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HOW CAN CLOUD PHYSICAL SECURITY SUPPORT THE FLEXIBLE WORKING MODEL?

Unlocking business insights to support flexible working, enhancing security and improving the health & safety of people in shared office spaces.

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INTRODUCTION

The sudden arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic in Europe had a significant impact on businesses and supply chains, forcing them to quickly adapt and deal with many new challenges.

To keep businesses operational, many leaders turned to cloud technologies such as hosted video conferencing platforms to replace the need to meet face to face. This shift in behaviour seemed to lead to a wider acceleration of the digitalisation of business processes and systems.

As offices and businesses closed, some for good, there was much uncertainty around the future of work and what it might look like. With fears around exactly how long the enforced lockdowns would stay in place, and the effect on companies over the longer term, some business owners took the decision to divest space, planning to adopt a home-working model for the foreseeable future.

The successful roll out of a vaccine brought about a reduction in serious Covid-related cases and a dramatic

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drop in fatalities. Many respective governments in countries across Europe started a drive to get people back to the office while encouraging a 'business as usual' mindset in an attempt to kick-start economies. Workforces and organisations continue to debate and be divided on the merits and drawbacks of office vs home working, with a balance often being down to personal preference.

Moreover, as social norms begin to be restored a hybrid or flexible working model is now fast becoming the modus operandi for many, further eroding the traditional 9-5. This affords those who are able with the opportunity to adapt their working environment to best suit their schedules and task needs on a day-to-day basis. Today's workforce is therefore increasingly enjoying greater choice in where to work as the business world itself evolves to become more dynamic and agile.

Not only do facilities, HR, security and office managers need to adapt to the regular coming and going of employees, but there is also a palpable upturn in the co-work space, a third dimension that sits between the office and the home-work set up. This on-demand service caters for a workforce that demands greater convenience, flexibility and a range of complementary services without some of the

traditional restrictions or formalities associated with the office environment.

The offer of greater fluidity for employees is not, however, without its challenges for those responsible for the safety and security of such environments and the personnel within. As demand for flexibility grows, the need to monitor and protect premises and people becomes ever-more complex in our modern world leading to a greater reliance on technology, automation and AI.

In this paper we will explore the benefits of hosted (cloud-based) physical security solutions to unlock powerful business insights that can transform security plus health & safety within both dedicated co-working spaces and a dynamic office environment. We will also consider the importance of trusted partnerships that can bring confidence and peace of mind to owners and managers who are looking to scale and adopt such solutions.

THE FLEXIBLE WORKER OF THE FUTURE

When the global pandemic took hold in spring 2020, the closing of business premises saw those who were able turn to home-working. Organisations that had already embraced digital transformation and the use of cloud-based infrastructure would have found the administration and coordination of such a set-up straightforward. In contrast, those businesses that still relied on older on-premise systems will have had to quickly resource a home-working set up from scratch, leading to soaring demand and consequential shortages in the supply of consumer electronics such as laptops .

As restrictions fluctuated and some went back to the office, it became apparent that the new and wholly more flexible model was preferable for those who could work in such a way with ease. Some now found the restrictions of the 9-5 office too stifling, and its considerable overheads a financial burden that was no longer necessary. Conversely, the attraction of a 100% home-working set-up began to wane with many reporting zoom-fatigue coupled with a lack of face-to-face contact or opportunity for collaboration with colleagues. Part home, part office, or 'flexible' working, therefore, appears to offer a solution.

BUSINESS MODELS WILL ADAPT

Such research strongly suggests that flexibility is key and that the modern workforce no longer wishes to be 'locked in' to one model. This may in part explain the **158%** increase in openings of dedicated co-working spaces over the past year , with projected growth pointing to a market size of $13.03 billion globally by 2025.

+ 158%

Increase in openings of dedicated co-working spaces over the past year

Research into the attitudes of working professionals about the move to remote working as a result of the pandemic found that **52%** of global employees work remotely once a week, and **68%** do so at least once per month with **74%** of professionals expecting remote work to become standard . A significant **97%** of employees don't want to return to the office full-time and many now deem the capacity for remote work to be the biggest draw for top talent . In Morphean's own 2020 Landscape Report we found that **50%** of those surveyed indicated that having more flexibility in working locations is a primary advantage.

Global employees attitude about the move to remote working:

Work remotely once a week **52%**

68% Work remotely once a month

Expect remote working to become standard **74%**

97% Don't want to return to the office full-time

More flexibility in working locations is a primary advantage **50%**
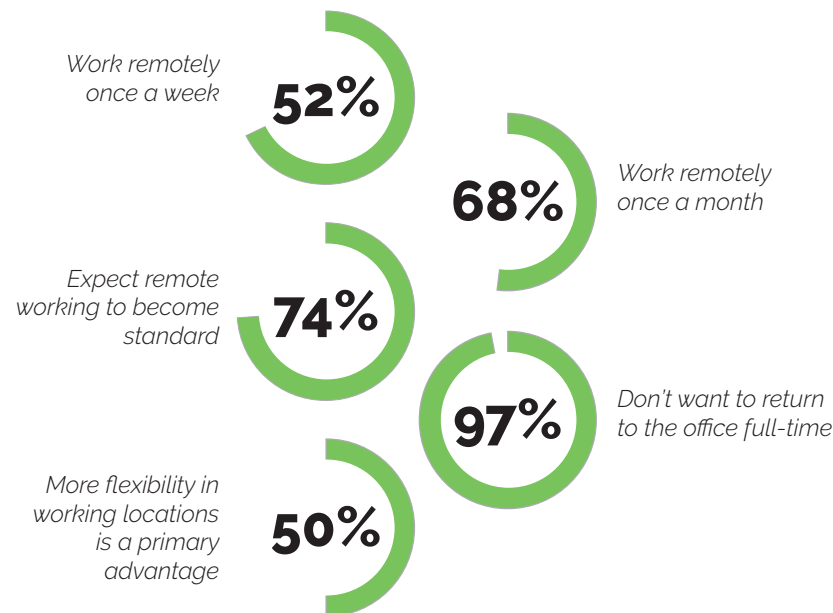
Dedicated co-working spaces represent flexible, dynamic environments that provide users with access to high-quality technology and facilities within an energised setting. Collaboration becomes simple and working close to home, or closer to colleagues and customers, is possible. The growth may be due to a number of reasons and factors. Some may simply not have the facilities to home-work effectively full time, or they may find their office is still not admitting full staff quotas, or a long and onerous commute is required. And this, of course, also appeals to business, as it means that they can increasingly attract talent from a much wider geographic pool.

THE CHALLENGE AHEAD

As a more flexible approach to working means that dedicated co-working spaces and offices offering a drop-in set-up grow in popularity and number, the challenge for managers will be how to keep such spaces secure. Safety also comes into the equation with the potential of Covid-related infections rising once more and Europe facing 500,000 more Covid deaths by February 2022, according to the World Health Organisation . In a recent survey, 66% of workers were concerned about their health and safety when returning to an office environment .

Taking into account an increased number of people coming and going from a site, and patterns of movement that will be difficult to predict, managers will increasingly need to rely on technologies to help them keep track of office use and ensure appropriate health & safety and security measures are in place. To make all of this feasible and to retain staff and deliver growth, demands a scalable system to keep pace with evolving security and safety requirements.

+ 500,000 *Europe could face 500,000 more Covid deaths by February 2022 - W.H.O*

# THE ROLE OF PHYSICAL SECURITY TECHNOLOGY

Advancements in physical security create opportunities for innovation that can have a positive impact on business functions. The internet of things (IoT) has provided the opportunity for connected devices to be used for purposes beyond those for which they were originally intended.

Connecting IoT devices and sensors, rather than running them in isolation, makes them much more powerful in terms of their increased scope and the outputs that a combined system can provide. Video surveillance as-a-service (VSaaS) and access control as a service (ACaaS) are managed services that harness the power of data and represent the next generation of physical security.

We also know that demand for VSaaS and ACaaS is on the rise. In a 2019 independent survey of 1000 IT decision makers conducted by Morphean , **84%** of IT managers stated that they were currently using **(48%)** or considering using **(36%)** a cloud-based video surveillance or access control solution. Of those considering VSaaS and ACaaS, **79%** anticipated introducing these solutions to their business within 12 months. Indeed, the VSaaS market alone is expected to experience huge growth, rising to a projected USD **4.7 billion** by 2025 at a CAGR of **16.0%** .

IT Managers and their utilisation of cloud based video surveillance or access control

16%
Not considered utilising

48%
Currently utilise

36%
Are considering utilising
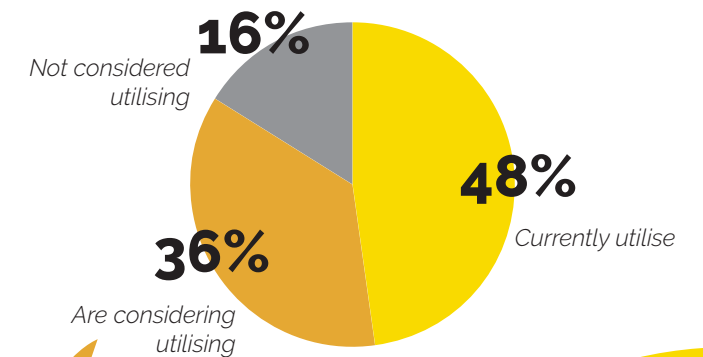
79%
of those considering, anticipated introducing these solutions within 12 months

16.0%
The % the VSaaS market alone is set to rise by 2025 + USD 4.7 billion
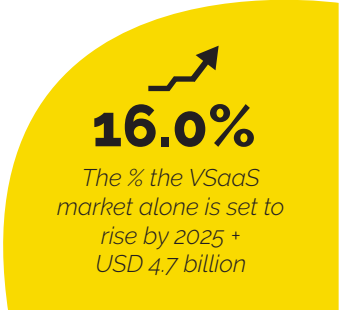
THE EVOLUTION OF VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

CCTV cameras have long been a common site across many industries, used to secure buildings both inside and out. Now, as technology continues to advance, digital infrastructure supports cloud-enabled alternatives to these legacy analogue-based systems. In a more connected world, camera systems that were originally employed solely for video surveillance can now be merged with additional sensors and enhanced with analytics software to expand their capabilities and produce insights that would be otherwise invisible to the naked eye.

The digitalisation of data means that information from a range of connected sources can be collected, analysed, and used to create powerful security and business insights. This intelligence can be used to inform many aspects of decision making. IP-networked video cameras offer a system that can secure the workplace in an efficient and cost-effective way. For example, people counting, and queue monitoring capabilities allow managers to check the number of members or visitors on-site and make decisions about controlling flow around the building based on real-time visitor demand.

The VSaaS model makes the connection of cameras to cloud platforms easy to facilitate, and the wealth of insights that can be generated using analytics and AI results in a smart business and security solution that can be customised and scaled to meet individual requirements, and all monitored from a single platform.

Analytics opens your eyes to insights that would be otherwise invisible to the naked eye.
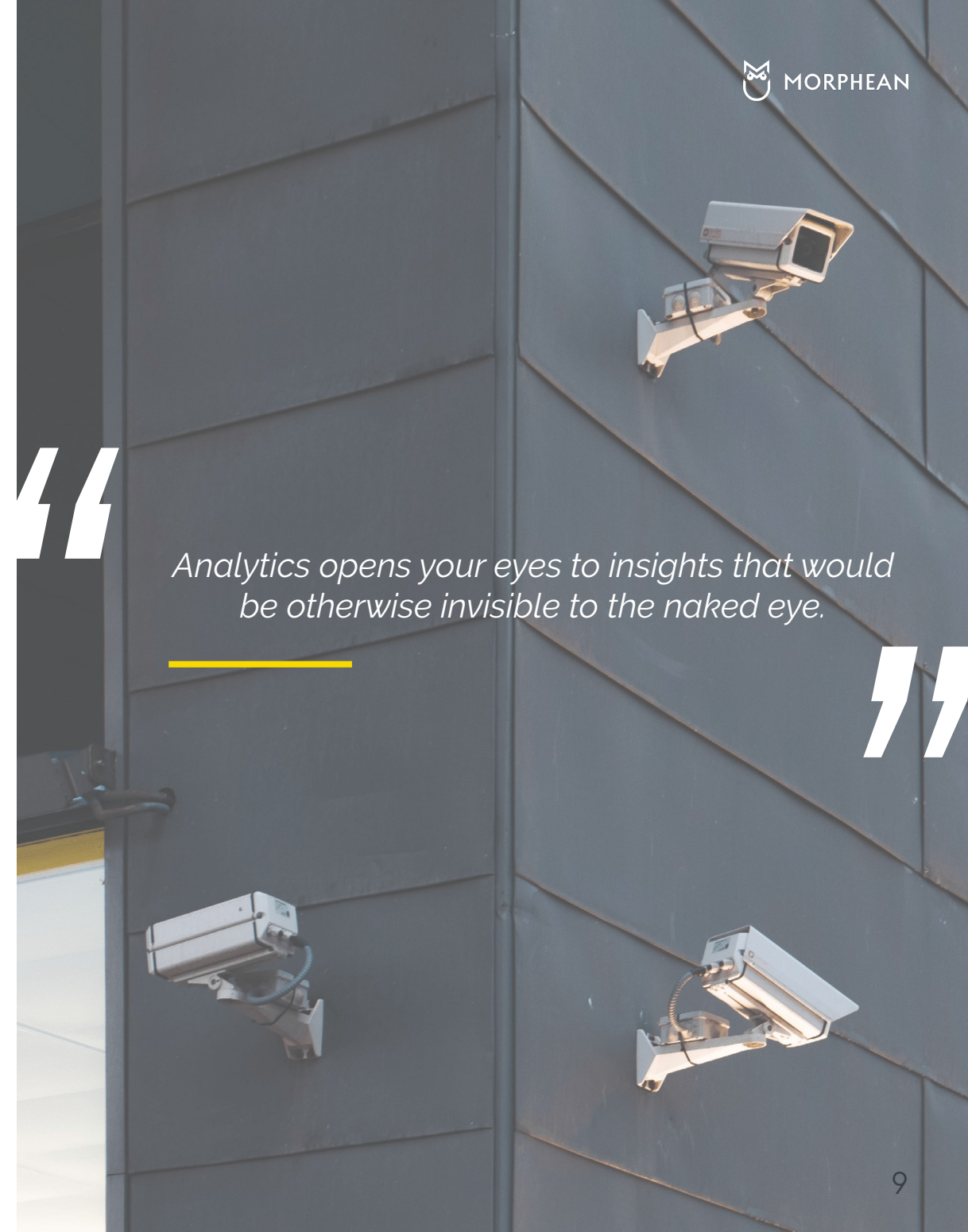
MONITORING AND CONTROLLING ACCESS

Historically, access control was commonly part of a building or office manager's responsibility and often a simple box-checking exercise. With the traditional model, if a key card is presented, a door will open, regardless of who is trying to gain access. Managing the system and looking for potential security breaches is a manual task, and often a low priority on the list of prime security concerns.

This is where ACaaS comes in, facilitating the automation of entrance and exit points with full visibility and control over confirmation of user identity and the granting or denying of admission. Now, an access control device can give access to anyone who, for example, has pre-booked a desk at a co-work facility, simply by presenting a QR code on a mobile phone. Video surveillance can provide a second factor of authentication to confirm the identity of the member entering the premises, minimising the chances of anyone attempting access for malicious endeavour.

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AUTOMATION AND REMOTE MANAGEMENT

Remote management based on insights delivered to a device mean that managers and security personnel can receive updates relating to any number of sites at the touch of a button. This removes the need to travel to a location unnecessarily. In addition, such technology enables the automation of pre-set procedures, including the triggering of alerts and alarms via digital (IP) audio speakers in response to an incident, such as a fire or even criminal attack. All staff and clients can be directed to safe zones by a completely automated process without the need for human intervention, and managers can have confidence in the technology to manage such situations swiftly and safely.

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BENEFITS BEYOND SECURITY

Better security is just one element of what VSaaS and ACaaS can offer the facilities, HR, security and office manager. Through the use of collected and analysed security data, intelligent insights about how the business operates can be used to inform decision-making processes, leading to more efficient operations and even cost savings.

Analysing flexible worker data for maximum ROI

In a 2020 survey of senior decision makers , **82%** of respondents anticipated the levels/frequency of remote workers and flexible working in their organisations to be higher post-pandemic and in the longer term. Businesses can use this move towards a more flexible approach to their advantage, making efficiencies around the use of energy, lighting and heating during quieter periods according to

data from the access control system and other interconnected devices or sensors.

Creating a more efficient, cost-effective facility relies on intelligence about current operations, to learn where changes could be made for greater efficiency. Using access control and video surveillance data, patterns of use and the behaviours of those on site can be analysed and relevant changes implemented. For example, in an area of the building that is less frequently

used, such as a corridor, storeroom or stairwell, reducing heating and lighting can lead to energy savings.

In addition, people-counting capabilities let managers know exactly who is on site and help build up intelligence around its regular use. Having such insights about the number of people and their movements within the premises may be important for insurance purposes to ensure the required levels of security/fire protection are adhered to.

Such intelligence can also benefit users by improving online scheduling, simplifying the choice to work from home or to book office space as requirements dictate, based on real-time occupancy and usage figures.

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> *82% of respondents anticipated the levels/frequency of remote workers and flexible working in their organisations to be higher post-pandemic and in the longer term.*

Health and safety considerations

As fluctuations in Covid-19 infection rates remain a cause for concern, building owners and managers will understandably be anxious about what this could mean for their sites over the longer term. This places them under pressure to maintain a clean, infection-free environment that people will be confident and comfortable to keep using. For the co-work facility, a loss of clients means a loss of revenue, so making sure that people keep returning to use their facilities is mission critical.

At the front entrance, touch-free or contactless access control technology can be implemented to remove the need to touch shared surfaces, thereby minimising infection risk. Once inside, IP audio speakers, connected to the video surveillance system, can automatically trigger messages as required to promote safe practices. With few government rulings around such measures in place, alerts could be for advice only, but the technology and the capability are there to be used and tailored for any future event where important health and safety messages may need to be conveyed.

TRUST AND ETHICS

Making the right choices about partners and technology is business critical to ensure that services and solutions can be trusted. Connecting any physical security technology, such as a surveillance camera, to an IT network is not without risk, so it's imperative to consider the cybersecurity of each device. Unsecured systems which are not manufactured in accordance with cybersecurity principles can be easily used as a backdoor to gain access to a wealth of information; for example, using a vulnerability in a security camera or sensor to attack a customer database.

A lack of knowledge around the providers of such

solutions and the manufacturing processes they employ has led in some cases to questions being asked of the technologies that have been selected and the ethics of the companies that produce them. When it comes to modern cloud-enabled security solutions, retailers who have not thoroughly checked the vendor credentials cannot be wholly confident that their valuable surveillance data is secure.

This places their business at risk, where data breaches, cyber attacks and even terrorist activity can have a devastating impact. According to the IBM Cost of a Data Breach Report 2021 , the average cost of a stolen data record now stands at **$161**, and the

average overall cost of data breach incident stands at **$4.24 million**. When downtime is factored in, plus the long-term damage to brand and reputation, it can have a devastating impact.

$161
The average cost of stolen data

$4.24 MILLION
The average overall cost of data breach incidents
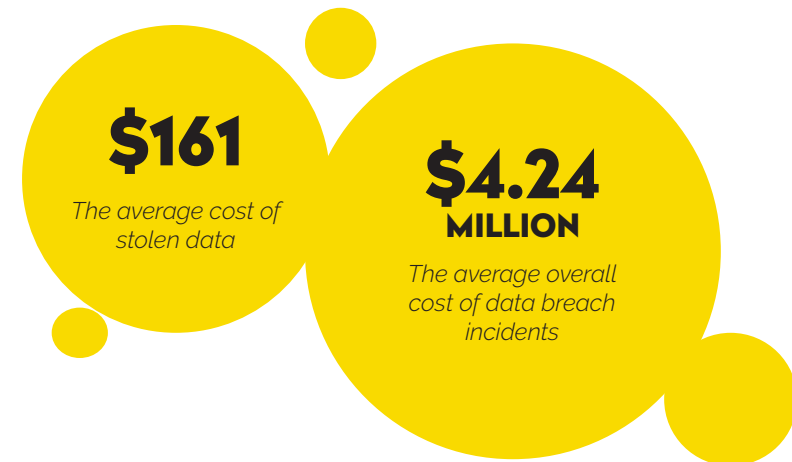
Partnerships based on ethical practices

When it comes to the use of data in the cloud, the facilities, HR, security and office manager should be looking carefully at who they choose to associate and do business with. Partnering with a trustworthy provider that has a track record of success, as well as adhering to ethical practices and codes of conduct that are common across the EU, will provide assurances of corporate governance and closer scrutiny of manufacturing processes.

In a world where products are often hastily produced in countries with low levels of quality assurance and with poor transparency of labour laws, it is all too easy to seek out and use devices that have been manufactured cheaply and brought to market quickly. But short-term gain often portends a longer-term cost. While speed of deployment to ensure comprehensive protection can be a key factor in partner selection, this should be balanced with a thorough process of due diligence to determine the integrity of vendor, technology, and increasingly the supply chain.

Asking the right questions

As businesses consider the evolving threat landscape and the broad range of challenges that the future will bring, cloud-enabled physical security is earning its place in their armoury. But with a modern business's ability to operate relying heavily on the connectivity of the technologies they have deployed, any disruption to operations can prove costly.

It's therefore essential to ask the right questions of providers to guarantee that ethics and integrity, together with trustworthy manufacturing practices, are employed when developing security solutions that can be relied upon to support the flexible working model and the premises that make its expansion possible.

CONCLUSIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

A key benefit in implementing cloud technology, such as VSaaS and ACaaS, is its ability to enable business managers to customise and scale quickly to meet demand. Solutions offered 'as-a-service' means a move toward an operational expenditure model, rather than one based on capital expenditure. Morphean's 2020 survey found that **28%** of respondents highlighted cost benefits as a key factor in the move towards VSaaS and ACaaS, with **19%** indicating that they would expect to see all-inclusive updates/upgrades and support, which both VSaaS and ACaaS can offer.

28%

of survey respondents highlighted cost benefits as a key factor in the move towards VSaaS and ACaaS
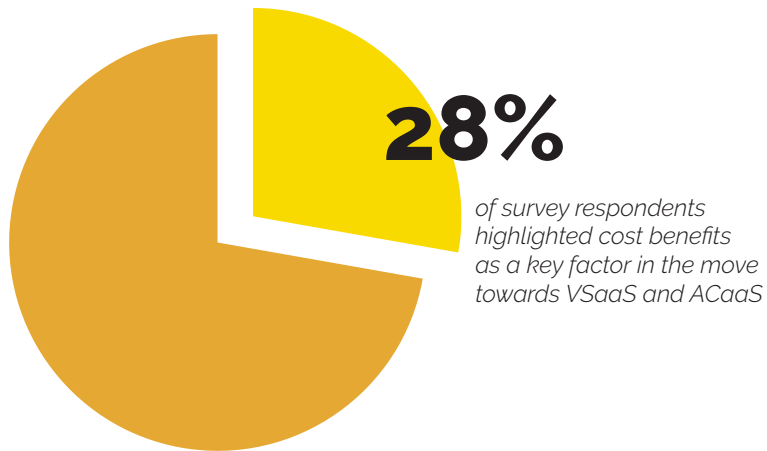
We have explained that security and surveillance technologies have the potential to become core business tools. Their capabilities go beyond security, providing many insights including the optimal use of space and energy, occupancy management and improving health & safety in relation to premises and people. Co-working and flexible working spaces that can demonstrate appropriate measures for creating a safe and secure environment will, undoubtedly, reap the benefit as the flexible model continues to see rapid growth.

With no costly alterations required to existing security infrastructure or disruptions to business operations, such solutions, future proof and highly scalable, can offer much to the facilities, HR, security and office manager. Working with a trusted partner will help managers get the most from the system and understand how best to use its outputs to aid business development. This will ultimately enable the flexible working space to enjoy ongoing success in an ever-changing world.
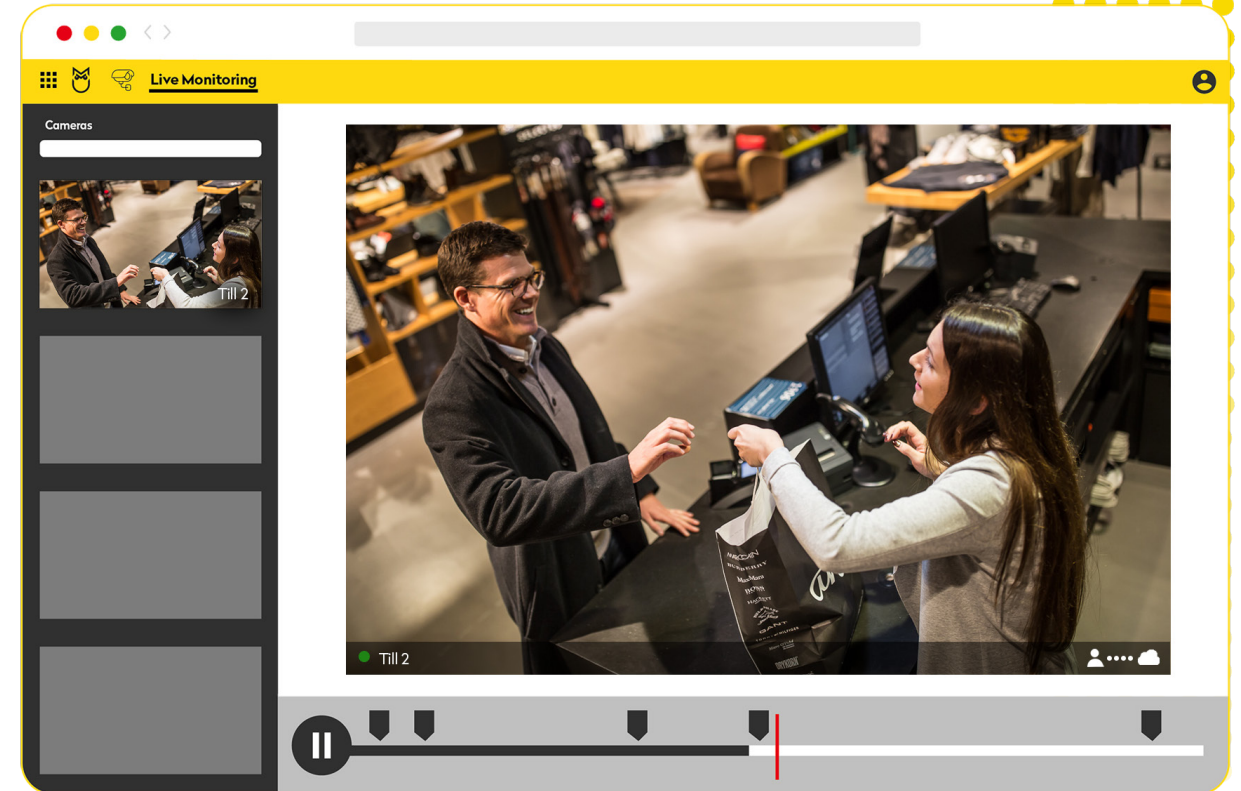
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BRING PEOPLE SECURELY BACK INTO THE OFFICE

Integrating your security systems with Morphean means your keep your people and your business operations safe. With Morphean you become more efficient, you save time, money and human resources, focusing on what really matters, instead of losing yourself in silos.

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ABOUT MORPHEAN SA

Morphean is a Swiss technology company with a strong presence in more than 12 countries worldwide. Founded in 2009 and with over 60 partners across Europe, the secure Morphean platform informs decision making and drives efficiencies for all organisations by generating unique and actionable insights from a multitude of data sources. With expertise across retail, transport & facilities management, among others, the company is recognised as a leader in secure service platform delivery through the use of cloud and AI technologies. The platform helps firms prepare for the future by keeping their 'Eyes Wide Open' to the intelligence gathered from a variety of network connected devices.

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