

The Mobile Connectivity ROI Index 2025 Commercial Real Estate

How the **commercial real estate sector** could benefit
from better indoor 4G and 5G coverage



Make sure you're connected, the writing's on the wall

Financial performance is seen as the biggest opportunity for commercial real estate when it comes to enhanced 4G/5G connectivity

71%

69%

of commercial real estate organisations say real-time **energy use optimisation** is driving demand for better indoor mobile connectivity

Commercial real estate organisations say they would **gain**

£4.1
BILLION

in productivity benefits from improved indoor mobile connectivity

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Let us help you make the case for better connectivity

By Chris Early, Interim Sales Director - Private Sector at Freshwave



Did you know that 80% of mobile voice and data traffic occurs indoors?

And as people are now accustomed to working from wherever they choose, assured mobile connectivity is more important than ever for productivity, worker satisfaction, and commercial rental returns.

Most of us take for granted that we can use our mobile devices while on the move, a convenience made possible by the substantial investments the mobile network operators (MNOs) have made. Understandably, these investments have been focused on areas that serve the largest number of people – typically outdoor locations.

“High-capacity mobile connectivity is essential to support the way people work”

But indoors is a different story. Stricter building regulations and the net zero transition have encouraged developers to incorporate energy efficient materials, such as low-e glass, into their developments. This, combined with other construction materials and complex building layouts (plus adjacent redevelopment), blocks

outdoor mobile signal from entering buildings, leaving them as mobile signal dead zones.

And as more of our mobile data usage happens indoors, reliable, high-capacity mobile connectivity is essential to support the way people work – from streaming and remote meetings to smart building systems and IoT devices.

We pioneered the enterprise-pays model for mobile connectivity in the UK and have long partnered with all the MNOs to extend their networks indoors for the benefit of everyone inside. In fact, we’ve already connected the equivalent of more than 60x the average London skyscraper’s footprint.

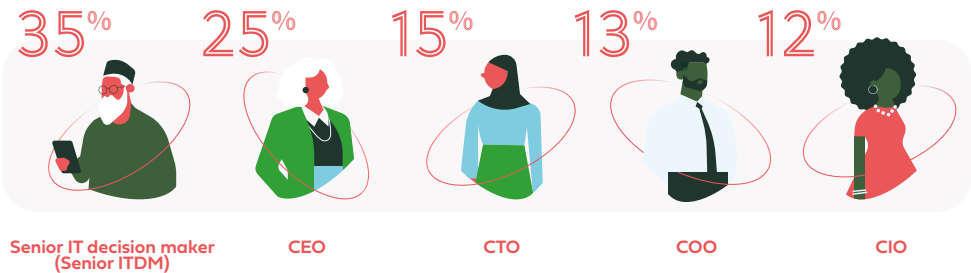
As a connectivity infrastructure-as-a-service organisation, we understand that our commercial real estate (CRE) customers need help articulating what they stand to gain from investing

in dedicated multi-operator indoor connectivity – both pre-build and for the years to come. It could be how connectivity helps to raise the quality of space on the market and make it more lettable, or how it accelerates digital transformation activities, such as real-time energy use optimisation or real-time structural integrity analysis. And since 2020, we’re seeing this topic increase in significance throughout the built environment value chain. We now often work directly with developers on whole estates, considering campus connectivity needs before any foundations are laid.

To support that need, we surveyed 100 C-suite leaders and IT Directors from CRE organisations (including property developers, facilities managers and landlords) across the UK as part of our wider ROI Index. This report includes both a CRE-specific deep dive, as well as results from the full 900 respondent sample.

Across CRE, respondents estimate that poor current connectivity costs them £5.9 billion annually. They also believe that improved indoor mobile coverage could deliver £4.1 billion in productivity gains, representing a significant return on investment in dedicated indoor mobile connectivity. CRE was the only sector to cite financial performance as the top organisational outcome from better indoor mobile connectivity (71%), reflecting the direct link between reliable coverage and revenue generation, tenant retention, and overall income streams.

I hope you find the insights of your peers useful. Read on to find out more about how to use our data in your organisation to build the case for indoor mobile connectivity, how it can be used to drive productivity, improve the tenant experience, and demonstrate a return on investment on built assets.



We surveyed 900 senior executives from medium and large organisations across the UK’s private and public sectors. The industries represented include transport and logistics, professional and financial services, healthcare, retail, manufacturing, hospitality, stadiums and leisure, property development, law, and government.

Connectivity delivers returns

We surveyed 900 C-suite executives and IT decision-makers from a range of sectors to understand what impact poor indoor connectivity has on their operations, as well as what they think they stand to gain from investing in dedicated indoor mobile connectivity.

This included 100 leaders in commercial real estate (CRE) organisations, on which the findings of this sector deep dive are based. The range reflects our current customer base of property developers, landlords and the tenants they serve.

The CRE sector has weathered seismic changes in the past few years. Following changes in working patterns post-pandemic, the “flight to quality” has seen occupiers increasingly favour higher-quality office and commercial spaces. Tenants want their spaces to work harder for them and to be attractive, flexible, and collaborative for their staff.

Premium buildings frequently achieve lower operating costs by integrating smart building systems that optimise energy use, space management, and maintenance. Increasingly, PropTech solutions and digital twins are being deployed to monitor performance in real time, predict issues, and enhance sustainability. All of these depend on robust digital infrastructure, including mobile connectivity, to ensure seamless data flow between sensors, systems, and user – maximising efficiency, minimising disruption, and unlocking long-term cost savings.

At the same time, prime buildings typically hold value better in uncertain markets and institutional investors prefer Grade A stock, further reinforcing demand.

When thinking about improving in-building connectivity in CRE, most people consider Wi-Fi the only solution. But Wi-Fi uses unlicensed spectrum, meaning it can become overburdened and fail, and is also prone to interference. This can seriously impact tenant satisfaction and business productivity. A dedicated multi-operator indoor mobile system extends the MNOs’ networks indoors, guaranteeing seamless signal and capacity for everyone in the building. This helps landlords to keep tenants happy and charge a premium for their space.

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For landlords, strong mobile infrastructure does more than keep tenants happy, it strengthens the building’s overall performance.

We rely on our phones. Our phones rely on connectivity.

Poor mobile coverage hits organisations where it hurts – their bottom line. And it causes headaches for landlords too. Tenant complaints, higher churn and longer void periods can all result from poor indoor mobile signal. For landlords, better indoor mobile coverage can be the difference between a floor sitting empty for months or being snapped up by a blue-chip tenant who demands seamless connectivity. And once a building is fully occupied, it’s currently a reason why tenants will renew their lease.

In premium CRE with tenants in sectors such as financial services, technology, and professional services, seamless mobile coverage is critical. Investment managers can’t afford dropped calls with clients, and technology firms rely on uninterrupted connectivity to power collaboration, data transfer, and customer engagement. In professional services, strong mobile performance underpins productivity and client confidence.

For landlords, strong mobile infrastructure does more than keep tenants happy, it strengthens the building’s overall performance. Mobile-enabled smart systems can support everything from access control and security monitoring to energy management and predictive maintenance, helping reduce operational costs. A building with seamless multi-operator coverage is also more marketable, commanding premium rents and protecting long-term asset value.

The business case for mobile is clear.

Poor mobile connectivity creates significant challenges in the CRE sector, as it does to businesses across the UK economy.



If an owner could prove a building's reliable connectivity, four out of five tenants (84%) would pay more per square foot for their space. And 77% of tenants would sign a longer lease in a building with superior connectivity infrastructure, or would sign a lease more quickly with assurance that technology infrastructure in a building meets the business requirements of the organisation.

– *WiredScore, The Value of Connectivity*

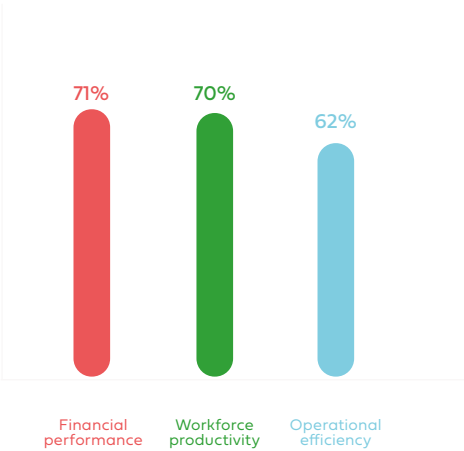


According to CRE decision-makers, issues with current connectivity are costing them £5.9 billion in lost productivity a year.

However, they also believe that dedicated indoor mobile connectivity would recoup the majority of these losses, delivering £4.1 billion in productivity for a sector which generates more than £124 billion a year in business turnover and directly and indirectly supports 2.5 million jobs across the UK.

CRE was also the only sector to cite financial performance as the number one organisational outcome, showing a clear link between connectivity and a more marketable built environment.

Top 3 organisational outcomes that would be improved with better indoor mobile connectivity in commercial real estate ▼

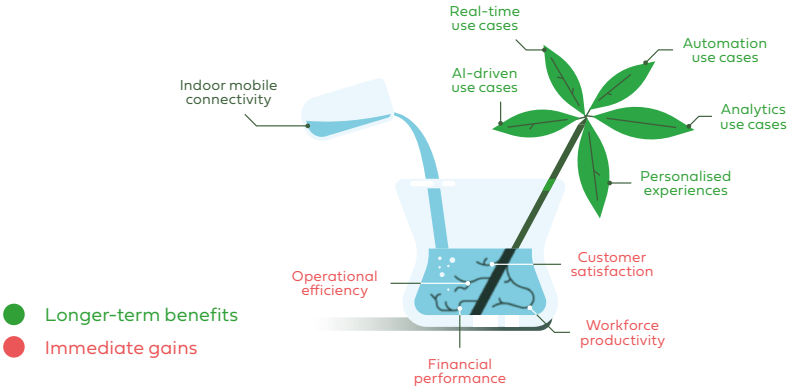


Immediate gains unlocked

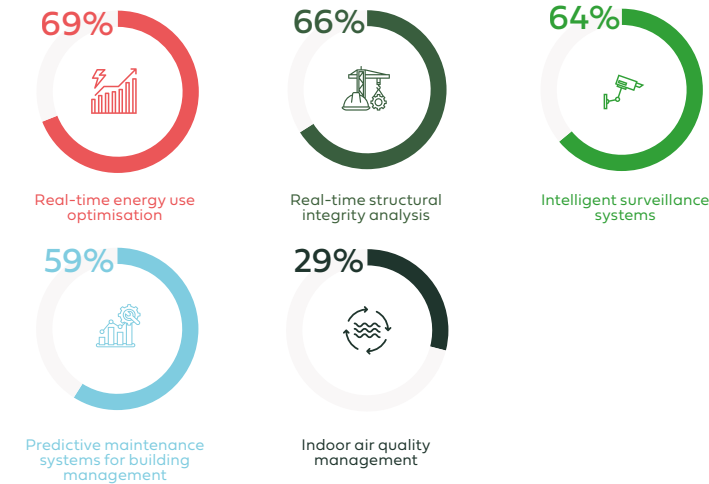
The shift in the UK commercial real estate sector towards higher-quality, more sustainable, and digitally enabled spaces highlights the need for reliable indoor mobile connectivity. Strong mobile coverage underpins modern workplace expectations – from hybrid collaboration tools and secure client communications to mobile-enabled access control and integrated building management systems. It supports near-term goals like boosting tenant satisfaction, reducing complaints, and minimising costly downtime.

And deploying multi-operator in-building connectivity maximises the value of existing PropTech investments; everything, from air quality monitoring and room-booking systems to smart vending machines and tenant experience apps, work more smoothly and reliably, ensuring landlords and occupiers realise a building's full potential.

By supporting multiple use cases on the same digital infrastructure, from mobile-first workplaces to smart building automation and digital twins, connectivity enables use case stacking that helps landlords and investors capture a greater aggregated return on digital investments, while future-proofing assets against rising tenant expectations and regulatory demands.



The future use cases your peers believe could be unlocked by dedicated indoor mobile connectivity



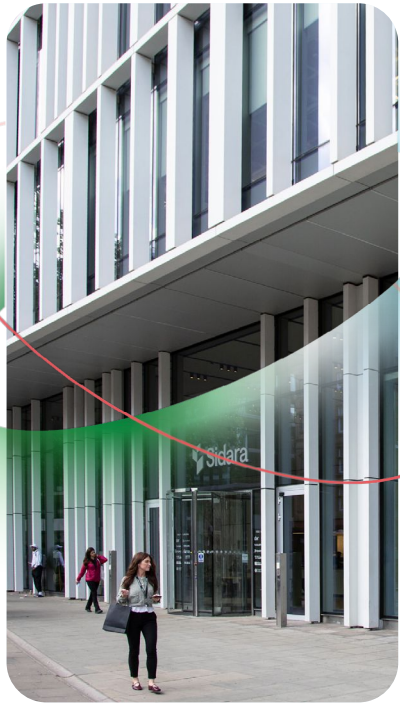
Longer-term opportunities

Looking to the longer-term opportunities, dedicated multi-operator indoor mobile connectivity is unlocking a new era of smart building capabilities; for instance, digital twins – virtual replicas of real-world buildings – integrate live sensor data to continuously test and optimise energy use, detect faults in mechanical systems, and flag structural anomalies before they escalate.

And when energy, safety, maintenance and environmental controls all run on one in-building mobile network, the benefits multiply. Landlords cut operating costs, boost building performance, and secure a future-ready, sustainable asset.

Improved commercial real estate connectivity in action

We've already connected millions of square feet of commercial real estate to multi-operator indoor connectivity – here are some real-world examples.



Providing more sustainable mobile connectivity at SIDARA with Omni Network

International multidisciplinary design and engineering company SIDARA decided to co-locate several of their member firms in the same building. This was to encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing between the different disciplines and enhance innovative thinking.

After evaluating a number of mobile connectivity options, including a distributed antenna system, SIDARA chose Freshwave's small cell solution Omni Network to provide coverage throughout their building. Freshwave are also providing an ongoing managed service.

"Throughout the development of 150 Holborn, I challenged our contractors and technology partners to meet our objectives that maximised flexibility and scalability to adapt to our ongoing changing needs as we evolve as a global business. Freshwave and their Omni Network have delivered on these. I believe in delivering technology with a purpose, not just because we can, and the mobile connectivity our staff and visitors experience adds huge value to our organisation."

Daniel Cope, former Head of Technology at SIDARA

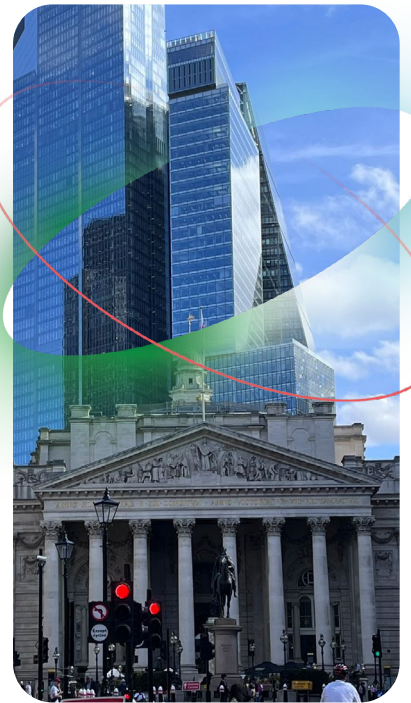
Freshwave bring connectivity from all the mobile network operators to 8 Bishopsgate

Freshwave designed and deployed a distributed antenna system to provide assured connectivity for everyone in the building, no matter which mobile network they use. Freshwave are supporting the system via an ongoing managed service.

As well as delivering mobile coverage for the landlord areas, occupiers can also connect to the service thanks to an innovative commercial model agreed between 8 Bishopsgate, Freshwave and real estate technology specialists Electracom.

"We're committed to providing a superlative experience for our occupiers across every facet of 8 Bishopsgate, from the physical surroundings to the amenities they enjoy. Seamless mobile provision is an important part of our exceptional technology offer."

Dan Ward, Senior Development Director at Stanhope





Connecting the City of London's tallest skyscraper

Smart buildings need the right network. We collaborated closely with 22 Bishopsgate to design an innovative commercial model that provides assured connectivity for landlord and tenants alike. Under this model, 22 Bishopsgate provides mobile connectivity in the common and landlord areas as part of their service to the tenants.

Tenants who want mobile signal in their office may opt-in to connect to the DAS and this is arranged, managed and billed by us. Our infrastructure and flexible approach allow them to "plug and play".

"From when we first started to design 22 Bishopsgate, we knew that technology would play a key role in creating the kind of building that everyone would want to work in. Mobile connectivity is an essential part of our smart building vision and Freshwave's project management, program installation and commissioning of the DAS system has been seamless from start to finish and done to an exceedingly high standard."

Peter Bicknell, former Head of Engineering at 22 Bishopsgate



One Nine Elms enjoys assured mobile connectivity from all operators with Freshwave

One Nine Elms, developed by Excel Winner UK, has two towers rising 42 and 57 storeys high which are linked together by a glazed bridge. Residents and guests of the luxury residential-led development in London benefit from seamless mobile connectivity from all the mobile operators, including in the lifts, thanks to Freshwave's deployment.

"We have a discerning clientele with the highest of standards so that needed to be reflected in both the reliability of the mobile solution and the manner in which it was deployed. Working with Freshwave ensured that we not only received coverage across the development today from all the operators, including in the lifts, but that the solution they deployed will also continue to serve us as we introduce innovative new technologies in the future for the benefits of our residents and guests."

Sungchul Yoon, Commercial Director at Excel Winner UK

Lighting up Lucent W1 with all operator connectivity

Lucent W1, a mixed-use development behind the world-famous Piccadilly Lights, worked with Freshwave so its tenants and visitors would enjoy in-building connectivity from all the mobile network operators. Freshwave deployed the distributed antenna system as an ongoing managed service.

"Lucent W1 is an oasis of calm in the hustle and bustle of Piccadilly Circus, providing our tenants and their visitors with a welcoming, airy space in which to collaborate and build community. We were determined to provide the best possible amenities in the building and mobile service will be no exception. We're happy to partner with Freshwave so that everyone can enjoy seamless mobile connectivity."

James Rowbotham, Head of Workplace Development at Landsec



5 key indoor mobile connectivity trends

When 900 business leaders shared their views on improving indoor mobile connectivity, five core themes stood out.

- 1 **Poor current connectivity is costing the UK £billions**
- 2 **Better indoor mobile coverage would bring immediate payback**
- 3 **Investment returns increase over time as organisations progress in their digitalisation journey**
- 4 **CEOs are the biggest advocates**
- 5 **Wales, London and the South East would benefit most**

All sectors summary

The UK is ready to unlock the benefits of better indoor mobile connectivity.

Across all the sectors we surveyed, 66% of organisations expect their overall budget for connectivity to grow in the next two years. And of everyone surveyed, CEOs felt there was greatest potential for productivity gains from better indoor mobile coverage at their sites, estimating it as 2.1% of their annual revenue or budget.

We surveyed 900 leaders from a range of sectors to understand what impact they hope that extra budget will achieve.

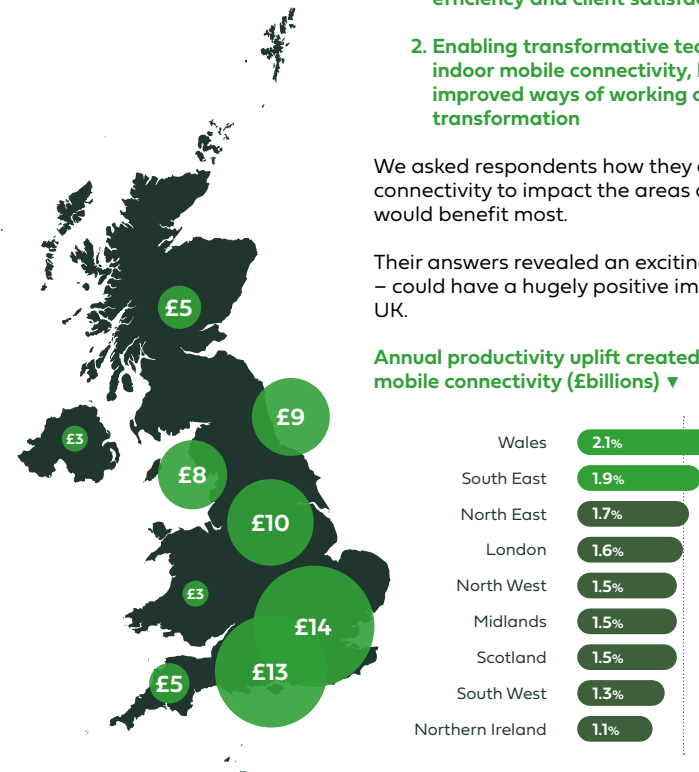
Our research uncovered two key opportunities from improving indoor mobile connectivity:

1. **Optimising the current operational model, using enhanced connectivity to improve everyday processes by boosting workplace productivity, financial performance, operational efficiency and client satisfaction**
2. **Enabling transformative technologies through advanced indoor mobile connectivity, like unlocking new and improved ways of working and accelerating digital transformation**

We asked respondents how they expect improved indoor mobile connectivity to impact the areas above and how their sectors would benefit most.

Their answers revealed an exciting opportunity that – if realised – could have a hugely positive impact across all regions of the UK.

Annual productivity uplift created by better mobile connectivity (£billions) ▼



Three key benefits of better indoor mobile connectivity

1

Reduce the impact of poor connectivity

Large organisations across the UK are losing £100 billion every year due to current connectivity limitations.

This impact could be reduced by 70% with better indoor mobile coverage.

Annual productivity uplift created by improved indoor mobile connectivity

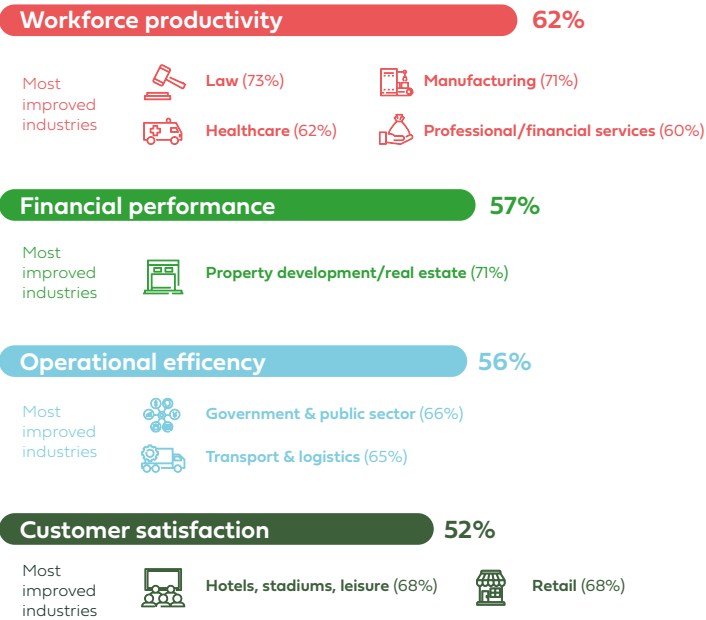
+£70BN

2

Improve a range of critical KPIs

62% of those we surveyed said better indoor mobile connectivity could boost workplace productivity, making it the biggest opportunity for improvement.

Organisational outcomes identified as being improved by indoor mobile connectivity across all sectors ▼



But other key outcomes like improving financial performance, boosting operational efficiency and increasing customer satisfaction also came out strong.

- **Workforce productivity** is particularly significant in sectors such as legal, manufacturing, healthcare, and professional/financial services, where faster, more reliable connectivity is crucial to enable flexible working, seamless collaboration, and real-time access to critical information.
- **Financial performance** was the main focus for property development and real estate, where reliable on-site mobile connectivity can facilitate better site management, faster deal closures, and improved client relationships.
- **Operational efficiency** was particularly important for government/public sector and transport/logistics. In these industries, reliable connectivity can enable smoother coordination, better use of resources, and minimised downtime.
- **Customer satisfaction** is particularly vital in consumer-facing industries such as hotels, stadiums, leisure, and retail. In these sectors, mobile connectivity can allow businesses to provide seamless digital experiences to their customers, from improved mobile payment systems to real-time personalisation and immersive entertainment options.

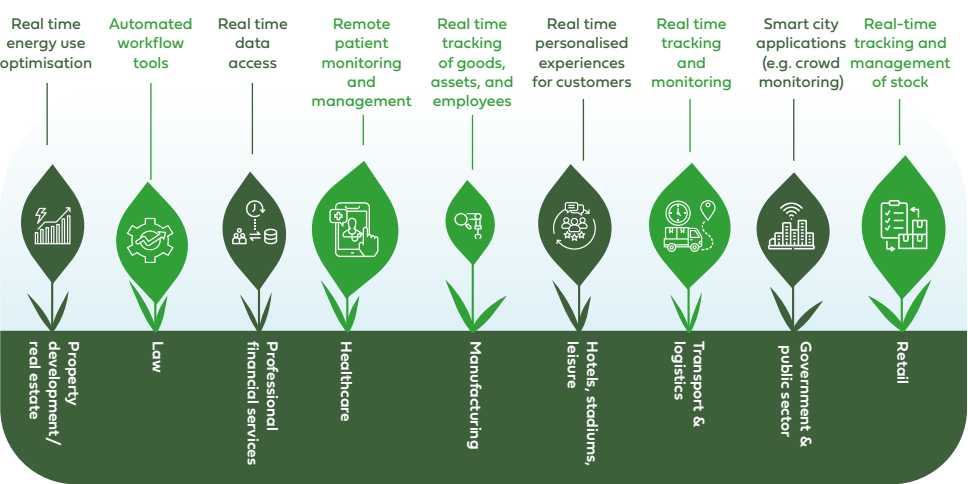
3

Accelerate digital transformation

The growing demand for improved indoor mobile connectivity is driven not only by the need to optimise existing processes but also by the push for digital transformation across all sectors in the UK. Organisations are looking to break down traditional operational silos, enhance their responsiveness to dynamic environments and deliver more value to customers and stakeholders.

Organisations are increasingly seeking to enhance real-time data collection, gain actionable insights and improve monitoring and management capabilities through advanced mobile connectivity.

The top digital transformation activity driving demand in each sector ▼



Next steps

A huge opportunity for commercial real estate organisations across the UK.

While the way many workplaces are used may have changed, their importance to organisations remains clear.

Rather than simply being banks of desks, modern workplaces have evolved to meet a variety of needs, from areas for focused work and individual pods for calls, to zones designed to facilitate collaboration. And assured connectivity is essential in getting the most value from each square foot of real estate for both tenants and owners.



The most improved organisational outcome from enhanced 4G/5G mobile connectivity cited by our CRE respondents was financial performance at 71%.

This reflects the direct link between connectivity and asset value in the sector. Reliable mobile coverage makes buildings more attractive to tenants, supports higher rental yields, and reduces the risk of vacancies.

In addition, robust connectivity enables the adoption of smart building technologies that drive operational efficiencies and cost savings.

This is your chance to be part of an exciting digital transformation, one that will strengthen the productivity of the UK as a whole.

Based on the insights in this report, those that move quickly to invest in assured indoor mobile connectivity could improve everything from productivity to operational efficiency, to tenant satisfaction and more.

But the time for that immediate payback is now.

And the question is: will your organisation be part of this high ROI, mobile connectivity-based future?

“We face challenges with inconsistent indoor mobile coverage, particularly in our larger buildings and those with dense construction materials.”

– Senior ITDM in Commercial Real Estate, South East



“The foundation of any successful business lies way beyond its bricks and mortar. Where? In its building’s connectivity. Not only does it bring to life culture, connectivity makes the business dynamic and future proof too”

– John Gravett, CEO of Cluttons

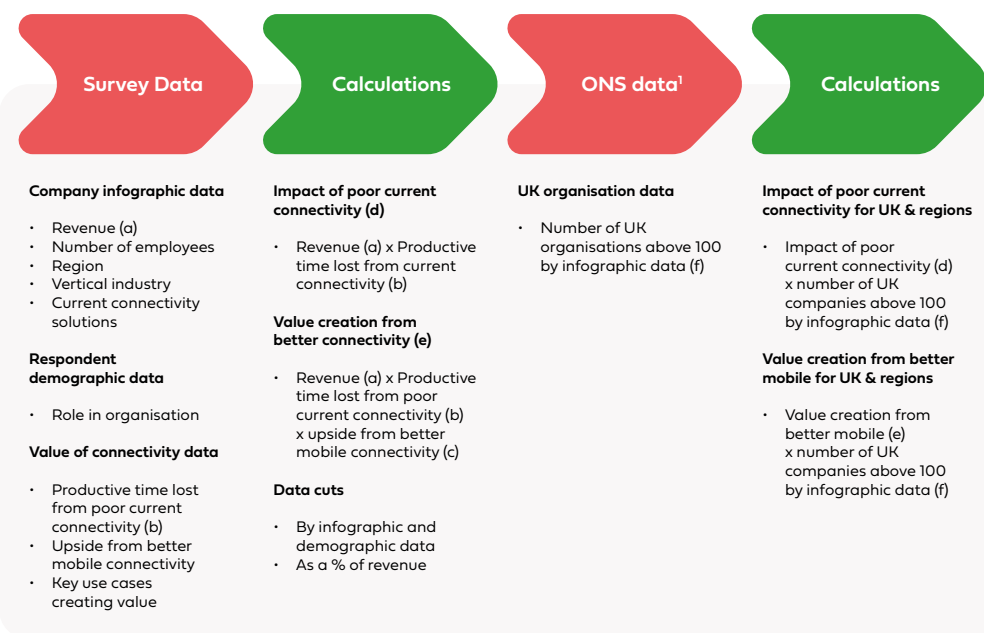


APPENDIX

Methodology

The survey we ran posed several questions for organisations across the UK from nine different sectors (100 organisations with greater than 100 employees) including the impact of existing connectivity issues on their business. We also asked them how much of this impact could be mitigated through improved mobile connectivity. This enabled us to calculate the average loss and mitigation value for businesses of different sizes within each sector across different regions of the UK.

We then used these average values and applied them to all relevant businesses across the UK – those with greater than 100 employees, within our target vertical industries, within each region. This enabled us to calculate the impact on specific industries, specific company sizes, and specific regions. The commercial real estate figures in the vertical deep dive were drawn from analysing the 100 responses from those in commercial real estate-specific organisations.



Definitions

Current connectivity

Network system within an organisation, consisting of predominantly fixed connectivity.

Large organisations

Organisations with more than 100 employees.

¹<https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/activitysizeandlocation/datasets/ukbusinessactivitysizeandlocation>

Assure mobile connectivity from day one

Speak to us today to find out
more about getting your building
connected.

mobileroi@freshwavegroup.com

