



Using strategic insights to understand  
**the key drivers** for your property portfolio

The world is how we shape it

sopra  steria

## Strategic insights can help you achieve better Estate Management outcomes

Strategic insights are those necessary to inform, review, or develop an organisation's strategy. It's essential to gain insights about the current circumstances, what the future may bring and what needs to change in order to realise potential benefits or overcome the current and future challenges.







# The Challenge

**Across the built environment, both private and public sector organisations face the challenge of managing large regional and national property portfolios with their existing service delivery partners. Property, facilities management and estate strategy teams, must continuously review their estate requirements, understand asset usage, condition and end user environments to meet building user expectations.**

Many Estate Management contract awards are often to traditional regional and/or national Estates Management or facility management providers. Often these organisations manage the “end to end” delivery of estate services or a full “integrator” model which has resulted in several versions of the truth from different data and insights from several disparate sources. The focus by traditional service providers was and still is mobilisation and, transition through to business as usual delivery which often means strategic insights arrive later than is most strategically useful.

Practically this has often resulted in a strong core service delivery solution offered at bid stage from estates providers. However this can lead to inflexible IT integrations with “bolt on” “off the shelf” CAFM (Computer Aided Facilities Management) and other operating systems that lacked detailed agile insight to allow organisations to develop their estate services and adjust their requirements through the life of a contract. What many organisations are actually looking for is greater interoperability and evolutionarily architecture not just another software product to manage.

For many organisations this has meant they always had a large “improvement list” and quite often delayed decisions as they did not have the right data, insights or evidence to make changes to their estate portfolio in the right timeframes. All teams involved with Estate Management now need to take the time to decide how they balance “return to office working” requirements from their building users vs longer term strategic improvements.

Balancing compliance requirements whilst also meeting customer, client and your own organisations’ expectations can seem an intimidating challenge. Add to this working to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, that may involve becoming carbon neutral, or embracing the circular economy and the challenge becomes considerable. It’s a data puzzle as much as anything else.

The task facing many organisations is to have a unified view of their estate, alongside the view of the people using their assets, at best siloed in disparate systems, at worst, non-existent. Realising the opportunity of big data analytics and enabling data informed decision making is challenging.

*Sopra Steria has a long history of systems and data integration expertise. We create an ecosystem underpinned by evolutionary architecture enabling interoperability that’s ready to incorporate new, best in class products, as organisational maturity and product availability grows. We achieve this by embracing this complexity and taking a flexible approach to integrating existing data sources and systems into a complementary ecosystem of products. Collaborating with our trusted partners and suppliers to create platforms that facilitate data driven decision making and ultimately enable and encourage people focused and sustainable outcomes.*



# Our Experience

Whilst 2020 was a challenging year for many organisations, it also enabled some beneficial outcomes for many by accelerating change as quick decisions had to be made about the way people work, how they balance their working patterns and how technology solutions could continue to support remote collaboration as we slowly returned to the office.



*For Sopra Steria, the pandemic dramatically accelerated our need to review our office occupancy, property portfolio and overall estate strategy. We chose to implement a data driven approach in order to learn more about our property portfolios, to understand what could be achieved and to prioritise key actions, whilst taking a risk-based approach to delivering value.*

*- Andrew Hepworth, Corporate Services Director, Sopra Steria*



By taking an agile approach to the project management of our own property rationalisation and optimisation programme and putting our people first in the journey we have learned some useful lessons that could help other organisations with their Estate Management challenges too.

We have always been a user focused organisation and by putting the needs of our people at the centre of our thinking and by applying our data analytics expertise we uncovered strategic insights that have allowed us to make a significant change to our estates portfolio in a way that makes our employees a priority.

To allow our business leaders to make data driven decisions about the property portfolio and strategy, we pulled together information from several functions from across the business. From human resources to facilities management to the less obvious functions such as IT, security and finance. These functions had an influence on and an understanding of what sort of property we needed now and in the future. Whilst this approach may sound obvious by breaking down silos and collating data can make a significant difference in the type of insights that can be gained.



## The data set created strategic insight for us identifying:

- What sort of working patterns people preferred rather than are assumed they would like.
- What type of location people prefer for a city centre office and all the benefits that brings from a transport connectivity perspective and from an agglomeration economics perspective.
- The social needs of our people who enjoy after work drinks; gyms and shops nearby and how long it took them to get home after a day of work.
- Other factors which were important to our people and visitors for example, childcare providers in the local vicinity and the types of facilities that people expect to have in office from a personal perspective.



We collated this information by working with our people managers to understand exactly what our people wanted and needed. Overlaying those views with static employee data such as home and contractual locations, working patterns and tax and expenses implications allowed us to build a true picture of the issues which needed to be considered.

We also thought about it from a customer or visitor point of view and focused on what they would expect from our office locations and use of the spaces. What did we need to provide them with? Was it physical tools, access to drinks stations, collaboration spaces, meeting rooms or was it something else they were looking for?

From a technical perspective, we considered what technology would need to be implemented and how we could support the new ways of working for our people where we needed to combine both onsite and remote attendance for example, via digital whiteboards to video conferencing.

# Outcomes

As evidenced by our own internal example, we were able to take an agile and flexible approach to this data collection exercise to build business critical data sets which supplied detailed and relevant strategic insights about our people and their requirements.

We enabled our data and analytics skills to consider our estates strategy in the whole enabling informed, employee centric decisions to be made which could support Sopra Steria in the future.

We were able to clearly articulate the situation to management to test solutions and to refine and reiterate as needed to ensure success. The evidenced based, data driven insights allowed us to take an independent view, time for reflection and meant that the plan was truly strategic.





## Benefits

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**The approach taken by Sopra Steria, can be adopted by many other organisations to allow them to overcome their own challenges. From rationalisation and optimisation of their estate, improving supply chain performance or the strategic support and maintenance in the management of their own large or ageing estates.**

For example, we can work with you to provide data and insight that will allow a more efficient compliance regime through active tracking of key data. We are also able to help develop your strategy for future contracts with suppliers. In addition, we provide professional support from our key partners who run best in class Estate Management systems to deliver an accurate position on property compliance. This enables you to work collaboratively with your suppliers in delivering continuous improvement to drive compliance performance.

Our proven capability in large complex mobilisations and our strength in systems integration supports seamless supplier on-boarding and off-boarding integration of complex contracting arrangements. Our experience of working with partners to support large workflow capability allows greater “reach” into the operational delivery, data and insight capability to support customers and their suppliers in delivering a better service for their customers.

We provide best in class help desk, triage, back office and supplier/stakeholder systems integration to some of the most complex, secure and business critical services across private and public sector environments. In addition to this where organisations would like greater workflow and back office visibility, we can support deeper systems and operational integration that support strategic insight.

With some key changes to the way private and public sector organisations procure services, the road map to better customer - supplier integration and insight can be achieved allowing greater control of services with a strategic partner in Sopra Steria to provide seamless systems integration along with independent and detailed strategic insight.

***Our next blog in this series will cover customer insight and how you can gain the right insights from users of your estate.***







## More Information

Sopra Steria helps clients to optimise their physical estates through true digital transformation. We have over 35 years' experience in Estate Management digitalisation across the public and private sectors. Our proven approach to creating an Estate Management ecosystem helps clients to adopt new technologies and integrate existing processes and systems to streamline the complex and varied tasks involved in Estate Management, while maximising efficiency and sustainability.

For more information on the property services we provide to public and private sector organisations please email us at [EstateManagement@soprasteria.com](mailto:EstateManagement@soprasteria.com).

Or you can visit us at <https://www.soprasteria.co.uk/industries/digitalisation-transforming-estate-management>

We look forward to working with you.