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES



SUSTAINABILITY CREDENTIALS



TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

The future office building will compete not only for tenants, but also for the employees of those tenants.

Assets that enhance workplace experience will be better positioned to achieve stronger occupier demand and retention.

THE FUTURE ROLE OF THE WORKPLACE

The survey demonstrates that the office remains strategically important, but its purpose is changing.

The workplace is evolving from a location where employees complete tasks into an environment that enables collaboration, innovation and organisational connection.

For leading companies, the question is no longer whether employees need offices, but how offices can create value that cannot be achieved elsewhere.

As businesses continue to pursue high-quality development, workplace effectiveness will become an increasingly important source of competitive advantage.

SUSTAINABILITY, COST & RISK MANAGEMENT

06

Unlocking the Advantage

How leading Chinese companies are using office strategy to drive high-quality development on the Chinese mainland

SUSTAINABILITY MOVES FROM COMMITMENT TO BUSINESS VALUE CREATION

Sustainability is becoming a practical business consideration in corporate real estate, valued for its ability to improve efficiency, reduce operating costs and manage future risk.

COST EFFICIENCY IS THE PRIMARY SUSTAINABILITY DRIVER

The survey shows that 55.6% of leading Chinese companies on the Chinese mainland identify cost reduction and operational efficiency as the primary reason for incorporating sustainability considerations into office decisions.

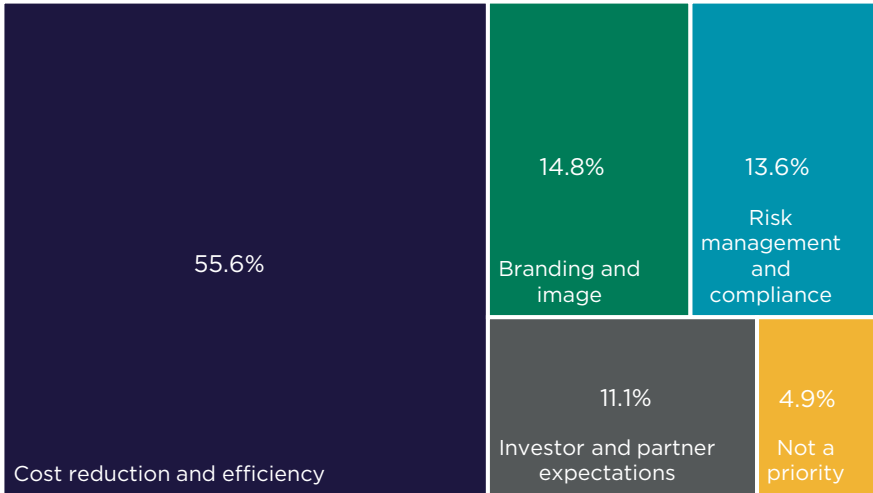
This finding highlights an important characteristic of the current market environment.

While environmental responsibility remains an important objective, companies are increasingly focused on sustainability initiatives that generate measurable financial returns.

For occupiers, sustainability investment is increasingly evaluated through the same framework as other business decisions: whether it delivers tangible value.

This shift from sustainability as a compliance requirement towards sustainability as an efficiency strategy represents a significant change in corporate real estate thinking.

Figure 19: Primary reasons for considering sustainability in office decisions



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

Examples include:

LOWER ENERGY CONSUMPTION

IMPROVED BUILDING EFFICIENCY

REDUCED OPERATING EXPENSES

BETTER WORKPLACE PERFORMANCE

ENHANCED ASSET RESILIENCE

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS ACCELERATE SUSTAINABILITY ADOPTION

The survey indicates that external pressures are also influencing sustainability decisions.

Risk management and compliance considerations account for 13.6% of responses, while investor and partner expectations represent 11.1%.

Together, these factors demonstrate that sustainability adoption is increasingly influenced by broader market forces, including:

For companies operating within international supply chains or serving global clients, sustainability performance is becoming an increasingly important business requirement.

GOVERNMENT POLICY

ESG REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

INVESTOR EXPECTATIONS

SUPPLY CHAIN STANDARDS

CUSTOMER REQUIREMENTS

SUSTAINABILITY IS BECOMING A MARKET EXPECTATION

Only 4.9% of respondents consider sustainability to be a low priority, indicating that sustainability has become a mainstream consideration in office decisions.

This reflects the growing influence of climate objectives on the Chinese mainland, including the national “dual carbon” goals, which are encouraging companies and property owners to improve energy efficiency and reduce emissions.

For office landlords, this trend has important implications.

Buildings without strong sustainability credentials may increasingly face challenges in attracting and retaining high-quality occupiers.

Future competitiveness will increasingly depend on:

GREEN BUILDING CERTIFICATIONS

ENERGY PERFORMANCE

SMART BUILDING SYSTEMS

CARBON MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES

SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS

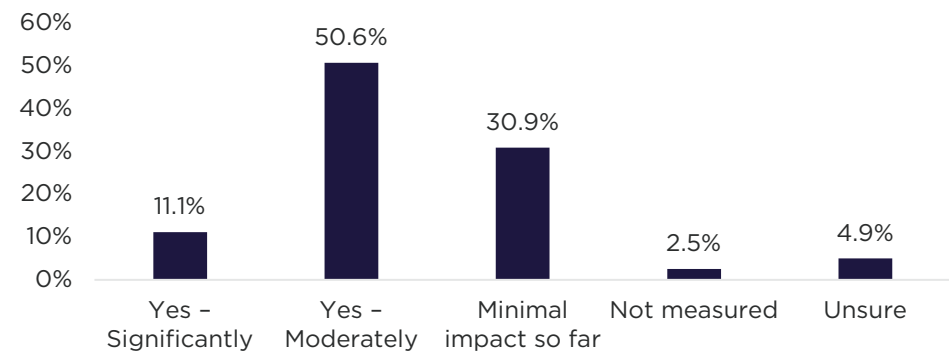


ENERGY EFFICIENCY BECOMES A CORE OPERATING CONSIDERATION

Energy costs represent one of the most direct links between sustainability and financial performance.

The survey indicates that while only 11.1% of companies consider energy costs to have a significant impact on operating expenses, energy efficiency remains an important area of future optimisation.

Figure 20: Impact of energy costs and building efficiency on operating expenses



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

This may reflect several factors:

INCREASING AVAILABILITY OF EFFICIENT BUILDINGS

IMPROVED ENERGY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

GREATER ADOPTION OF GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS

ENHANCED AWARENESS OF OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

However, the survey also identifies potential information gaps.

Approximately 7.4% of companies either do not measure energy costs separately or are uncertain about their impact.

This suggests that some organisations may not yet have sufficient visibility into the operational performance of their workplaces.

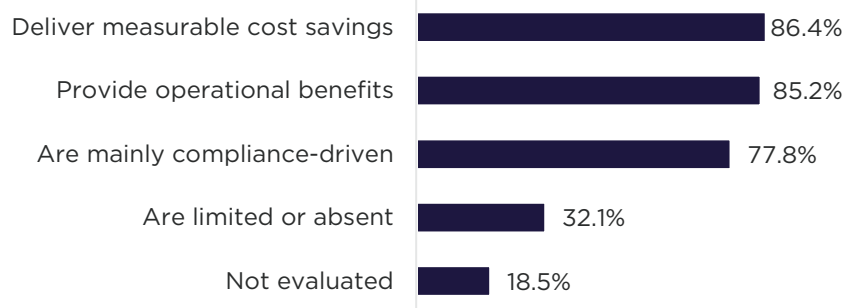
Improved measurement and data analysis will become increasingly important as companies seek to identify efficiency opportunities.

GREEN BUILDINGS ENTER A VALUE VALIDATION PHASE

The survey indicates strong recognition of the practical benefits of green buildings.

More than 80% of respondents view green buildings as valuable business tools rather than simply environmental certifications.

Figure 21: Perceived business value of green buildings



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

This represents an important market transition.

Previously, green certifications were sometimes viewed primarily as compliance achievements or corporate reporting requirements.

Increasingly, companies are recognising their broader operational value.

Benefits include:

LOWER ENERGY CONSUMPTION

IMPROVED EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

BETTER WORKPLACE QUALITY

ENHANCED CORPORATE REPUTATION

GREATER LONG-TERM ASSET RESILIENCE

This suggests that green buildings are moving from being a premium feature towards becoming an expected component of high-quality office environments.



THE CHALLENGE OF MOVING BEYOND CERTIFICATION

Despite strong recognition of green building value, the survey highlights continued challenges.

Approximately 32.1% of respondents believe that green building features within their current office portfolios remain limited or absent.

This indicates that there is still a gap between sustainability aspirations and practical implementation.

In some cases, buildings may achieve certification but fail to maximise operational benefits due to:



LIMITED ENERGY MONITORING



INEFFICIENT BUILDING MANAGEMENT



POOR TENANT ENGAGEMENT



LACK OF OPERATIONAL OPTIMISATION

The future focus of sustainability will therefore move beyond certification towards measurable performance.

Companies and landlords will increasingly need to demonstrate actual outcomes, including:



ENERGY SAVINGS



CARBON REDUCTION



OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY



EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

SUSTAINABILITY AND RISK MANAGEMENT ARE INCREASINGLY CONNECTED

Sustainability is also becoming an important component of broader corporate risk management.

Companies are increasingly considering how office strategies can protect against:

For investors and landlords, sustainability performance is becoming closely linked to asset competitiveness and long-term value preservation.

Buildings that fail to adapt may experience increasing challenges as occupiers become more selective.



RISING ENERGY COSTS



REGULATORY CHANGES



CARBON REPORTING REQUIREMENTS



ASSET OBSOLESCENCE



CHANGING OCCUPIER EXPECTATIONS

IMPLICATIONS FOR OCCUPIERS

For companies, sustainability should increasingly be integrated into corporate real estate strategies.

Key considerations include:



EVALUATING BUILDING ENERGY PERFORMANCE



UNDERSTANDING OPERATIONAL COSTS



MEASURING WORKPLACE SUSTAINABILITY OUTCOMES



ALIGNING OFFICE DECISIONS WITH ESG OBJECTIVES



USING SUSTAINABILITY AS A TALENT AND BRANDING TOOL

The most effective sustainability strategies will combine environmental objectives with measurable business benefits.



IMPLICATIONS FOR LANDLORDS AND INVESTORS

For landlords and investors, sustainability is becoming a fundamental requirement rather than a differentiating feature.

Future competitive assets will likely demonstrate:



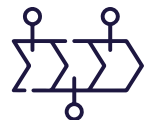
STRONG ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE



LOWER OPERATING COSTS



ADVANCED BUILDING TECHNOLOGY



TRANSPARENT SUSTAINABILITY DATA



ALIGNMENT WITH OCCUPIER ESG REQUIREMENTS

Investment in sustainability is increasingly an investment in long-term asset relevance.

THE FUTURE OF SUSTAINABLE OFFICES

The survey demonstrates that sustainability has become embedded within corporate office decision-making.

However, the next phase will be defined by measurable outcomes rather than commitments alone.

Companies will increasingly seek workplaces that deliver:



LOWER COSTS



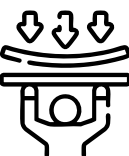
BETTER EFFICIENCY



IMPROVED EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE



REDUCED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT



GREATER RESILIENCE

For the Chinese mainland office market, sustainability will become a key factor separating competitive assets from those that struggle to maintain occupier demand.

The future office will not only need to support how people work – it will also need to support how companies manage cost, risk and long-term value creation.

DECISION PROCESS & ADVISORY SUPPORT

07

Unlocking the Advantage

How leading Chinese companies are using office strategy to drive high-quality development on the Chinese mainland

THE INCREASING STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF CORPORATE REAL ESTATE DECISIONS

Office strategy at leading Chinese companies on the Chinese mainland is increasingly a senior leadership concern because it affects cost, growth, talent, resilience and long-term capital allocation.

C-SUITE LEADERSHIP DRIVES OFFICE DECISIONS

The survey shows that senior leadership plays the dominant role in office decision-making.

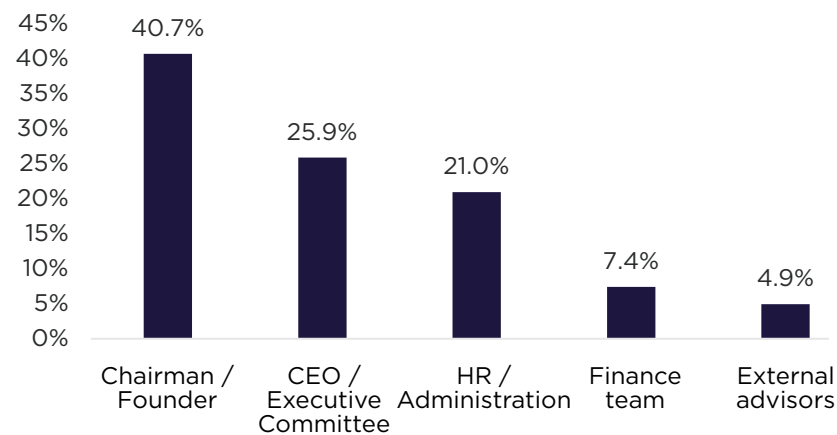
Chairmen/founders and CEOs/executive committees together account for 66.7% of primary decision-makers.

This demonstrates that office strategy has moved beyond a facilities or administrative function and is increasingly viewed as a strategic business decision.

Senior executives are increasingly involved because office decisions influence:

For many companies, particularly those undergoing transformation or expansion, office strategy has become an important element of overall business planning.

Figure 22: Who primarily drives office decisions



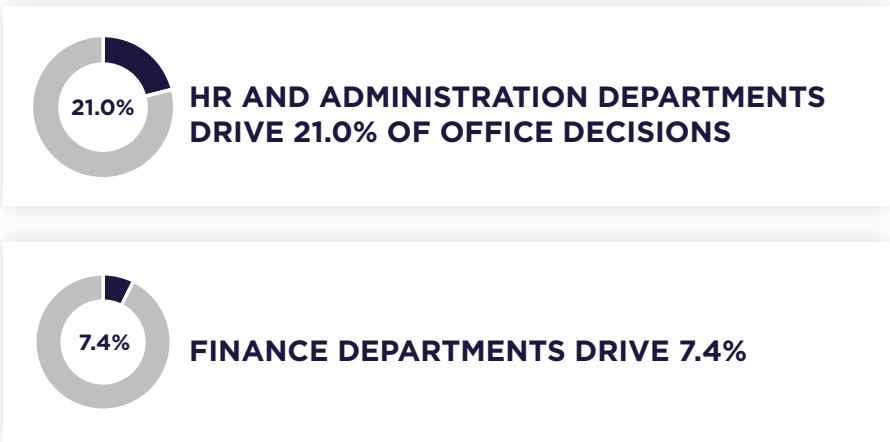
Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research



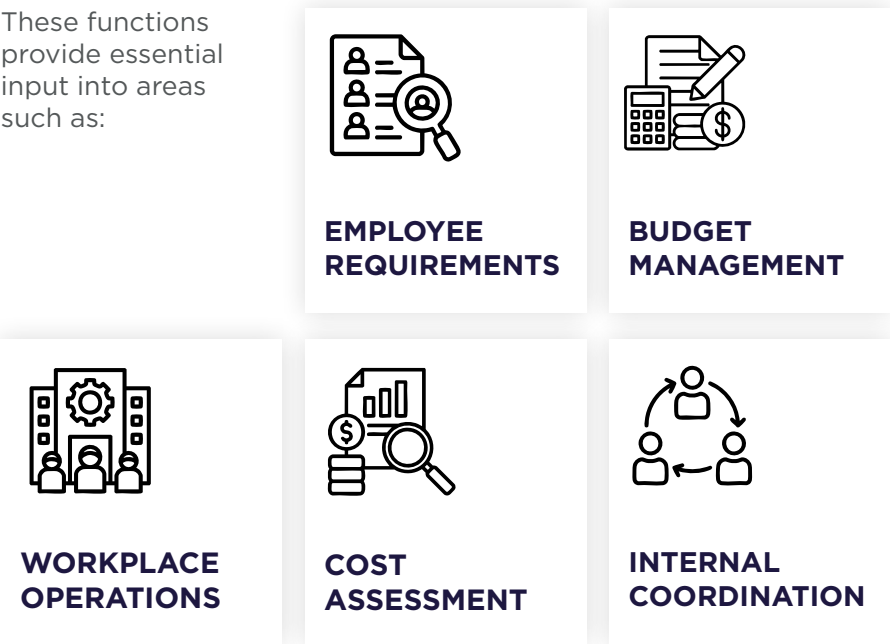
FUNCTIONAL DEPARTMENTS PROVIDE CRITICAL SUPPORT

Although senior executives lead final decisions, functional departments remain important contributors.

The survey indicates that:



These functions provide essential input into areas such as:



The increasing complexity of office decisions means successful strategies require collaboration between multiple stakeholders.

A modern corporate real estate decision typically involves balancing financial objectives with employee needs, operational requirements and long-term business strategy.

EXTERNAL ADVISORS REMAIN SPECIALIST PARTNERS RATHER THAN DECISION MAKERS

Only 4.9% of respondents identify external advisors as primary drivers of office decisions.

This indicates that companies generally retain ownership of strategic real estate decisions internally.

However, their limited role in final decision-making does not reduce the importance of external advisors.

Instead, advisors increasingly serve as specialist partners providing:

The value of advisors lies not in replacing corporate decision-makers, but in improving the quality and effectiveness of decisions.



MARKET INTELLIGENCE



INDEPENDENT ANALYSIS



NEGOTIATION EXPERTISE



RISK ASSESSMENT



STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS



MARKET INTELLIGENCE IS THE MOST VALUED ADVISORY SERVICE

The survey highlights that access to reliable market intelligence is the strongest reason companies engage external advisors.

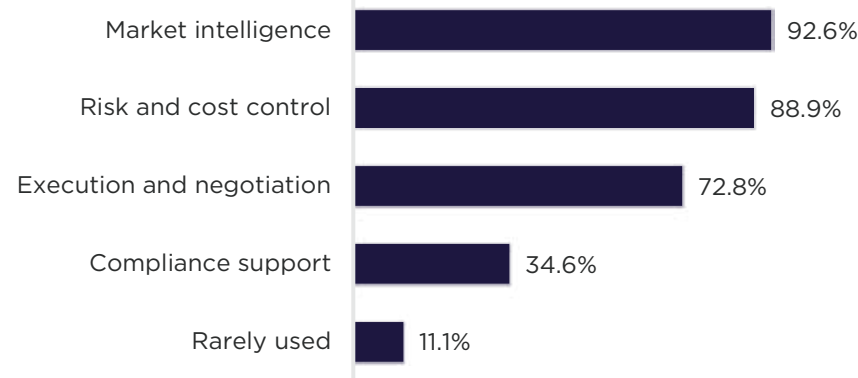
A significant 92.6% of respondents recognise market intelligence as a key advisory benefit.

In a rapidly changing office market, accurate information has become increasingly valuable.

Companies require insight into:

Independent market intelligence helps occupiers make better-informed decisions and reduce information disadvantages during negotiations.

Figure 23: Key benefits of using external real estate advisors



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research



RENTAL TRENDS



VACANCY CONDITIONS



NEW SUPPLY PIPELINES



COMPETITIVE POSITIONING



LANDLORD STRATEGIES

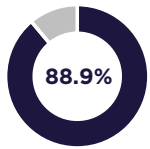


MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

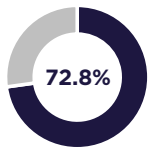
ADVISORS SUPPORT COST CONTROL AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Beyond market intelligence, companies increasingly value advisors for their ability to manage risk and improve financial outcomes.

The survey shows that:



88.9% VALUE RISK AND COST CONTROL SUPPORT



72.8% VALUE EXECUTION AND NEGOTIATION ASSISTANCE

This reflects growing recognition that office decisions involve significant financial and operational risks.

Professional advisors can support companies by:



BENCHMARKING MARKET TERMS



IDENTIFYING COST-SAVING OPPORTUNITIES



EVALUATING LEASE STRUCTURES



NEGOTIATING IMPROVED CONDITIONS



MANAGING RELOCATION COMPLEXITY

As companies focus more strongly on total cost of occupancy, these capabilities are becoming increasingly important.

THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND STRATEGIC ADVISORY SERVICES

While companies recognise the value of traditional advisory services, the survey suggests there is significant opportunity to expand into broader strategic areas.

Only 34.6% of respondents identify compliance support as a major advisory benefit, while some companies continue to rely primarily on internal resources.

This indicates that many organisations may still view real estate advisors mainly as transactional service providers rather than strategic partners.

However, the increasing complexity of corporate real estate creates opportunities for advisors to provide more integrated solutions, including:



PORTFOLIO STRATEGY



WORKPLACE OPTIMISATION



LOCATION PLANNING



SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY



OCCUPANCY COST MANAGEMENT



LONG-TERM REAL ESTATE PLANNING

The future advisory model will increasingly move from transaction support towards strategic partnership.

STRONG MARKET CONFIDENCE IN REAL ESTATE ADVISORY VALUE

The survey demonstrates broad confidence in the value of professional real estate advisory services.

More than 90% of respondents hold a positive view of advisory value, with 58.0% agreeing that measurable results justify the cost.

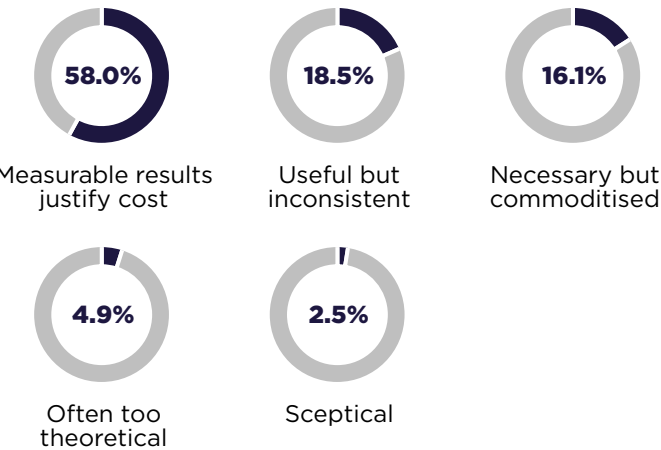
This indicates that companies increasingly recognise the financial and strategic benefits of specialist support.

The strongest appreciation of advisory value is among companies facing greater uncertainty.

For example, organisations concerned about overcommitting to office space are more likely to view advisors as valuable because external expertise can help reduce downside risks.

Similarly, companies prioritising faster execution place greater emphasis on advisory support.

Figure 24: Perceived value of real estate advisory services



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

This highlights the importance of differentiation.

As corporate expectations become more sophisticated, advisory firms must demonstrate value beyond standard market information or transaction execution.

Future competitive advantages will come from:

The most successful advisors will be those capable of connecting real estate decisions with broader business outcomes.



DEEPER
INDUSTRY
KNOWLEDGE



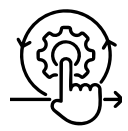
INTEGRATED
SOLUTIONS



DATA-DRIVEN
INSIGHTS



STRATEGIC
THINKING

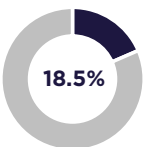


STRONG
EXECUTION
CAPABILITY

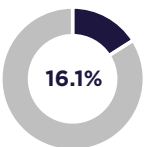
DIFFERENTIATION AND QUALITY REMAIN KEY CHALLENGES

Despite strong recognition of advisory value, the survey identifies areas where service providers must continue to improve.

Approximately:



18.5% OF RESPONDENTS CITE
INCONSISTENT SERVICE QUALITY



16.1% IDENTIFY COMMODITISATION AS A
CONCERN



FASTER
EXECUTION
BECOMES
A PRIORITY
ADVISORY
REQUIREMENT

The survey identifies faster execution as the most valued outcome from a real estate partner.

Approximately 40.7% of respondents prioritise faster execution, reflecting the increasing importance of speed and efficiency in corporate decision-making.

Companies are seeking advisors that can help them:



IDENTIFY SUITABLE
OPTIONS QUICKLY



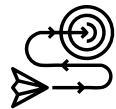
REDUCE INFORMATION
GAPS



MANAGE COMPLEX
NEGOTIATIONS



SHORTEN DECISION
TIMELINES

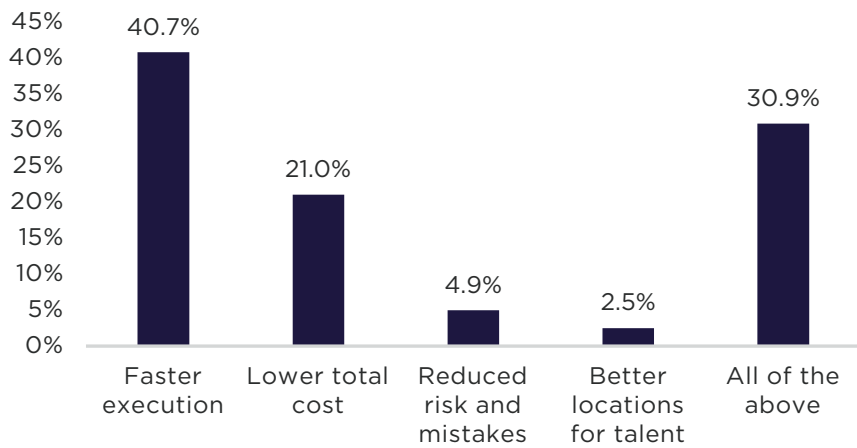


EXECUTE STRATEGIES
EFFECTIVELY

In competitive business environments, delayed real estate decisions can create significant opportunity costs.

Speed, however, must be balanced with strategic quality. Companies require advisors that can accelerate decision-making while maintaining rigorous analysis.

Figure 25: Priority outcomes expected from real estate advisory partners



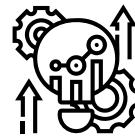
Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

DEMAND FOR
INTEGRATED
SOLUTIONS IS
INCREASING

Approximately 30.9% of respondents value integrated end-to-end solutions.

This reflects growing demand for advisory partners that can support the entire real estate strategy lifecycle.

Rather than engaging separate providers for individual requirements, companies increasingly seek integrated support covering:



STRATEGY
DEVELOPMENT



MARKET
ANALYSIS



SITE
SELECTION



WORKPLACE
PLANNING



LEASE
NEGOTIATION



IMPLEMENTATION

This trend presents opportunities for advisory firms to expand their role from specialist consultants to long-term strategic partners.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CORPORATE REAL ESTATE
ADVISORY INDUSTRY

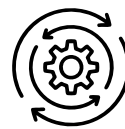
The survey findings indicate that corporate real estate advisory services are entering a new phase.

The market is moving away from a transaction-focused model towards a more strategic partnership approach.

Successful advisors will need to combine:



NEGOTIATION
SKILLS



STRATEGIC
INSIGHT



IMPLEMENTATION
CAPABILITY

As companies continue to optimise their office strategies, advisors that can demonstrate measurable business value will be best positioned to support future decision-making.



MARKET
EXPERTISE

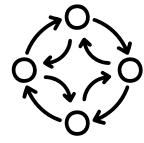


DATA
CAPABILITIES

THE FUTURE ROLE OF ADVISORS

The evolution of corporate office strategy creates a clear opportunity for professional advisors.

Companies increasingly need support navigating:



**MARKET
UNCERTAINTY**



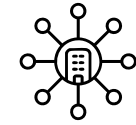
**COST
PRESSURES**



**WORKPLACE
TRANSFORMATION**



**SUSTAINABILITY
REQUIREMENTS**



**FLEXIBLE
LEASING
STRATEGIES**

The advisor of the future will not simply help companies find office space. They will help organisations design workplace strategies that support growth, efficiency and resilience.

In an increasingly complex commercial real estate environment, strategic advice has become a critical business capability.

STRATEGIC READINESS CHECK

08

Unlocking the Advantage

How leading Chinese companies are using office strategy to drive high-quality development on the Chinese mainland

ASSESSING CORPORATE OFFICE STRATEGIES FOR FUTURE GROWTH

As leading Chinese companies on the Chinese mainland adapt to a more complex business environment, the effectiveness of office strategy is becoming an increasingly important factor in supporting long-term development.

The survey findings indicate that most companies believe their current office strategies provide a solid foundation for growth. However, many also recognise that further optimisation is required to unlock additional value.

This reflects a broader transition in corporate real estate management. Companies are no longer simply asking whether their offices meet current requirements. Instead, they are evaluating whether their office strategies are sufficiently flexible, efficient and aligned with future business priorities.

The ability to continuously review and adapt office strategies will become increasingly important as companies navigate changing economic conditions, evolving workplace expectations and shifting talent requirements.

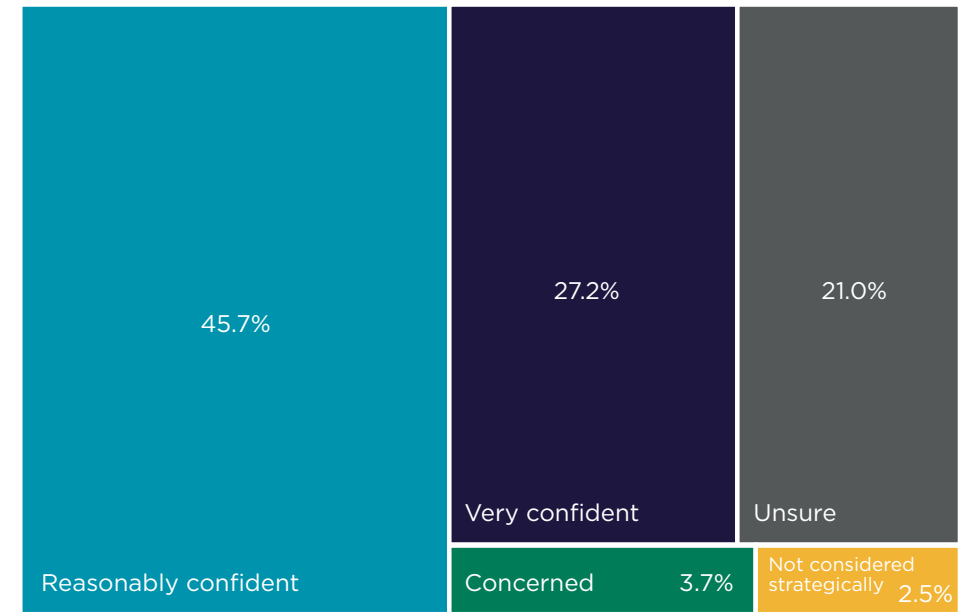
STRONG CONFIDENCE IN THE STRATEGIC VALUE OF CURRENT OFFICE APPROACHES

The survey reveals broad confidence among companies regarding the ability of their office strategies to support high-quality development.

A combined 72.8% of respondents describe themselves as either “very confident” or “reasonably confident” that their current office strategies actively support business development.

This demonstrates that most organisations believe their workplace decisions are broadly aligned with their operational and strategic objectives.

Figure 26: Confidence in current office strategies to support high-quality development



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

This confidence reflects several positive trends identified throughout the survey:

-  **GREATER FOCUS ON WORKPLACE EFFICIENCY**
-  **INCREASED CONSIDERATION OF TALENT REQUIREMENTS**
-  **MORE SOPHISTICATED COST EVALUATION**
-  **STRONGER ALIGNMENT WITH INDUSTRY ECOSYSTEMS**
-  **GROWING AWARENESS OF SUSTAINABILITY**

However, confidence does not necessarily mean that strategies are fully optimised.

Many companies recognise that additional improvements are required to maximise the contribution of real estate to business performance.



GROWTH-STAGE COMPANIES DEMONSTRATE THE HIGHEST CONFIDENCE

The survey indicates that companies in earlier growth phases demonstrate particularly strong confidence in their office strategies.

Early-stage and expansion-stage companies record the highest levels of confidence, with more than half describing their strategies as highly supportive of growth.

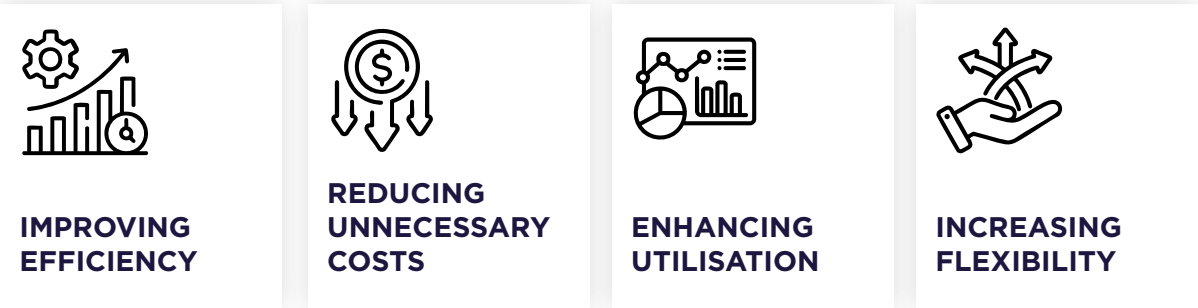
This reflects the importance of office strategy during periods of rapid development.

For growth companies, an effective workplace strategy can support:



These companies often view office strategy as an enabler of growth rather than simply an operational requirement.

By contrast, companies in optimisation or consolidation phases tend to adopt a more measured approach. Their focus is often on:



This difference demonstrates that office strategy must evolve according to business development stage.

MOST COMPANIES SEE OPPORTUNITY FOR FURTHER OPTIMISATION

While confidence levels are generally positive, the survey highlights significant demand for improvement.

Approximately 66.7% of respondents state that their current office strategies support growth but could be improved.

An additional 11.1% believe their office strategies actively accelerate growth.

Together, these findings indicate that most companies have established functional workplace strategies but recognise opportunities to enhance performance.

Key areas for optimisation include:

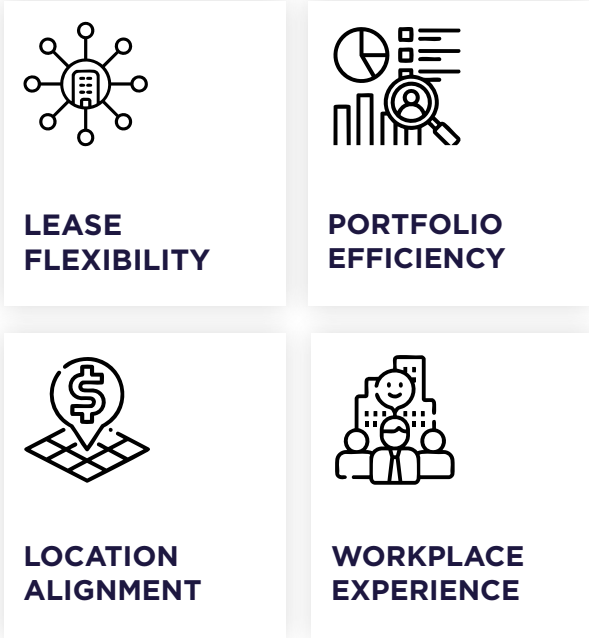
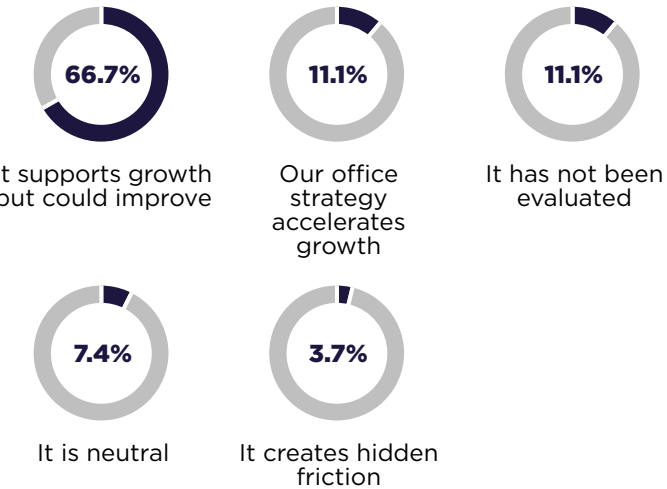


Figure 27: Opportunities to optimise current office strategies



Source: Cushman & Wakefield Research

This suggests that future corporate real estate strategies will focus less on fundamental transformation and more on continuous refinement.

THE NEED FOR DYNAMIC OFFICE STRATEGY MANAGEMENT

The survey findings reinforce that office strategy cannot remain static.

Business conditions, workforce requirements and market opportunities continue to evolve. A strategy that works effectively today may become less suitable in the future.

Companies increasingly require ongoing review processes that evaluate:



CHANGING BUSINESS PRIORITIES



WORKFORCE TRENDS



MARKET CONDITIONS



SPACE UTILISATION



FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Dynamic strategy management allows organisations to make timely adjustments rather than responding only when challenges emerge.

This approach is particularly important given the uncertainty associated with long-term office commitments.

IDENTIFYING STRATEGIC FRICTION POINTS

Although most companies view their office strategies positively, a minority identify potential misalignment.

The survey shows that:



These findings suggest that some organisations may not have sufficient visibility into the effectiveness of their current workplace arrangements.

Potential issues may include:



INEFFICIENT LEASE STRUCTURES



WORKPLACE DESIGNS THAT DO NOT SUPPORT COLLABORATION



SUSTAINABILITY GAPS



UNDERUTILISED SPACE



MISALIGNMENT BETWEEN LOCATION AND TALENT NEEDS

For these companies, strategic reviews can identify opportunities to improve performance and reduce long-term risk.

EXPANDING THE VALUE PROPOSITION BEYOND COST AND TRANSACTIONS

While cost management remains an important priority, the survey indicates opportunities for advisors and landlords to expand their value propositions.

Companies increasingly require support in areas such as:

The future of corporate real estate will involve demonstrating how workplace decisions contribute to wider business objectives.

Real estate will increasingly be evaluated not only by financial cost but also by its contribution to:



RISK MITIGATION



TALENT STRATEGY



SUSTAINABILITY



PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENT



ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS



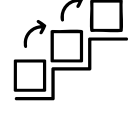
GROWTH



INNOVATION



EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE



CORPORATE RESILIENCE

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR OCCUPIERS

Based on the survey findings, companies seeking to strengthen their office strategies should consider several priorities.



ALIGN REAL ESTATE STRATEGY WITH BUSINESS STRATEGY

Office decisions should be closely connected with growth objectives, organisational structure and operational requirements.



INCREASE FLEXIBILITY

Companies should evaluate whether existing commitments provide sufficient adaptability in changing market conditions.



IMPROVE DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

Better measurement of occupancy costs, utilisation and workplace effectiveness can support stronger decisions.



INTEGRATE WORKPLACE AND TALENT STRATEGY

Office environments should support recruitment, retention and employee engagement objectives.



TREAT SUSTAINABILITY AS BUSINESS VALUE

Sustainability initiatives should focus on measurable operational benefits while supporting broader ESG objectives.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR LANDLORDS AND INVESTORS

The survey findings also provide important implications for office owners and investors.

Future competitive assets will need to demonstrate:

Buildings that simply provide physical space will face increasing competition.

STRONG OCCUPIER ALIGNMENT

FLEXIBLE LEASING SOLUTIONS

EFFICIENT OPERATIONS

SUSTAINABILITY PERFORMANCE

TALENT-SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

INDUSTRY ECOSYSTEM CONNECTIVITY

The next generation of successful office assets will function as platforms that enable occupier success.

CONCLUSION - READINESS FOR THE NEXT PHASE OF CORPORATE REAL ESTATE

The survey demonstrates that leading Chinese companies on the Chinese mainland are entering a new phase of office strategy development.

The focus is shifting:

FROM FIXED COMMITMENTS TO FLEXIBILITY

FROM COST MANAGEMENT TO VALUE CREATION

FROM OFFICE ACCOMMODATION TO STRATEGIC ENABLEMENT

FROM EXPANSION TO EFFICIENCY

FROM SPACE QUANTITY TO WORKPLACE QUALITY

Most companies believe their current office strategies provide a foundation for future growth. However, the widespread recognition of optimisation opportunities demonstrates that corporate real estate strategies will continue to evolve.

The companies best positioned for high-quality development will be those that treat office strategy as an integrated business capability—one that supports productivity, attracts talent, manages risk and creates durable competitive advantage.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

THE NEXT PHASE OF CORPORATE OFFICE STRATEGY ON THE CHINESE MAINLAND

The corporate office market on the Chinese mainland is entering a more selective phase, where efficiency, flexibility, workplace quality, sustainability and strategic value creation will shape demand more than simple expansion.

OFFICE DEMAND WILL BE DRIVEN BY QUALITY RATHER THAN QUANTITY

Future office demand is expected to be shaped less by workforce expansion and more by the need for higher-quality, better-performing workplaces.

Leading Chinese companies will increasingly focus on:

This will favour office assets that demonstrate value beyond physical space, including efficient operations, quality amenities and strong connectivity.



IMPROVING SPACE UTILISATION



OPTIMISING OCCUPANCY COSTS



ENHANCING WORKPLACE EFFECTIVENESS



SUPPORTING COLLABORATION AND INNOVATION

LOCATION STRATEGY WILL CONTINUE TO SHIFT TOWARDS ECOSYSTEMS

Office location decisions will increasingly be influenced by broader business ecosystems rather than rental costs alone.

Leading Chinese companies will prioritise locations that provide access to:

The most competitive office markets will be those that combine high-quality real estate with strong business ecosystems.



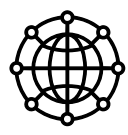
TALENT POOLS



CUSTOMERS AND PARTNERS



INDUSTRY CLUSTERS



INNOVATION NETWORKS



GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

Taken together, these trends point to a more selective and performance-driven market in which office strategy must be reviewed continuously rather than set once and left unchanged.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Unlocking the Advantage

How leading Chinese companies are using office strategy to drive high-quality development on the Chinese mainland

LOCATION DECISIONS ARE INCREASINGLY ECOSYSTEM-LED

Access to talent, customers, partners, industry clusters and policy support is becoming central to location strategy.

WORKPLACE QUALITY IS A GROWING TALENT DIFFERENTIATOR

Many offices meet basic functional needs, but fewer create a distinctive advantage for recruitment, retention and productivity.

FLEXIBILITY IS NOW A RISK-MANAGEMENT PRIORITY

Leading Chinese companies are seeking lease structures and portfolio strategies that allow them to respond more quickly to changing business conditions.

OFFICE STRATEGY IS SHIFTING FROM EXPANSION TO VALUE CREATION

Leading Chinese companies are prioritising productivity, efficiency, resilience and long-term competitiveness over simple footprint growth.

COST REMAINS CRITICAL, BUT EVALUATION IS BECOMING BROADER

Occupiers are moving from rental comparisons towards total occupancy cost, workplace effectiveness and business value.

SUSTAINABILITY IS MOVING INTO THE BUSINESS MAINSTREAM

Green buildings and energy efficiency are increasingly valued for reducing costs, supporting ESG goals and strengthening asset resilience.

DECISION-MAKING IS BECOMING MORE INTEGRATED

Senior leadership at leading Chinese companies remains closely involved, while advisory support is increasingly valued for market intelligence, risk control, speed and strategic execution.

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