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## Not Today Office

**So there I was filling up our 3 row kid-hauler SUV at Costco last week. Seeing a fellow gas thirsty SUV owner filling his**

larger vehicle in front of me, I knew we were both having a similar financially emotional moment together. Then I noticed his t-shirt, which read “Not Today Satan!” It was too much to resist so I struck up a conversation. What I quickly noticed was that he actually was a living, breathing endorsement of his shirt. He was positive, and his approach to the day reflected one that was not going to be soured by whatever life threw at him. As I started to think about this 26 th white paper I have written, I was frankly feeling a little discouraged that some of the needed and timely disruptive forces way overdue for Office simply haven’t taken hold the way a if-it-makes-sense-let’s-do-it, type-A like me wants to see. So I offer this particular paper as encouragement for those, like me, continuing to grind, claw, and persist towards better workplace solutions in the face of an industry that remains stubborn.

**I’d Know It If I Saw It:** I find that when I engage people at all levels of organizations (occupiers and not necessarily owners and operators of Office), and we talk about current and past work environments, it is generally easy for them to articulate the numerous shortcomings. What becomes much harder because most are unfamiliar with much that’s different from the current status quo, is sharing what they’d like to see. However, when I paint a word picture of what that could be from my experience and vision, it becomes that excited, “Oh yes! That! I couldn’t describe it but what you just described is what I would love.” That sometimes-silent voice will only need to see something profoundly better once and from then on they’ll be able to describe but more importantly demand it. And from that point, Office will move rapidly forward.





**Being OK With Green:** Somewhere in the path of moving from the color yellow to blue lies the color green as those two color worlds intersect. While the perfect and flawless shade of blue might be the end goal, treading through the blurred and mixed world of green might be a necessary phase. I seem to really find either of the two symbolic colors in my conversations: 1) the we've always done it this way owner/operator crowd and 2) why aren't we in the ideal and magical perfect work environment blend yet? I have amazing dreams of that #2 day too, but as a proud resident of Realville, in that lightly populated town, straddling those two worlds and being fluid in both languages is essential. The paralysis resulting from #1 (asset purse string holders) saying "back to normal" and #2 (new start ups seeking capital and hosts) saying "let's fix 30 years of problems all next week" is painful to endure.



**Real Stress = Real Innovation:** We are seeing a new trend of some office buildings in key markets being handed back to the banks/lenders. With existing fee and incentive structures, to get out of the insanity rut, the current set of facts doesn't just invite, but screams for those "crazy" people like me to step in and fully deploy an overhaul. Again, because I still get the "what does Workng do?" questions, here is the basic approach: 1) build dynamic teams that are hired, trained, and incentivized around service, proptech adoption, and financial performance. 2) For the right larger assets/portfolios, fold Property Management, Spec Space strategy, and Coworking under one operational roof which cleans up marketing and user experience, 3) Map 2-3 years out at a time and strategically deploy Proptech that eliminates the many self-created friction points (transactional, project management, customer feedback, contract management, etc.).



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Unfortunately, my brother from another mother and I both drove away from Costco this week having paid more than either of us wanted to. However, I was smiling because my new friend had reminded me that so much of life is not about circumstances as much as our response to them. No, Office is definitely not Satan, but for those of us pushing ourselves hard to move things ahead, Office can become discouraging if we allow it to. Someone reminded me this week of a prediction about the needs of future office environments I made way back in 2017 on a Bisnow panel. Guess what? It's still strikingly accurate 5 years later and unacted on. But I'm staying in the fight a little longer... Not today Office!



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