Joan Desk Booking

The perfect solution for managing your flexible workplace

Introduction

Flexible work environment offers employees a balance between working from home and in-office. Many companies are recognizing its benefits as a cost-efficient and safe way to run your business. However, if those flex arrangements are not implemented well, businesses can face health hazards, lower employee satisfaction, and an overall drop in their business performance.

And that's the last thing you'd want.

As a leading solution in the meeting room systems industry we, at Joan, have insights into trends and struggles faced in workplaces worldwide. Based on a decade of expertise and the feedback of thousands of clients from more than 90 countries worldwide, we designed a state of the art solution for navigating the times of social distancing and flexible schedules.

Our **Joan Desk Booking app** ensures smooth transition to your flexible workplace. It is built on the strong foundations of simplicity and clarity, making it easy to **book desks and schedule teams from wherever you are**.

In this guide, we created an overview of the solution and went into details of its implementation. If you're interested in getting Joan Desk Booking app for your workplace, reach out to us at sales@getjoan.com.

64%

of employees would like to increase the level of remote work[1]

85%

of businesses confirmed that productivity has increased in their business as a result of greater flexibility[2]

75%

of employees consider flexible working to be the new normal[2]

---

[1] Press, *The Future Of Work Post-Covid-19*

[2] International Workplace Group, *The IWG Global Workspace Survey*

Table of contents

How to create and manage a flexible work environment?

Let's start by exploring the benefits of a flexible environment and its implementation. It is not a stand-alone solution as it usually requires adaptation of your processes and communication habits. For the last couple of years, we've seen a flexible environment as being extremely challenging to deploy and manage, thus, the majority of companies stuck with the in-office policies.

However, ever since the COVID-19 outbreak, it has become an increasingly popular environment and the pressure of fast implementation is greater than ever. Thus, we want to make sure you're taking all the right steps and not diving into a solution without clear goals and expectations.
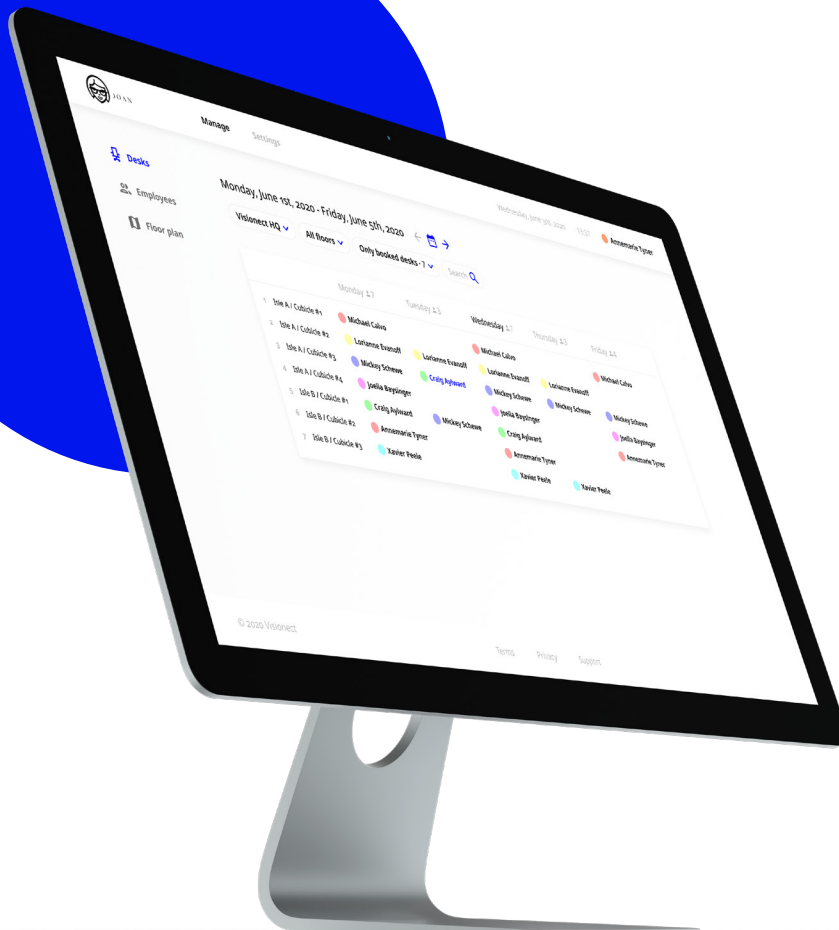
The benefits of flexible work environment

There's a wide range of benefits for different stakeholders, but in the end, it boils down to these three: health, productivity, and efficiency.

1

Social distancing protects everyone's health

"Clean your hands, keep your mask on, and most importantly, keep a 1.5 m distance between each other" is the 2020 mantra. While the first two are fairly simple to implement, the third one's a bit tricky in an office setting.

With the popularity of open-plan offices and increasing prices on the real estate market, not everyone has the luxury of a corner office. Or even an office. The reality is that the majority of companies do not own facilities with the extra space needed to satisfy the 1.5 m between each person requirement. What now?

Flexible workspace ensures compliance with social distancing requirements by enabling some workers to work from home, while others get extra space between their desks. In that way, everyone is at a safe distance and the risk of getting infected by viruses decreases.

And we're not only talking about the coronavirus. Seasonal flu and the common cold uncontrollably spread around the office each winter. Thus, even with (if) the virus gone, protecting your employees every winter should still be a priority.

2

Less crowded offices increase personal productivity

It's extremely hard to focus on your job when everything's buzzing around you, and you just got your fifth coffee offer (it's not even noon yet!).

Flexible environment offers two benefits:
Everyone now has personal space needed for their focus
The overall office volume drops significantly, making it easy to not get distracted

When your personal productivity increases, expect to see an increase in the general level of output. Creating more in less time.

3

Efficiently allocate your time

According to Buffer 2019 study: State of remote work, 99% of asked expressed a desire to work remotely at least a part of their week/life. And that was before the coronavirus.

One of the most important reasons for partial remote work is saved time. Workers can decide when they'd like to come to the physical location or when it's perfectly ok to work from home. That flexibility can empower employees to be in charge of their own time and have a better work-life balance. By commuting to the office only 2 or 3 times per week, they can save up to 6 hours that would otherwise be spent on the road. That time can be invested in finishing their tasks, making them more efficient, or spending more time with their family which will increase overall mental health and happiness.

Start with planning your flexible workplace

That's the first step. Don't just jump into various solutions—find the answers to those questions above, and map out answers to any exceptions.

Carefully review your offices and team dynamics:

- Is there a team that needs to be present every day? Find a fixed space for them.
- Are they cross-cooperating with other teams?
- Do you have a place to sit another team at least 2 times per week? Where can you place them?
- How will you limit desk/office space bookings, for the ones booking on their own? And, more importantly, how are you going to implement that limit?

All of these questions need to get answered before deciding on tools you're going to use that can help you out. And don't forget to double-check your solution with team leads and C-suite.

Keep the standard work schedules

Is your company used to the 9–5 schedule? Well, stick with it. People are creatures of habit. Change the work schedule and you'll have to deal with confusion and lower productivity. The main benefit of standard schedules is definitely easier communication. Whether people are working remotely or in office, communication should still be possible and efficient. And honestly, waiting a couple of hours to get the answer to your email is just not going to cut it.

When everyone is working at the same time, jumping on a call to discuss things becomes as easy as walking to someones' desk when in the office. And that's the cooperation you want to foster.

The second benefit is that your operations will run smoothly no matter the location of your team. Tasks are rarely isolated and often require input from other team members. With standard schedules, projects will get completed in less time.

Track your workplace attendance

One of the greatest challenges is tracking who's in the office on which days. That's not only necessary to keep track of office occupancy, but it's a must for tracking transportation costs in the majority of countries.

How to track this?

For pilot implementation, start with a simple spreadsheet. It'll help you define what you need in the long term. Once you've got this covered, progress to an app that covers both business needs and is easy to use (like Joan Desk Booking, for example).

Build accountability and focus on results

Work on your company culture. Flexible work hours definitely rely on employees being truthful, and accountable for their projects. Make sure that everyone understands the importance of booking their workplace in advance, showing up on certain days, and working even when they're remote.

Hold 1:1 meetings for clear communication, and measure KPIs for each individual. Let them set up goals, and hold them accountable for taking action. By keeping them in charge, it'll bring positive results since it's something they commit voluntarily and is not something that they need to follow for the sake of following.

Learn and iterate

Transitioning to a more flexible workplace is a process that can't be perfected overnight. Choose tools and processes that will work for years, not only for a month. And most importantly, won't bite into your already existing tasks. Try Joan Desk Booking app for a seamless desk managing experience and a foundation of your flexible workplace.

Joan Desk Booking app
for booking desks and scheduling teams

Recently, Gartner released a series of guidelines for returning back to the office based on pre-established practices and opinions. The most notable guideline? Ensuring social distancing within the office.

Social distancing may sound simple in that there must be at least a 1.5 m space between each person. However, when it comes to implementing this rule with limited resources (office spaces), it becomes much more difficult to manage. Namely, what we've seen is that companies around the globe are alternating between working from home and the office using rotating schedules, with the aim of limiting workplace capacity to 80% or less.

Managing a flexible office environment can be extremely time-consuming. Imagine creating a seating chart for your whole office, taking into account everyone's wishes while making sure that you're still following all of the health regulations. There's got to be a better way. And there is.

At Joan, we developed a desk booking app which will allow employees to book their seat directly from their phone. In addition, a dashboard will clearly show who's in the office on each day and enable HR managers to book time slots for individual teams.
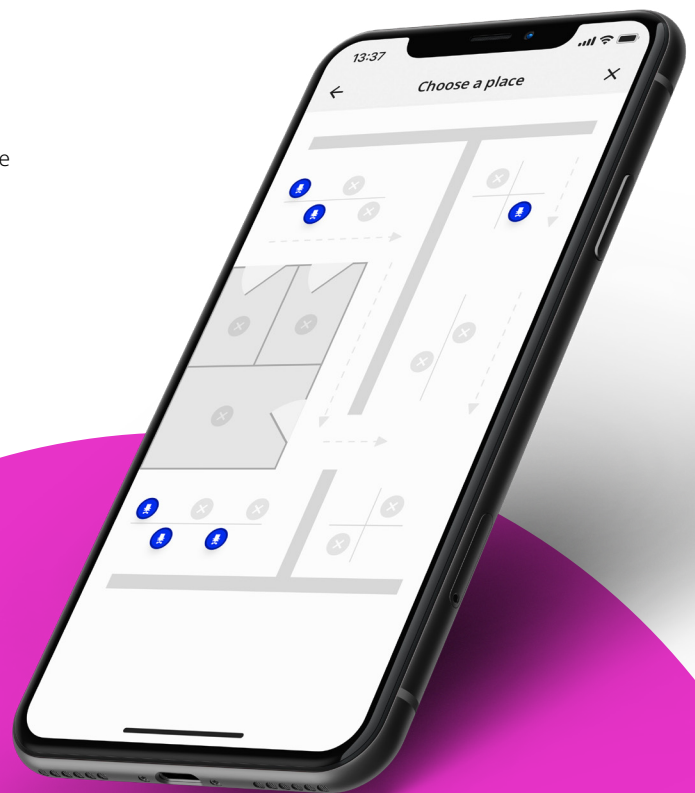
# Every employee can now book a desk from their phone

The first-come-first-serve basis is not only inefficient, it can also cause a lot of bad blood when someone arrives at the office only to discover that all of the desks have already been taken. There are also bigger, underlying problems with the system:

- There's no overview of who's in the office and where they're seated
- There's no freedom to book a desk and navigate the office smoothly on your own
- Scheduling desks for teams is inefficient and time-consuming

While the first two points will be tackled later, let's focus on the third one—how everyone should be able to book a desk independently and obtain the necessary office insights.

Be confident that your selected desk is waiting for you

Eliminate any workplace uncertainty by taking back control. Book a desk in the Joan Desk Booking app in two easy steps—pull out a layout of your workplace and select your preferred desk, then choose a time slot. That's it! Your desk is ready and waiting for you. On the off chance that your seat gets reassigned, you'll receive a notification with details of your new arrangement.
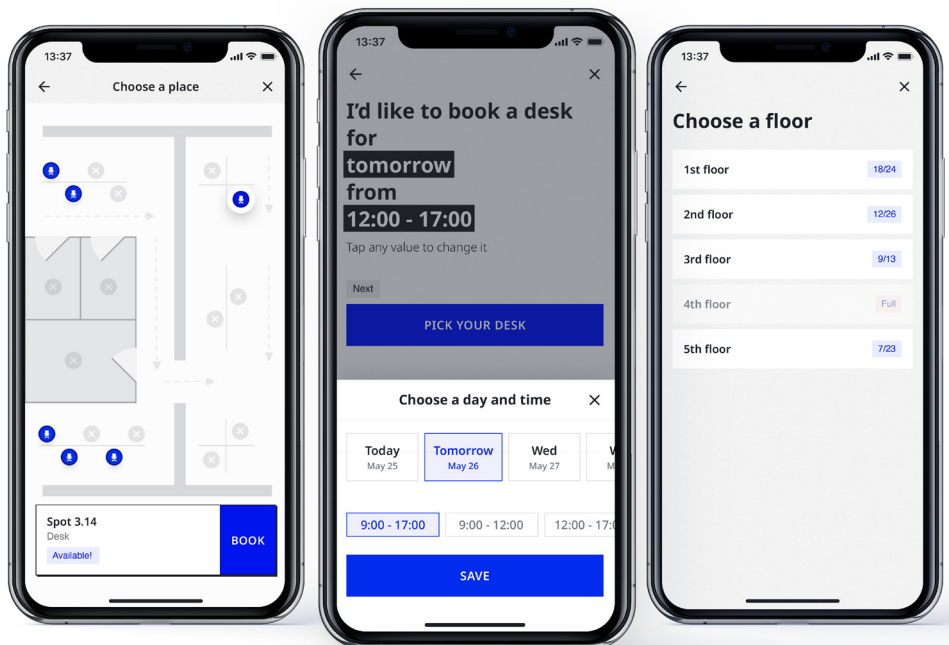
Alternate between working from home and the workplace in the best possible way

As with everything else, the team at Joan believes that office technology must support your work by being part of your everyday life in a discreet and efficient manner. The Joan Desk Booking app is no different. It is easy to onboard, manage, and book a desk for your time in the office.
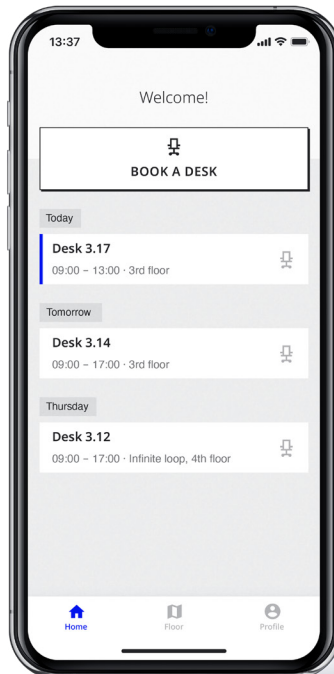
See your bookings and decide on the next scheduling
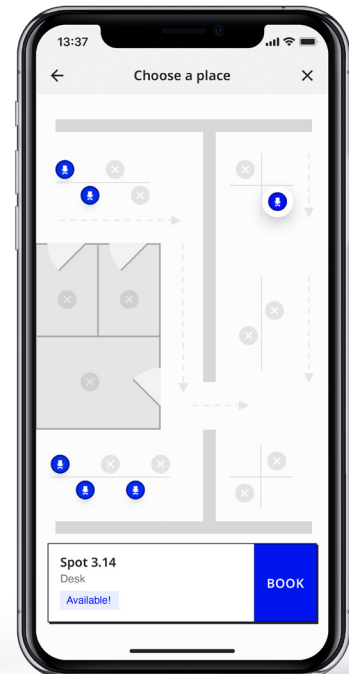
Simply navigate around the office and see the location of your desk

# Every office manager can now easily track office presence and schedule desks

Office or HR managers are faced with the daily task of keeping track of everyone in the office, as well as when the workplace is hitting capacity and whether there is enough space for everyone when considering social distancing.

That brings us to the two problems mentioned above: having an overview of who's in the office and scheduling desks based on a team lead preference.

Keep track of who's in the office and when

Keeping information on the presence of each employee can be challenging. All the current alternatives are awkward and time-consuming—reminding everyone to fill in spreadsheets, and analyzing them at the end of the month.

With Joan Desk Booking dashboard that syncs with Joan Desk Booking app in real-time, the information on attendance is always kept at your fingertips. With a complete, downloadable list of office attendees, contact tracing becomes easier and most importantly, faster.
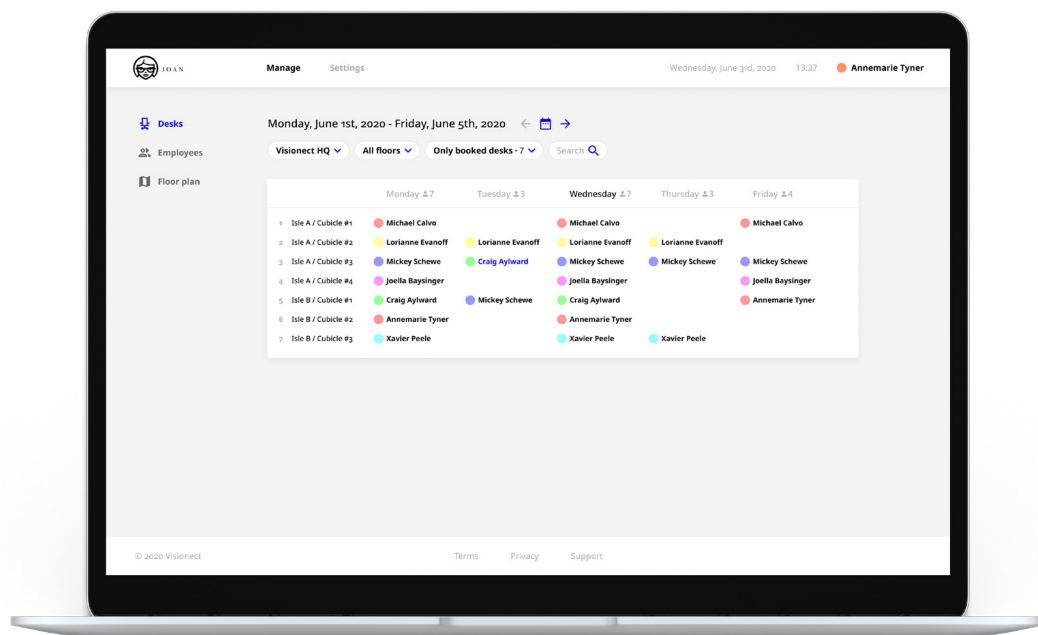
Schedule desks for a whole team

While some people do work independently and can book desks on their own, it's sometimes necessary to get a whole team or even a mixed team in the office on the same day. From design sprints to growth meetings, those interdisciplinary events are based on the cooperation of different departments.

Instead of back and forth messaging on Slack, a team lead can simply notify the dashboard manager on the attendance of the team members, and they can schedule desks accordingly. No extra hassle of communication and individual scheduling.
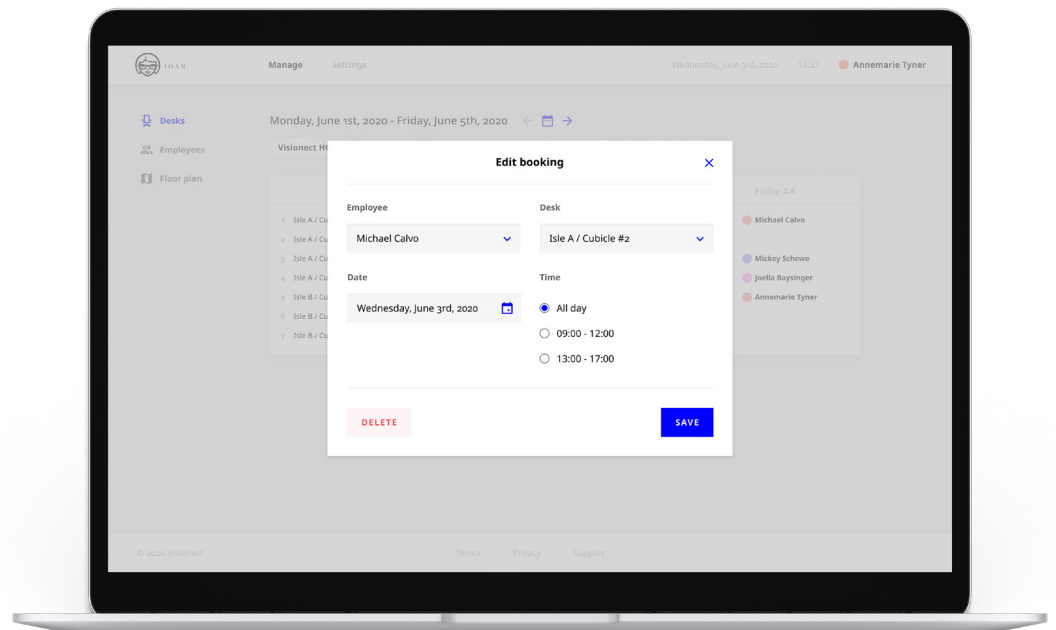
Update desk bookings

Let's say a new regulation is announced overnight—we're facing another health threat, so the new social distancing proposal is 2.5 m with a maximum of five people in one room.

Since everyone has already booked their desks for this week, it's time to get your hands dirty:

- Upload a new map with updated limits and desks
- Change all of the existing bookings to meet the criteria

With an overview of all bookings, updating their details is fairly simple. Change the desk and time, and the employee will be notified of the change.

Schedule shifts and manage desk bookings from your desktop

As big advocates of flexibility and efficiency in the workplace (we're always creating new ways to book meeting rooms), we understand that a mobile app is not perfect for all use cases. That's why we prepared a desktop version of the app that can be run on your computers.

How does the desktop version differ from the mobile app?

The desktop version of Joan Desk Booking app offers the same features as the mobile app, as well as additional features for office managers.

The only notable difference between the mobile app and the desktop version is that with the latter, you are flexible to book a desk on the go.

Why opt for the desktop version?

There are a few advantages of using the desktop version:

- **Privacy.**
  Joan Desk Booking mobile app is designed with privacy in mind. However, with the majority of employees having personal mobile phones, it seems fair to give them the option to keep their work-related affairs on their work computers.

- **Clarity.**
  Let's be honest, mobile phones offer a limited overview on their small screens, regardless of their design. You either have to move between screens or scroll to get all of the information that you need. With the desktop version, everything is clean and clear, making the reservation process even smoother.

- **Versatility.**
  The desktop version takes into account both office managers and employees. Thus, it offers the perfect versatility for editing and scheduling desks in the same interface.

The desktop version offers a clear overview of your office spaces
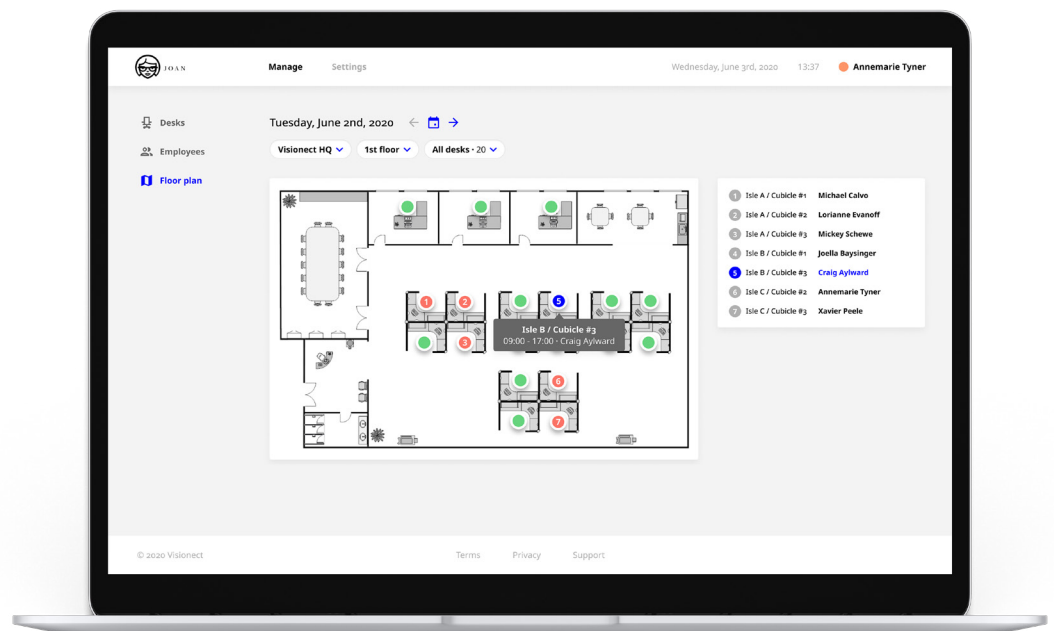
How do you use the desktop version as an employee?

As mentioned above, the desktop version simply replaces the mobile app by offering the same features—just schedule your arrival and select your preferred desk.

Here's what you can do:

- **Schedule your shift.**
  Joan Desk Booking app offers pre-set time slots for a standard workday. Simply decide when you're going to arrive in the office and a time window will be set for your shift.

- **Book your favorite desk.**
  With the return to the office, standard health regulations need to be implemented. This includes keeping a 1.5m distance between each employee at all times. As a result, not all desks will be available every day of the week. Book your chosen desk upfront and be confident that it's ready for you when you arrive.

- **Manage your bookings.**
  Have you decided to switch shifts? Would you prefer to sit next to the marketing department? Simply edit or cancel your booking.

- **See where your colleagues are sitting.**
  The desktop version offers a list of employees and where they are sitting. No need to wander around the office in search of your team members—it's easy to see where they're stationed for the day.

How do you use the desktop version as an office manager?

The desktop version for office managers offers an extended range of features. Most importantly, you'll have the ability to book desks for whole teams and change any existing bookings.

Here's what the office manager's version provides:

- **Attendance tracking.**
  Track who's in the office on which days for accurate remuneration and tracking of additional costs.

- **Scheduling desks for team members.**
  Book a desk for anyone in your company. When heads of individual departments let you know the mandatory office days, simply book and notify all team members. Avoid the hassle of people not showing up on their workdays and any other unnecessary confusion.

- **Edit bookings.**
  Sometimes, there'll be last-minute changes. Edit any bookings in seconds.

Gain a complete overview of workplace attendance
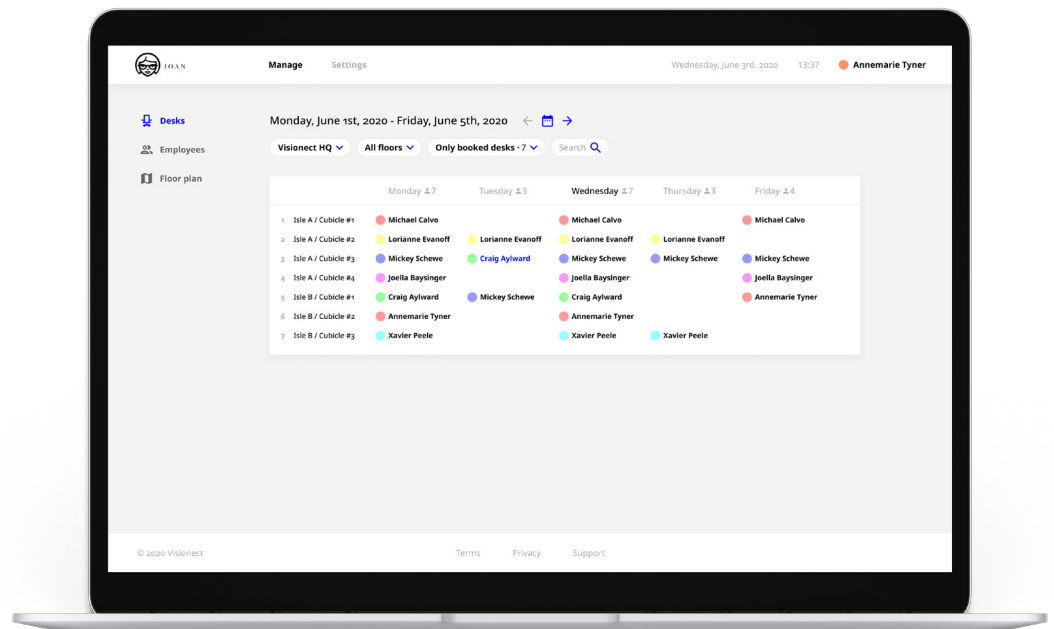
Try
Joan Desk Booking
solution for free

We are offering a free 30-day trial for all first-time users. Once you land on the office.getjoan.com, simply create an account and your free trial begins. Now you're ready to upload the office map, add employees, and experience a flexible workplace with no charge. Learn more about onboarding.

Go to office.getjoan.com or contact us at sales@getjoan.com.

Frequently asked questions
FAQ

1. **What's the file format for uploading floor plans?**
   We currently support .jpg and .png options.

2. **Is the Office portal only available for office managers?**
   Both, office managers and employees will have access to the Office portal with different permissions. Everyone will be able to book a desk from their desktop. Here's an article about it.

3. **Is there a possibility to block out nearby desks to ensure social distancing?**
   Yes, office manager will have the option to set up bookable desks in the Office portal.

4. **What is the max amount of floors you can configure?**
   There's no limit. Set up the entire office building, Joan Desk Booking app's got your back.

5. **Does the system keep records of bookings so we can access them a few weeks after they have happened?**
   Yes. Though the analytics interface is not yet available we are planning to add it soon. If you need to have the export before the interface is ready, we can export the data for you.

6. **Is there a way to mass import users using a file?**
   Yes, you can import a .csv file.

7. **Will the user automatically check-in when they arrive in the office (based on mobile location)?**
   Yes, we are developing two options—automatic "by geolocation" and manual by pressing a button.

Haven't found what you're looking for?
Reach out to sales@getjoan.com.