

OpenBlue

Visitor



Top four benefits of a visitor management system



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Introduction

As organizations around the world scrambled to develop protocols to limit the transmission of airborne diseases and employee exposure, they found that effectively doing so requires visibility into and control over who is on site, when and how they use the space. Unsurprisingly, the most effective place to start was right at the front door.

Think about the kind of traffic coming in and out of an office on a given day, both in the pandemic context and outside it. It's reasonable to expect customers, prospects, partners and job candidates to be on site. The office also receives mail and lunch deliveries and generally manages a lot more traffic than just staff.

So, while many organizations rapidly transitioned to fully remote and hybrid work environments to ease the health and safety burden on the office temporarily, most organizations are now doing their best to prepare for a return to in-person work. And when the doors reopen – in stages or all at once – employees won't be the only ones walking through them.

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It's important to note that the security risk inherent in building visitors is not new. But the increased flexibility that comes with hybrid workplaces means employees and guests enter the building with less regularity, which can make handling both expected and unexpected visitor interactions logically frustrating. Maintaining security and safety protocols while creating an inviting experience for guests creates an ideal environment for high-quality work and productivity. And creating reliable and consistent systems makes it easy for visitors and employees to follow appropriate procedures.



Every stakeholder now has a vested interest in how the relationship between the building, the employees and visitors is managed. That's why a visitor management strategy has become critical to preserving the value of in-person interactions. And in the process, a visitor management solution (VMS) has become a business-critical solution.

What is a visitor management solution?

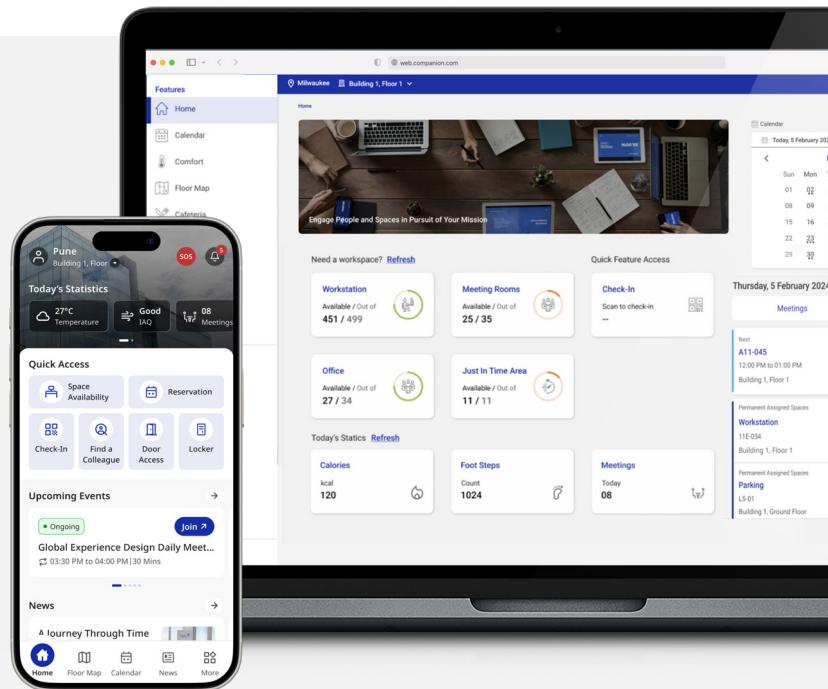
Before diving into why a visitor management solution has become business critical and how it benefits a business across six KPIs, let's define what it actually is.

A visitor management solution automates and simplifies every step of the visitor experience and process. In doing so, it ensures a positive, safe and convenient experience throughout the visitor journey, from pre-registration through to arrival, check-in, collection, meeting, check-out and post-visit analytics.

Here's how it works:

Your visitor management solution automates visitor booking and sends confirmations to the host and visitor. The visitor (or host) is able to pre-register the visitor details, book specific visitor requests (such as parking) and view on-arrival instructions and turn-by-turn directions for the specific meeting.

On arrival, visitors can manage their own check-in using a modern and quick self check-in kiosk, which certifies their identity and access privileges – including self-certifications that they are in compliance with existing health and safety protocols.



Their host is automatically notified and the kiosk can automatically print a badge. Further automations with guest Wi-Fi and access control can be enabled into the building as well.

While all this is happening, authorized users can use real-time dashboards to see visitor movements. They also have access to a real-time record of which visitors are in which areas of the office, which includes detailed information on health and safety and space utilization metrics.

Top four benefits of a visitor management solution

If this sounds like a luxury automation that can be managed just as effectively by reception staff and hosting employees, read on. It's possible that was once true. But now, the global context combined with the modern software capabilities makes the value much clearer.

What it comes down to is that any organization without a proper visitor management solution must acknowledge that they're unusually comfortable with not only operational inefficiencies, but also taking risks.

Let's explore how a modern visitor management solution can benefit an organization in these key areas:

1. Save time and money

One of the most obvious and long-term benefits of deploying a visitor management solution is that it reduces the amount of time and effort required from all parties involved in the visitor experience. It automates tasks that take place in every visitor interaction, but aren't routine for any of the participants. In doing so, it guarantees everyone has the information they need when they need it, all the little details are executed correctly and everyone can focus on delivering value elsewhere.

Here's how software benefits each group:

Visitors

An obvious beneficiary of improved workflows for managing visitors are visitors themselves. From the time they receive their confirmation email ahead of their visit, everything they need to check in is already organized. They know where to go to park, what information they'll need to share or protocols they'll need to follow to check in; and they don't have to wait around awkwardly looking for someone they have maybe never met.

Doing all of this up front through automation also reduces congestion at both parking and reception. Returning visitors are also remembered on the system which makes sign-in even faster on return visits.



Benefit value calculation: time saved by visitors

Manually overseeing visitor parking and reception takes **15 minutes on average per visitor**. For a workplace welcoming **100 visitors per day**, that equates to **525 working hours per month**.

With a visitor management solution, this only takes **five minutes per visitor** – or **175 working hours per month**.

Total time savings:
525 hours – 175 hours
= 350 hours per month

If based on an average hourly visitor/consultant/contractor rate of **\$100 per hour**, this equates to **\$35,000 per month saved** for each building with **100 visitors per day**.

Employee hosts

The other primary participant in the visitor experience is the employee host. Using a visitor management solution, hosts can pre-book and pre-approve visitors (if needed) much more quickly. They also receive immediate notification of a visitor's arrival without waiting for a receptionist to call once they're in the lobby.

Similarly, hosts spend less time waiting for visitors while they go through a manual check-in. The solution reduces back and forth between a host and their visitor and increases the sense of professionalism to get a scheduled meeting off on the right foot.

Receptionists

Receptionists traditionally play an especially important role in managing the visitor experience, a role which they can be much better at when a VMS is in place. It gives them full oversight and control to confirm that the visitor has checked in, who they are on site to see, what time they checked in, what time the visitor's upcoming meeting is booked for and the ability to print visitor badges before or upon visitor arrival.

When the tedious tasks are accounted for by software, receptionists can focus on creating great first impressions and establishing a rapport with the visitor.

Benefit value calculation: time saved by employee hosts

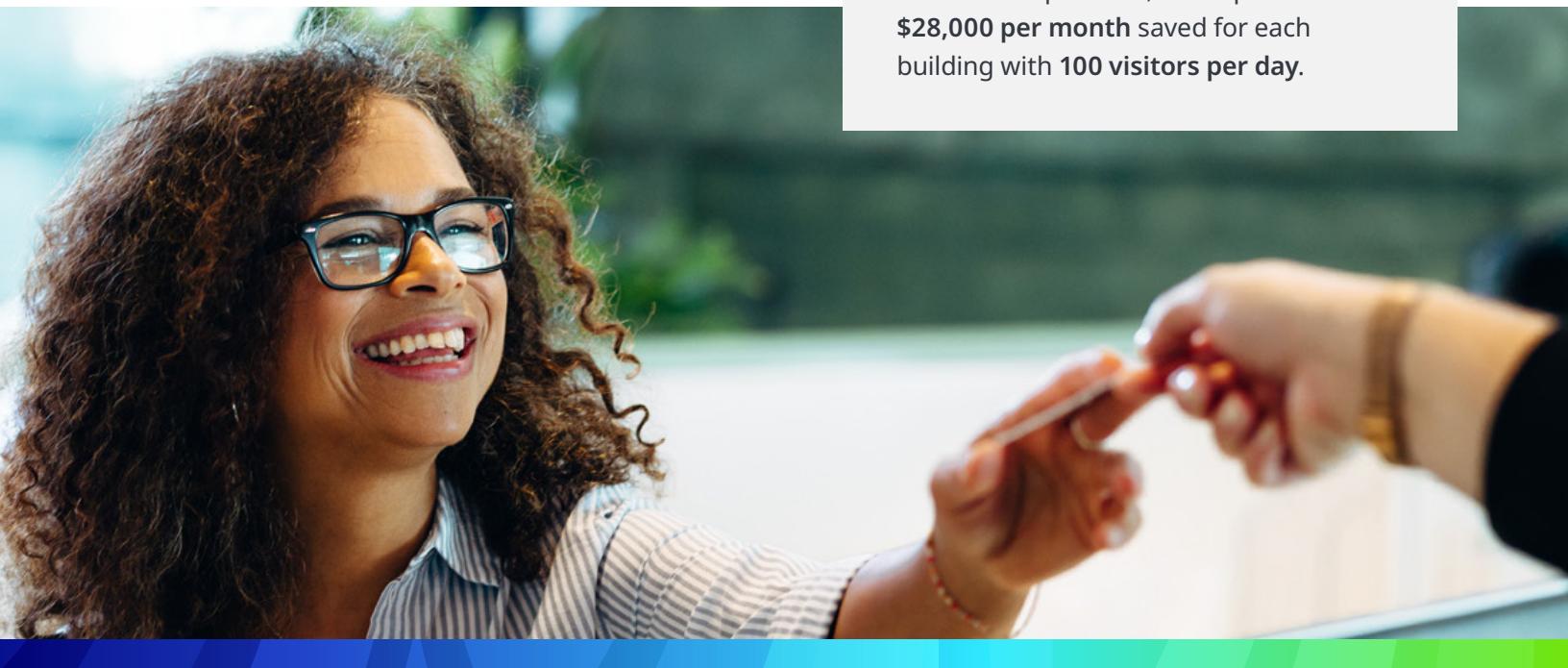
Manually booking, preparing for and welcoming visitors to the office normally takes 10 minutes on average per visitor. For a workplace welcoming 100 visitors per day, that equates to 300 working hours per month.

With a visitor management solution, this only takes **two minutes per visitor** – or **70 working hours per month**.

Total time savings:

300 hours – 70 hours
= 230 hours per month

If based on an average hourly employee rate of \$100 per hour, this equates to **\$28,000 per month** saved for each building with **100 visitors per day**.



Facilities managers

Instead of maintaining detailed spreadsheets and manually aggregating visitor documentation, facilities managers using a visitor management solution enjoy real-time oversight of all upcoming and checked-in visitors. They also enjoy detailed visitor data analytics which offer instant, clear visibility into the full history of visitors and related details such as health and safety certifications.

This allows facilities managers to make incremental, data-driven improvements to the visitor experience, while also making it easy for them to manage incident reporting or health and safety investigations.

Executives

Executives enjoy the additional benefit of analyzing how the visitor experience, visitor policy and workspace optimization initiatives all work in unison to serve broader business goals. The software makes it easy to ensure consistent policy implementation up front while optimizing procedures and improving productivity and efficiency over time.

Personal assistants

Finally, assistants can link themselves to managers in the system in order to pre-book visitors and/or receive visitor arrival notifications on their behalf. This reduces waiting times and the overall admin time spent on visitor management.



2. Increased security

Protecting the business and office extends well beyond the series of predictable events that deserve established protocols. Visitor management software allows a proactive approach to managing other security risks – both physical and informational. It blocks unwanted visitors and records all visitor information digitally and securely.

Physical security

Physical security involves understanding who is coming into the office, why and who they're coming to see. A VMS automates what would otherwise be the responsibility of receptionists who aren't security specialists and limits the need to hire a security person for the front door specifically.

A VMS requires each visitor or contractor to sign in digitally. It ensures the business receives all information required for entry, such as reason for visit, the company they are from and the host they are visiting. Part of this process can include health and wellness certifications to improve protocol enforcement and reduce liability.

Similarly, visitor management software allows businesses to create a person-of-interest list which can prevent unwanted visitors from being invited to the building for a meeting, or blocking their entry if they show up on site. It can even automate the notification of security personnel if anyone on the list tries to gain access, providing for a low profile but highly effective security response.

As an added bonus, management can make use of real-time electronic records of all visitors for security reporting, information intelligence and HSE auditing.



Informational security

Of course, physical security is only the visible half of the security battle. As with everything in a digital-heavy world, protecting the security and integrity of data is crucially important. Unsecured manual systems that have sensitive visitor and business data are susceptible to fall into the wrong hands, and the responsibility for making sure that doesn't happen falls on the organization. With a proper solution built to handle and protect sensitive data, all information is securely stored and can easily be accessible in the future.

Organizations need a VMS in place that stores data securely and is not vulnerable to cyber or informational attacks. Look for vendors that offer written information security policies and can show third-party audits and accreditations, such as ISO-27001 and/or AICPA SOC 2. These go a long way towards proving their commitment to security is strong, and will adapt to new threats as they emerge.

3. Data privacy improvements

Protecting business data extends to protecting the data of the individual you collect – and making sure visitors know that. Not only does protecting visitor data insulate the business from embarrassing leaks, it's also a matter of conforming to GDPR, CCPA and other international data protection regulations. Plus, it proves to visitors that they are a priority.

Any system – manual or digital – must give visitors the option to authorize the storage of their personal information. Beyond that, they must have the ability to edit or delete that data in the future. Without this approval, the business isn't in compliance with global privacy laws. It's far easier to comply with these regulations when the software manages everything.

There's only one opportunity to make a great first impression

That impression starts to develop well before the visitor meets their host and extends beyond the time the meeting ends. That's why it's so important to have a system in place that delivers a consistently convenient and secure experience at each touch point.

4. Brand image

There's only one opportunity to make a great first impression. That impression starts to develop well before the visitor meets their host and extends beyond the time the meeting ends. That's why it's so important to have a system in place that delivers a consistently convenient and secure experience at each touch point. All of these convenience, compliance, security and privacy improvements support and maintain a strong brand image.

A frictionless digital system does not do away with the "personal touch". Instead, it removes chances for confusion and lets everyone involved focus on the relationship and the important work at hand.



How to find the right visitor management solution

The visitor management solution you choose should enable you to handle every expected and unexpected visitor interaction with ease and speed. It should enable a superior visitor experience that solves your compliance risks and reduces your security risk, while also improving your organization's brand – regardless of how much or how quickly your policies change.

With OpenBlue Visitor, a leading global visitor management solution from Johnson Controls, you can manage every part of the visitor lifecycle while also enjoying seamless integrations with some of the most robust and intuitive workplace management, employee experience and workplace analytics solutions on the market.

OpenBlue Visitor enables a superior visitor experience that reduces your compliance and security risk while improving your organization's brand. With intuitive check-in kiosks and a variety of options including parcel management, OpenBlue Visitor allows you to create a safe and seamless experience for all occupants from invitation to departure.

In a business and office environment that demands so much attention and care, it's important that you find a solution that can automate and simplify the routine so you can focus on the novel and complex.

An advanced visitor management solution does just that, and OpenBlue Visitor is uniquely capable of going beyond the front door to open up a whole new world for your business.

Ready to simplify and improve your visitor management experience?

Talk to a Johnson Controls visitor management specialist today!



About OpenBlue

A complete ecosystem of connected technologies, expertise and services. It saves money and creates a new class of smart buildings that are secure, healthy and sustainable. OpenBlue reads the live activity of the building and makes sure it adapts to this information, continually fine-tuning until it performs perfectly.

About Johnson Controls

At Johnson Controls (NYSE:JCI), we transform the environments where people live, work, learn and play. As the global leader in smart, healthy and sustainable buildings, our mission is to reimagine the performance of buildings to serve people, places and the planet.

Building on a proud history of 140 years of innovation, we deliver the blueprint of the future for industries such as healthcare, schools, data centers, airports, stadiums, manufacturing and beyond through OpenBlue, our comprehensive digital offering.

Today, Johnson Controls offers the world's largest portfolio of building technology and software as well as service solutions from some of the most trusted names in the industry.