

Northern Trust Workplace Experience Transformation

Optimizing hybrid work with a scalable, employee-centric platform



CASE STUDY

Northern Trust

EMPLOYEES SUPPORTED

25,000+ globally

LOCATIONS

27 sites using Modo
(of ~100 global locations)

CORPORATE REAL ESTATE

4M+ SF portfolio

DESK BOOKING FLEXIBILITY

~90% free address seating

Northern Trust, a global financial services leader headquartered in Chicago, manages trillions in assets and supports over 25,000 employees across multiple continents. Recognizing the need to elevate the partner experience and drive productivity, leadership saw a pivotal opportunity to modernize workplace technology platforms and reimagine how employees interact with their workspace.

The Challenge: Overcoming Outdated Systems, Frictioned Workflows

Since 2019, Northern Trust had embraced a free address seating model, but their existing on-premises platform was not keeping pace with the organization's evolving needs. Employees expected a multi-platform, consumer-grade user experience that supported a broader set of needs that extend far beyond booking a desk. Meanwhile, IT, HR, and operations teams faced a growing burden managing multiple systems across 100 global locations.

Free address working has enabled Northern Trust to accommodate a wide range of workstyles while significantly improving space efficiency. However, this flexible model introduces operational complexity that requires the right tools—such as workplace technologies, occupancy analytics, and adaptable workplace layouts—to support successful implementation. The organization needed a tool that could support a wide range of work styles—from partners who plan their schedules weeks ahead to those who make last-minute decisions. The goal was to ensure the tool felt intuitive and flexible, encouraging adoption without creating stress or resistance.

“We weighed usability, cost, data security, and ease of implementation—but the deciding factor was that Modo could go beyond just desk booking to deliver a broader workplace experience.”

Mitchell Bobman, Vice President Workplace Technology
Northern Trust

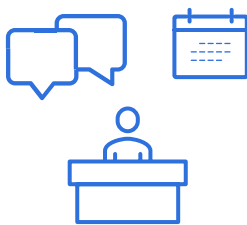
The Search for a Solution: Selecting a Scalable, Flexible Partner

Northern Trust evaluated a spectrum of solutions, from standalone desk booking tools to comprehensive workplace experience platforms. Selection criteria included **usability, cost, data security, ease of implementation**, and flexibility, with an emphasis on global relevance.

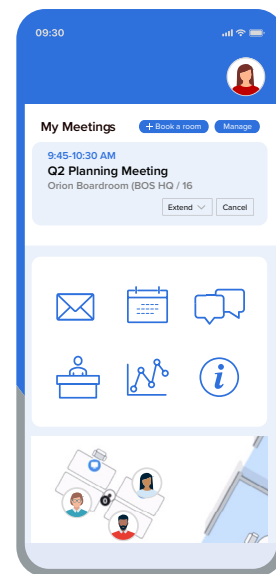
Modo emerged as **the ideal partner**. With live deployments in the financial sector, Modo’s proven security maturity and compliance experience gave Northern Trust added confidence—making the implementation process smoother compared to vendors without this background. Unlike rigid point solutions, Modo’s **mobile-first platform** accommodated diverse employee personas and supported iterative prototyping and edge cases, reassuring Northern Trust it could meet immediate operational needs and scale for broader workplace experience initiatives.



**Standalone Desk
Booking Tools**



**Partial Workplace
Platforms**



**Full Workplace Experience
Platform (Modo)**

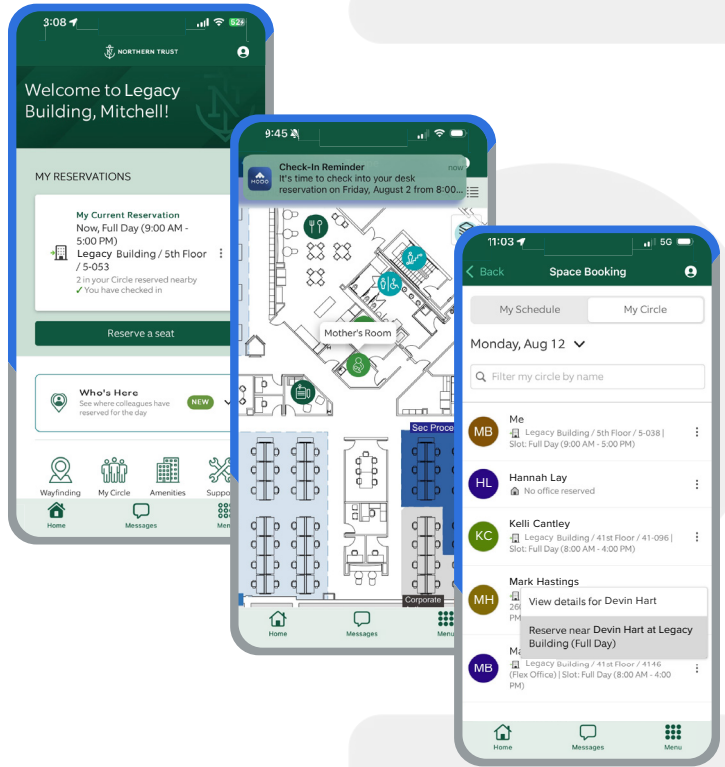
What truly differentiated Modo was the ongoing partnership and collaborative approach. Early **prototyping**, handling of **edge cases**, and iterative **co-creation** allowed Northern Trust to validate concepts quickly, adjust workflows, and ensure the platform evolved in lockstep with employee needs. This combination of operational reliability and strategic adaptability reassured leadership that the solution could not only address immediate desk booking requirements but also scale to support a broader, **long-term vision for workplace experience**.

Implementation: Rolling Out a Strategic, Employee-Centric Platform

Northern Trust's rollout with Modo went beyond software deployment—it was a strategic effort to reshape how employees interact with their workspace. The goal was not only efficient desk booking but a seamless, **globally relevant experience** that supports behavior change and long-term workplace evolution.

Key Components:

- **Desk and Space Booking:** Employees reserve desks via an interactive map and view colleague locations, with kiosks complementing mobile access for in-office use.
- **Localized and Global Experiences:** Role-based features ensure relevance across North America, APAC, and EMEA, accommodating diverse cultural and operational needs.
- **Admin and Communication Tools:** Location-based admin roles, templates, and messaging features streamline training, policy updates, and employee engagement.
- **Custom Auto Check-In:** Reservations linked to the badging system automatically check in employees, reducing manual administrative tasks.



To ease adoption, Northern Trust ran **pilot programs**, developed training materials, and executed a thoughtful communications campaign. This helped employees understand not just how to use the app, but why it mattered—shifting behaviors gradually and naturally.

Partnership in Action:

Early Modo prototypes and sandbox environments enabled hands-on testing and rapid validation of ideas—capabilities competitors struggled to provide. Ongoing co-creation allowed Northern Trust to adjust workflows, tailor features, and evolve the platform alongside employee needs, reinforcing Modo as a trusted partner for both immediate and long-term workplace experience goals.

“Right out of the gate, the Modo team whipped up a prototype—giving us something we could actually use to validate ideas and drum up interest—which made it really useful and valuable compared to other vendors.”

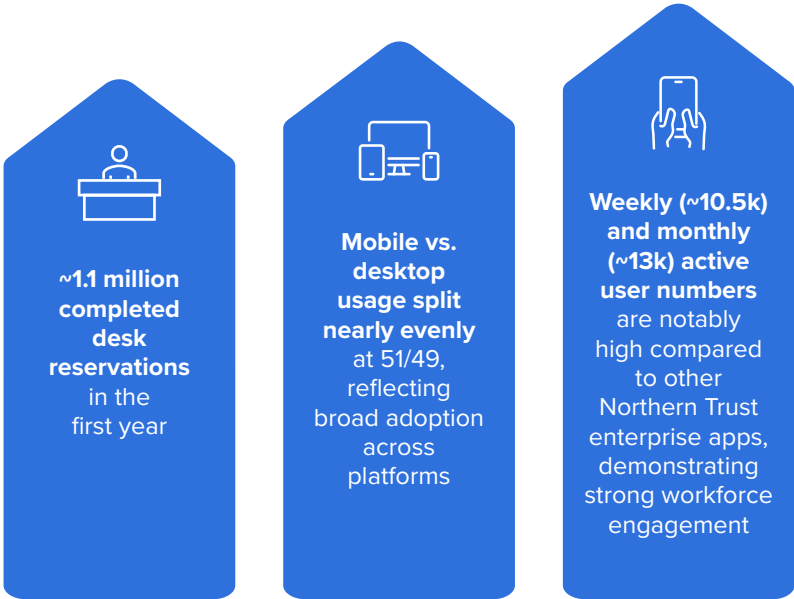
Mitchell Bobman
VP Workplace Technology
Northern Trust

Results: Improved Space Utilization, Operational Efficiencies and Engagement

Post-launch adoption **exceeded expectations**. Employees leveraged mobile booking for on-the-go planning—whether arranging spaces during commutes or making last-minute decisions—and engagement with reminders, notifications, and event updates highlighted the platform’s value as both **a productivity tool and a communication channel**. Peak usage aligned with pre-arrival and arrival times, reflecting practical, real-world adoption patterns.

Regional and device trends underscored the platform’s global impact: APAC offices led in Android adoption and mobile engagement; 24/7 support centers exhibited unique peak usage patterns; and EMEA/NA teams planned in-office schedules further in advance than those in APAC. Understanding these patterns enabled Northern Trust to **tailor communications, policies, and support** to meet diverse employee needs worldwide.

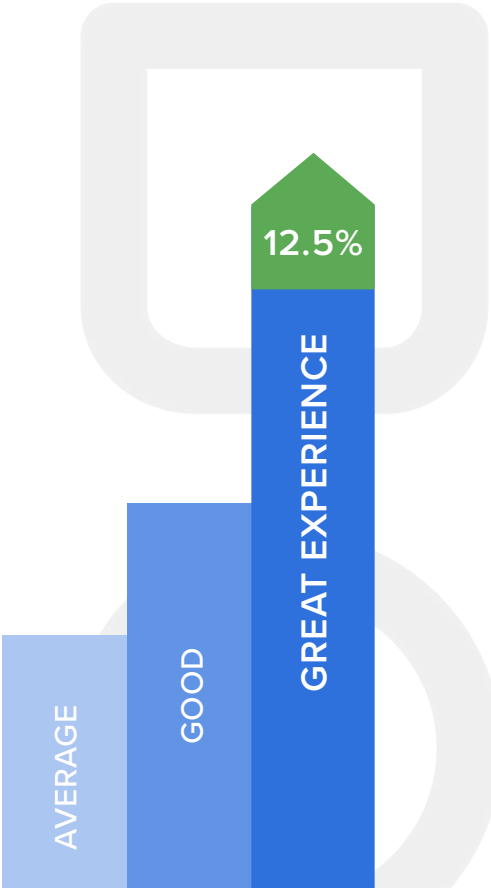
Quantitative adoption metrics:



These adoption trends reinforced the value of Modo as a globally relevant, flexible platform supporting diverse employee work styles while driving consistent engagement across all locations. Since launching in 2024, employee satisfaction ratings for the app have increased 12.5% for the ‘Great’ experience category, reflecting growing adoption and positive sentiment across the workforce.

“Modo lets us deliver a globally consistent yet locally tailored experience—employees in London and Chicago get the same reliable tools, but each sees the information and resources most relevant to their location.”

Mitchell Bobman
VP Workplace Technology
Northern Trust



Platform Impact: Measurable Outcomes and Workplace Value

Operational Outcomes:

- **Improved Space Utilization:** Real-time visibility into seating patterns enabled smarter space allocation and cost optimization.
- **Behavioral Change:** Thoughtful adoption strategies and social proof encouraged employees to embrace new behaviors with minimal resistance.
- **Time Savings & Efficiency:** Automated check-ins and integrated calendars reduced manual steps and cut desk no-shows by 50%.
- **Productivity Gains/ROI:** A mobile-first platform collectively saved ~2 minutes finding a desk and ~2 minutes locating colleagues per day.

Experiential Outcomes:

- **Enhanced Office Visibility:** My Circle™ insights provided transparency into who was coming into the office, improving coordination and planning.
- **Improved Wayfinding:** Interactive maps guided employees to reserved workstations and key office areas, making navigation effortless and intuitive.
- **Enhanced Resource Access:** Centralized information created a one-stop shop, transforming the office into a hub for work, connection, and value.
- **Engaged Workforce Communications:** Office news and event updates delivered via mobile increased awareness and participation in organizational updates.

Looking Ahead: A Single Pane of Glass, Better Workplace Experience

Northern Trust continues to leverage Modo as a **strategic platform** for workplace innovation, unifying workplace tools to simplify administration, enhance security, and provide faster, more effective support. By consolidating apps, the organization minimizes the number of tools partners need to access and monitor, while centralizing workflows like desk booking, office wayfinding, visitor registration, and communications.

This consolidation also enables richer data collection and clearer insights, supporting structured decision-making across **IT, HR, marketing, and operations**. By treating workplace technology as a strategic enabler rather than a tactical tool, Northern Trust is building a flexible, employee-centric environment that drives engagement, strengthens security, and positions the organization for sustainable hybrid work success for years to come.

**ROI figures are estimates based on internal calculations and certain assumptions. Actual results may vary due to market conditions, operational factors, and other variables. These figures are intended for illustrative purposes and should not be relied upon as precise forecasts.*

Request a Demo

1 Washington Mall, #1056, Boston, MA 02108 | 1-888-663-6522 (MODO LABS)



The platform delivers a

19.3x* return on investment

by reducing costs, saving backend time, and eliminating inefficiencies compared to legacy systems, while enhancing the overall employee experience.

modolabs.com