Hybrid work has changed the basic question companies ask about their offices. It used to be how many desks they needed. Now it is what the office is for. Answering that question well requires a mix of operational insight and market knowledge, which is why many firms turn to commercial real estate consulting before signing a renewal or a new lease. Advisory resources like DAUM consulting services show how brokers help businesses connect workplace strategy with real estate decisions.

This article walks through how to build a workplace strategy for hybrid teams, how to plan space around actual usage, and how to turn those findings into a lease that fits.

Start With Purpose, Not Square Footage

The modern office serves different purposes for different organizations. For some, it is a collaboration hub where teams meet a few days a week. For others, it is a client-facing space that reinforces brand and culture. For many, it is a combination of focused work areas, meeting rooms and social spaces.

Before talking about size, leadership should agree on a few priorities:

- Which activities must happen in person, and which work well remotely
- How often different teams are expected to come in
- Whether clients, recruits or partners visit regularly
- How the office supports training and mentoring for newer employees
- What the company expects its headcount to look like over the lease term

Measure How Space Is Actually Used

Assumptions about occupancy are often wrong. Badge data, room booking records, desk sensors and simple employee surveys can reveal the real pattern of use. Many companies find that attendance peaks on certain weekdays while the office sits mostly empty on others.

That peak pattern drives planning. Designing for average attendance leaves people without seats on busy days, while designing for the absolute maximum wastes money. A practical approach is to plan for typical peak days and use scheduling policies to smooth demand.

Collect data over several months if possible. A single week can be distorted by holidays, project deadlines or seasonal travel, while a longer sample shows the rhythm that the space plan should actually support.

How Commercial Real Estate Consulting Shapes the Space Plan

Once usage is understood, a consultant or broker can translate it into a space program. That program typically defines:

1. **Seat ratio.** The number of workstations per employee, which in hybrid settings is often below one to one.
2. **Space mix.** The balance between open seating, private offices, focus rooms and meeting spaces.
3. **Collaboration areas.** Larger rooms and flexible zones sized for team days and workshops.
4. **Support spaces.** Storage, wellness rooms, phone booths and pantry areas.
5. **Technology needs.** Video conferencing in most rooms, reliable wireless coverage and simple booking tools.

The program then becomes the basis for evaluating buildings. A floor plate that looks efficient on paper may not accommodate the meeting rooms a hybrid team needs, while a slightly larger suite with the right layout might deliver more value.

Building Flexibility Into the Lease

Hybrid patterns are still evolving, so flexibility is worth negotiating. Useful lease provisions can include expansion or contraction rights, shorter initial terms with renewal options, sublease and assignment rights, and landlord contributions toward reconfiguration. Some tenants also pair a smaller core office with access to flexible coworking space for overflow.

Companies operating in more than one market often take a portfolio view. A firm with teams in Southern California and Arizona might consolidate in one city and expand in another, a decision that benefits from local insight in each market; those exploring the Arizona side can review daumcommercial.com/office/phoenix/.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Cutting space aggressively without testing whether peak days still work
- Copying another company's layout instead of designing for your own workflows
- Ignoring acoustics, which can make open hybrid floors unpleasant for focused work
- Underinvesting in meeting room technology, which hybrid teams rely on every day
- Treating the decision as purely real estate rather than involving HR, IT and team leaders

Frequently Asked Questions

How much space does a hybrid team need?

There https://numberfields.asu.edu/NumberFields/show_user.php?userid=6986471 is no universal figure. The right amount depends on peak attendance, the mix of collaborative and focused work, and how much meeting and support space the team requires.

Should we renew our current lease or move?

Compare the cost and disruption of reconfiguring your current space against relocating. Sometimes a renewal with landlord-funded improvements delivers the best outcome.

When should we start planning before a lease expires?

Many companies begin well over a year ahead, since usage studies, space planning, market surveys and negotiations all take time, and a longer runway preserves leverage.

A thoughtful workplace strategy turns hybrid uncertainty into a clear plan. By grounding decisions in real usage data and aligning them with market options, companies can create offices that people want to use while keeping occupancy costs in check. DAUM Commercial Real Estate Services is among the firms that offer consulting alongside brokerage to support that process.