

 Desk  
 Space

# Change Management Strategy

## Introduction

**Desk Space** is a creative coworking space based in Darlinghurst, Sydney, with over 100 members from diverse businesses across media, lifestyle and technology. This evidence-based strategy makes recommendations for Desk Space to implement **Tessellate**, a tailored digital solution for workplace management.

## Overview of Tessellate

Tessellate is a digital workplace management system, the first of its kind to include an artificial intelligence (AI) assistant and integrate directly with popular office systems including Robin room bookings, Envoy visitor management and Zoom video conferencing. The mobile app features a streamlined 'feed' layout (see Figure 1) which algorithmically self-arranges to prioritise the user's preferred or required content at any given time.

Currently, Desk Space lacks a consolidated platform for members to book meeting rooms, accept and send courier packages and change the office playlist, among many other functions. These actions are instead possible through a disjointed combination of services including Robin, Envoy and Sonos. Thus there is a precedent for an operational change that would address this problem, such as introducing Tessellate as Desk Space's primary member-facing management platform.

## Methodology

This strategy draws on a combination of client consultation, scholarly research and industry literature. A joint consultation with Desk Space's business and experience managers was used to identify challenges and opportunities that Tessellate could help address. A change management approach was created by qualitatively assessing innovation literature to determine the best methods of implementing a digital management solution at Desk Space.

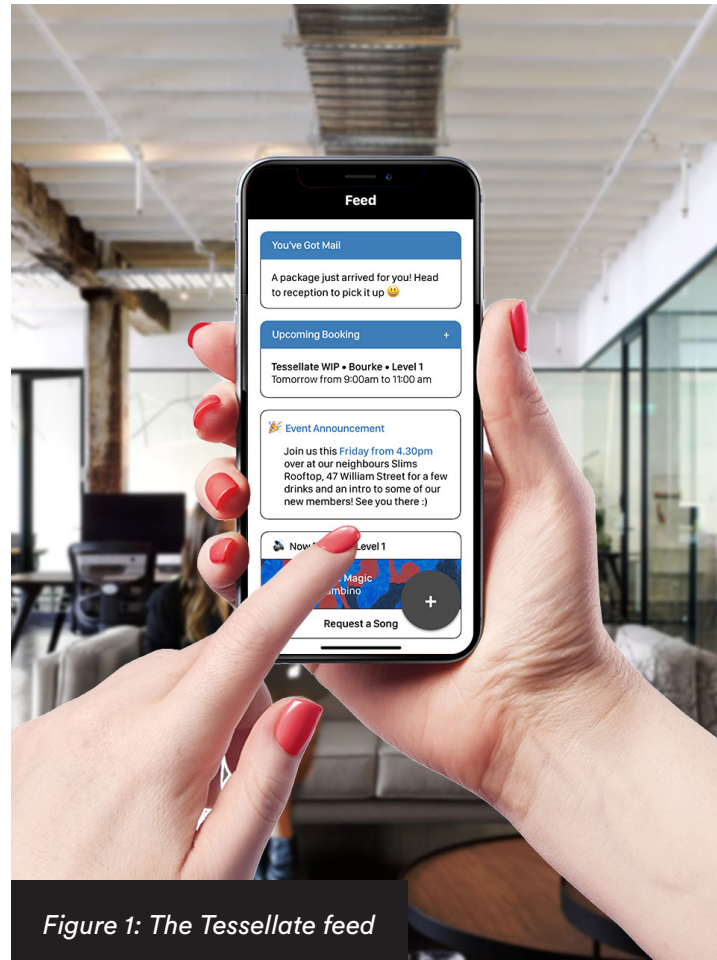


Figure 1: The Tessellate feed

## Objectives

### Corporate Objectives

Desk Space strives generally to be a space for multidisciplinary collaboration and innovation, encapsulated by their motto: 'make it together' (Desk Space 2018). A consultation with Desk Space's business manager also revealed the organisation is looking to:

- Create new and efficient processes
- Provide surplus value to members
- Create cost efficiencies and reduce waste
- Further engage existing members

## Change Management Objectives

This strategy seeks to address the above objectives, and further to:

- Improve members' communication with the experience manager and each other
- Increase use of existing communication and productivity systems
- Future-proof the business as the future of work rapidly becomes the present

## Challenges

### Size

Desk Space operates with **three full-time staff** in highly generalised roles, such as the business manager, who additionally deals with contractors and performs minor facilities repairs. This simplifies the change communication process, however having such a small team means customer service inevitably suffers. By comparison, global coworking giant WeWork have a weekly rotating roster of experience managers at their similarly-sized locations; this allows them to individually tailor their customer service to each member. Tessellate's built-in AI assistant allows Desk Space to achieve similar results by acting as an additional experience manager that adapts based on each member's needs.

### Revenue Model

Profit margins present a further challenge, as Desk Space currently gets a very small margin of membership fees after operational expenses. The costs associated with providing afterhours access to members, and recently renovating two of their building's three levels, make it **difficult to make a costly investment in innovation**. It is recommended that Desk Space implement Tessellate as the service has a small annual fee, and will increase members' engagement with existing services at Desk Space (e.g. Envoy and Zoom conferencing), thereby reclaiming the value of subscription fees to services that would otherwise remain underused.

### Low Member Engagement

Despite repeated efforts to engage members, Desk Space faces the intractable challenge of creating a culture of collaboration. Coworking spaces should enable the co-creation of social support, networking opportunities and community relationships between freelancers and (often competing) businesses (Gerdenitsch et al. 2016; Spreitzer, Bacevice & Garrett 2015). These supports are typically a result of collaborative consumption (Andrade et al. 2017, p. 175).

This issue creates daily challenges, making simple tasks such as courier pick-ups and drop-offs complicated, messy and time-consuming for all parties. Furthermore, **failure to meet this challenge is detrimental to both member satisfaction and Desk Space's ability to compete with the over 90 coworking spaces in Sydney alone** (Rushfaster 2018). This issue creates daily challenges, making simple tasks such as courier pick-ups and drop-offs complicated, messy and time-consuming for all parties. Tessellate addresses this issue by providing a simple and direct means for better engaging members with the space and each other, by streamlining many systems into a singular user experience.

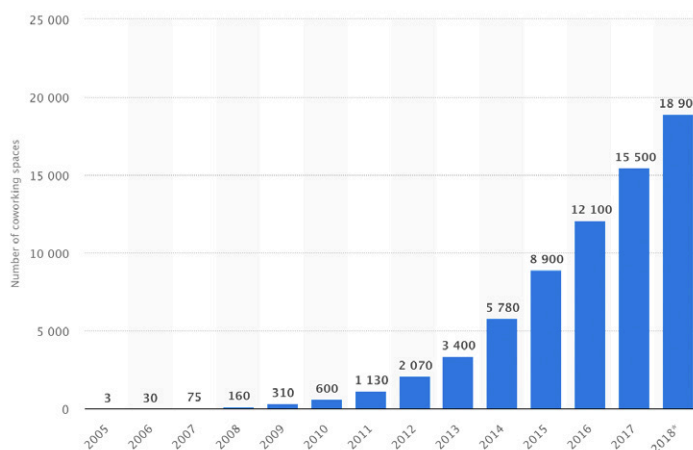
## Opportunities

### Big Data & Personalisation

Supported by the proliferation of Big Data and the growth of data science, the future of decision-making at work will be increasingly personalised (Lytras et al. 2015, p. 1381). To this end, **artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms can anticipate workers' needs and increase opportunities for engagement with underutilised services** (Khoury 2018). Capitalising on this opportunity early will make Desk Space a global leader in the coworking industry, as coworking organisations have so far failed to accommodate AI, instead focusing on customisation, which offers considerably less options to an increasingly diverse array of users. By integrating with popular workplace management services, Tessellate adds an AI layer to existing management processes, allowing Desk Space to turn the future of AI at work into a reality.

## The Future of Work

Coworking has proliferated rapidly in recent years, with the number of members and spaces increasing consistently over the last five years (Mahlberg & Riemer 2017; Statista 2018). In Australia alone, coworking spaces grew by 297% since 2013 (Knight Frank 2017). Desk Space has a unique opportunity to bolster its identity as Sydney’s first coworking space, pursuing innovation to once again remain a step ahead of the local industry. For the reasons throughout the above, Tessellate presents one such opportunity to innovate, however this strategy should be seen as a starting point for further innovation in the workplace experience at Desk Space.



*Figure 2: The number of coworking spaces worldwide has increased exponentially since 2013 (Statista 2018)*

## Approach

Following a formal change management strategy will allow Desk Space to engage all stakeholders to maximum effect, and efficiently allocate resources towards this change.

This strategic approach draws on the principles of human-centred design and Agile development, which together emphasise a dynamic implementation approach which creates, embraces and adapts with change, led by qualitative and quantitative user feedback (Cunningham n.d.; Dingsøyr et al. 2012, p. 1214; Razzouk & Shute 2012, p. 335). To this end, the strategy will be implemented over 6 weeks, in three fortnight sprints.

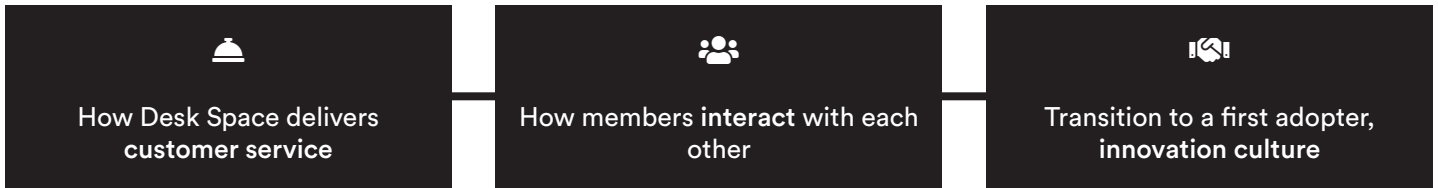
## Governance

Enacting this change will require sustained collaboration between the Desk Space team, and myself as project manager. Individual responsibilities are outlined below.

Role	Responsibilities
Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversight of the change implementation process</li> <li>• Holding implementation teams accountable for real change</li> <li>• Coproducing change messaging and materials</li> <li>• Monitoring change adoption metrics</li> <li>• General point of contact for implementation teams</li> </ul>
Managing Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embracing and encouraging change</li> <li>• Setting expectations and reviewing change management results</li> <li>• Providing necessary tools and resources for change to succeed</li> </ul>
Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and coordinating an updated business strategy to support this change in the long term</li> </ul>
Experience Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Championing change through member interactions</li> <li>• Coproducing change messaging and materials</li> <li>• Transferring relevant training and software skills to Desk Space members</li> <li>• Coordinating measurement of change metrics</li> <li>• First point of contact for members</li> </ul>

# Messaging & Tactics

Change messaging should focus on three key areas which Tessellate will transform:



Tactics should engage key stakeholders with all three facets of change messaging, with added attention to the most relevant facet(s) in each case. The key stakeholders in this are the Desk Space team and member base, however the Tessellate team should also be factored as contributors to this change. Messaging and tactics for each are detailed below.

## Desk Space team

As the prime movers of this change, the Desk Space team will be involved across all areas of strategy implementation. Messaging will prioritise customer service and cultural transformation, emphasising the team’s role in improving member services through an active investment in developing an innovation culture.

Messaging will be delivered face-to-face and digitally, in the form of technical training sessions and regular project planning and retrospective/review meetings. This will ensure a balance between corporate and strategic objectives, allowing the Desk Space team to provide feedback that will inform agile adjustments to implementation tactics.

Messages	
What?	Desk Space is introducing an office management system purpose-built for coworking spaces.
Why?	The nature of work is changing. As coworking becomes the norm, coworking spaces have to innovate in order to stay relevant and find efficient ways of managing larger groups of people.
Benefits	This change will shift the way the team works, reducing the proportion of time and money wasted on running software that members don’t engage with. By automating menial customer interactions, Tessellate frees up time to engage with members on bigger issues.
Tactics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Train the trainer sessions</b> to be held during weeks 1-3, allowing time to case test Tessellate at Desk Space</li> <li>• Member communication materials will be created from scratch, in a <b>codesign process</b> with the project manager and Desk Space team</li> </ul>	

## Desk Space members

As Tessellate’s end-users, members will receive change messaging later in the implementation project. Emphasis will be placed on giving members a sense of ownership in the process, through focus groups aimed at refining member-facing messaging and communication materials.

Messaging will be delivered through a mix of physical, digital and hybrid means, including digital posters to be displayed on screens throughout the building, and repackaged as an email marketing campaign.

Messages	
What?	Desk Space is introducing a new, smarter way of working and networking.

Why?	Diverse members have <b>diverse needs and preferences</b> . Traditional communication methods at Desk Space are cluttered and complicated. A new approach is needed, that simplifies everyday processes and makes it easier to collaborate.
Benefits	This change will make day-to-day tasks easier, like planning a meeting or receiving deliveries. Tessellate's smart AI assistant will learn from continued use, developing a shorthand that will continue to save time and effort at work. Getting Desk Space updates in one place will mean a less cluttered inbox and fewer Slack notifications.
<b>Tactics</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Focus groups</b> to be conducted, allowing time to refine and better target change communication</li> <li>• <b>Digital posters</b> and <b>EDM campaign</b> will inform members of the coming change</li> <li>• <b>Soft launch</b> will give members time to play with Tessellate and conduct peer-to-peer education through word of mouth</li> <li>• <b>Drop-in training sessions</b> to be held during weeks 3-6</li> <li>• Issue <b>education materials</b>, including short online video tutorials</li> </ul>	

### Tessellate team

While this strategy does not propose messaging for the Tessellate team, it is necessary to acknowledge that the team will form a crucial role in driving the implementation project. As a co-creator of Tessellate and an implementation project manager, I will be responsible for training the Desk Space team and conducting drop-in training sessions during the initial launch period. Once the implementation project is complete, the Tessellate team will provide over-the-phone and email support to members and the Desk Space team, as well as software maintenance and updates.

## Technical Training Plan

Phase	Training
Weeks 1-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Train the trainer' face-to-face sessions</li> </ul>
Weeks 3-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online video tutorials by function</li> <li>• Drop-in sessions for support</li> </ul>
Week 6+ (ongoing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support service via in-app chat/email</li> <li>• Online video tutorials by function</li> </ul>

## Integrated Implementation Plan

Focus	
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<i>Sprint 1</i> (Week 1-2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct 4x one-hour 'train the trainer' sessions + collect feedback</li> <li>• Initiate weekly sprint planning and retrospective/review meetings</li> <li>• Initiate weekly stakeholder meetings</li> <li>• Create member messaging resources</li> <li>• Recruit members for focus group testing</li> </ul>
<i>Sprint 2</i> (Week 3-4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soft launch</li> <li>• Gradual rollout of physical and digital messaging (i.e. posters and education resources)</li> <li>• Conduct focus groups to test member resources – iterate as required</li> <li>• Continue 'train the trainer' sessions based on prior feedback</li> </ul>
<i>Sprint 3</i> (Week 5-6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch member messaging and education resources</li> <li>• Conduct daily three-hour drop-in training workshops</li> </ul>

## Resource Requirements & Budget

As the existing Desk Space team will be engaged as change managers in this process, the costs associated with implementation will mainly involve a rearrangement of work tasks and reallocation of existing resources during the implementation period. The table below outlines the financial costs associated with executing this strategy.

		<b>Cost</b>
<b>Communication</b>		
Design and creation of visual materials		\$500
Production of education materials (e.g. video tutorials)		\$2000
<b>Additional Staff/Labour</b>		
Project Manager (6 week contract)		\$13,200
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$15,700</b>

## Risk Mitigation

<b>Risk Factor</b>	<b>Mitigation Measures</b>
Stakeholders are not prepared for change	Change management takes a top-down/bottom-up approach as part of a holistic view of stakeholder relationships. Leveraging existing teams ensures sensitivity to the Desk Space culture, reducing the risk of misguided action.
Stakeholders do not respond to messaging	Codesign processes ensure consistent dialogue and opportunities to adjust tactics based on feedback.
Strategy requires further time for implementation	Care has been taken to create a realistic timeline while still adhering to the principle of agility. Agile/Scrum workflows emphasise dynamism, so they can easily be adjusted depending on the backlog of tasks.

## Evaluation Framework

### Performance Indicators

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Performance Indicators</b>
Ongoing dialogue between key stakeholders	Codesign process used throughout project. Affordances made for feedback and criticism.
Foster engagement with innovation	Engagement metrics including number of user registrations monitored from launch. Feedback and observation used to track progress.
Engage stakeholders with organisational cultural change	Value of innovation communicated through stakeholder messaging. Feedback and surveys used to track progress.

### Measurement

The rate of change adoption will be monitored using measurement tactics including:

- Analysis of qualitative and quantitative surveys
- Measurement of software analytics
- Observation of face-to-face and digital interactions

## **Conclusion**

Desk Space is uniquely poised to address internal business challenges and seize innovation opportunities by adopting the Tessellate workplace management system. This strategy has proposed a flexible model for change management during the implementation of this innovation over six weeks. Cost, risk and evaluation considerations have been made to ensure that an Agile implementation approach will succeed. I am excited to be involved as a project manager throughout this process, and look forward to strengthening Desk Space's culture of innovation.

*Prepared by Nusardel Oshana, Innovation Strategist*

*hello@nusardel.com*



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