



### ACOUSTIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Expect to see pods like this for attending Zoom calls. “We’re going to need privatized, acoustically sound spaces” accommodating conference calls with clients and those working at home, says Katy Mercer, a principal at the architecture firm Woods Bagot.

# OFFICE OF THE FUTURE

BY VINDHYA BURUGUPALLI

Desk pods? Zoom booths? *Briefings* looks at some of the surprises workers may find as they return to offices.

**AFTER WORKING FROM HOME FOR TWO YEARS**, you’re finally called back to the office. Are you wondering how it looks now? Don’t be startled to see cubicles replaced by Zoom booths and flexible seating. With about four workers in 10 trickling back into offices in major US cities, and more set to return in the coming year, once-traditional surroundings are rapidly evolving. Increased collaborative zones and fewer individual desks are how offices roll now. The office no longer puts much emphasis on “enclosed cellular spaces,” says Antonia Cardone, senior managing director at Cushman & Wakefield. “We want to go back for the sake of being together; we’ve had plenty of isolation, we want community,” she says. With that all in mind, we took a look at elements that have been installed or renderings of those that may be.

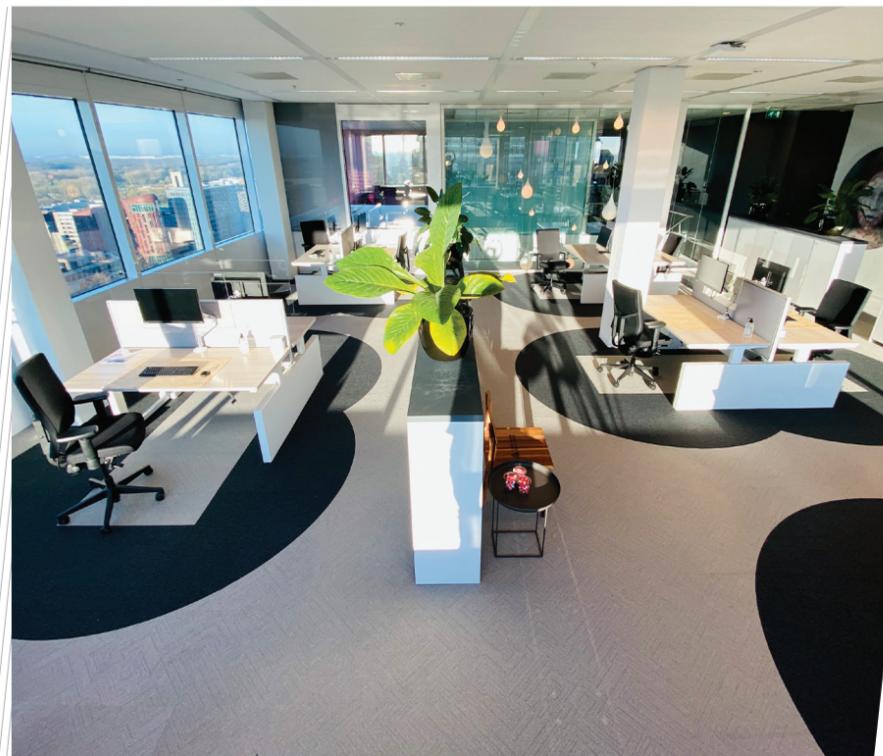
Mohamed M. Radwan, Radwan Architecture & Design Studio



**DIY OFFICE** Many office spaces will have flexible features such as these glass walls, which can be opened up for large gatherings or closed to facilitate smaller private meetings.

**COLLABORATION WITH CAUTION**

Six-foot floor markers like these black carpet bubbles blend into the design to subconsciously enforce social distancing—a precautionary measure.



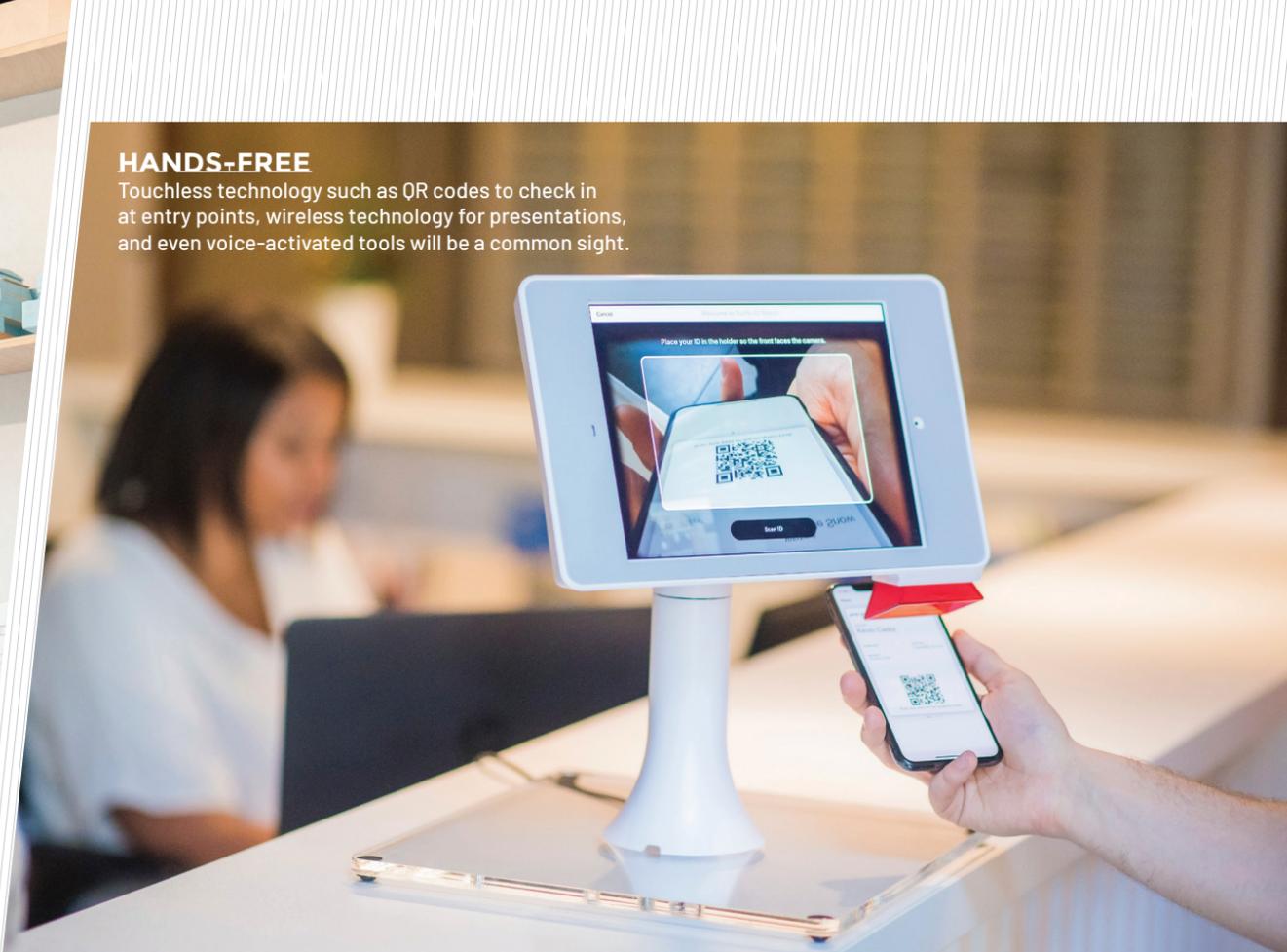
**2+IN+1** Main conference rooms are being reimaged as indoor-outdoor spaces for maximum airflow and movement. “We no longer need so many individual seats, but more collaborative places and larger meeting rooms that are equipped with new technologies,” says Cardone.

Clockwise top left: Amenta Emma Architects, Kyle Jeffers Photography for RossDrulisGusenbery Architecture, Inc., Cushman & Wakefield



**DESKS TO GO**

Transparent and mobile acrylic dividers will give workers the flexibility to move around and set up their desks in different spaces, as assigned seating may be reduced.



**HANDS-FREE**

Touchless technology such as QR codes to check in at entry points, wireless technology for presentations, and even voice-activated tools will be a common sight.



**CIAO, MAKESHIFT OFFICE**

With hybrid and remote work becoming the norm, workers will be inclined to build dedicated home offices. In a recent survey, 53 percent of home buyers said they'd prefer a home office over an extra bedroom.