The return to the office will be a mess, but this brand-new software could help companies manage workers' unpredictable hybrid schedules.

Nick Iovacchini, cofounder and CEO of KettleSpace. Kettlespace

- **KettleSpace announced the release of new software to manage hybrid workforces.**
- **Workers can use KettleOS to reserve desks and to track their remote and in-person schedules.**
- **Companies can use the software to track and monitor office usage and their employees' experiences.**
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The return to the office is expected to be hybrid for most companies, with the exception of some banks and financial institutions. But what "hybrid" will look like in this brand-new world differs by company and industry.
A few companies, like Cambridge, Mass.-based marketing and software sales firm Hubspot, allowed workers to divide their time between home and the office before the pandemic. But for most, it's uncharted territory.

KettleSpace — a New York-based flexible office space provider that turns nighttime restaurants into daytime offices available to rent by remote workers, entrepreneurs, and freelancers — has developed a potential solution for companies figuring out how to manage a hybrid return to work. Today, KettleSpace unveiled software that will allow companies to manage their space and remote work protocols, while also generating data about worker habits that can be analyzed to adjust company policies over time.

KettleSpace had to shut down all of its locations at the start of the pandemic. CEO and cofounder Nick Iovacchini told Insider that the company developed the software, called KettleOS, after interviewing more than 1,000 executives about the return to work. The transition would be much more like an experiment, Iovacchini said, than a single, discrete event.

The transition would be much more like an experiment, Iovacchini said, than a single, discrete event. "We built this tool to help start the process of learning, taking in feedback and data over time, and then optimizing the right blend."

The software was first used by a major NYC university, which KettleSpace does not have permission to identify, in order to bring employers and students back to campus.

Workers can log into KettleOS to book desks — similar to making a restaurant reservation — and, eventually, nab spots in local coworking spaces or flexible offices. Employers, on the other hand, can use it to manage office permissions and schedules, communicate with employees about timeframes and protocols, and examine data on office usage. (Pricing will be determined based on the size of an organization and the depth of the features they require.)

"Other folks are looking at a slice of this," Iovacchini said. "But we're trying to step back and zoom out and look at the whole cycle."

A pandemic pivot

KettleSpace was founded in 2016 by Iovacchini, a restaurateur, and Dan Rosenzweig, a former WeWork real estate associate. The idea was to turn unused restaurants into coworking space while also avoiding the high cost of office leases by sharing revenue with the restaurant owners. The company has managed over 100 locations in the New York City area since its inception.
Dan Rosenzweig, co-founder of KettleSpace Kettlespace

One Friday in March 2020, the company closed all its workspaces due to the coronavirus. By Monday, they had released all of their restaurant office spaces and began to downsize their team. The company has yet to reopen its KettleSpace locations but plans to begin doing so in June.

With time to explore, the founders talked to a wide range of experts and developed a hypothesis about how office work would change after the pandemic.

"The age-old power dynamics between employer and employee have fundamentally changed. And in order to attract and retain top talent, employers will have to come to the table to reach a new equilibrium balancing time in-office and time off-site," Iovacchini said in a press release accompanying the KettleOS launch.

This led to the development of the app, which companies can customize with their own branding. The app should help companies manage the multi-step process of return, Iovacchini said. First, it will coordinate which employees work where, at what times, followed by engagement and employee culture initiatives that try to even the playing field between remote and in-person employees.

The next step, creating alternative workspaces for employees closer to their homes but not in them, could drive an upsurge of demand for the restaurants-turned-daytime offices of KettleSpace's original business model. The company will allow users to book time in any location and will make decisions about where to open new locations based on the demand they're seeing in the app.

Iovacchini walked Insider through a demo of KettleOS. Read more below.

**KettleSpace — which turns empty restaurants into daytime flexible office space for businesses and**
individuals — is now helping companies manage their employees' return to the physical workplace.

The software platform, KettleOS, will help companies keep track of where, when, and how their employees work.
The company is taking its expertise managing a flexible, changing portfolio of office space into the software realm. It conducted interviews with more than 1,000 business leaders to better understand the vagaries of the hybrid workplace.
Kettlespace believes that data recorded via the app about employee habits and preferences during the early days of the return to the physical office will help businesses adjust their operations accordingly down the line.
The KettleOS platform allows companies to separate their employees into teams, as well as set up specific procedures and schedules for each team.
Part of the app allows employees to log their time working from home, book space in a main office, or reserve a spot in other spaces which eventually will include Kettlespace's physical coworking locations.

Clients can use the data Kettlespace collects to continue to adjust their remote-work policies and offerings. They might choose to add or subtract workspace options depending on employee habits. They can also monitor employee satisfaction and see how it correlates with work locations and schedules.
KettleOS also offers a "portfolio view," allowing companies to easily compare space utilization across their different offices.

Manage your on-site and off-site workspaces with a single platform, creating a wealth of valuable utilization data.
Other platforms offer office-space reservations and employee experience monitoring, but Kettlespace's focus is on providing the sort of data that companies can marshal to inform strategic choices about office leasing and management.