Cool Tech for COVID-19 Compliant Workplaces

Compiled by [SpaceIQ](#)

COVID-19 is making the return to the workplace interesting, to say the least. Workplace managers not only need to structure seating and office movement for social distancing, but also face the daunting task of keeping desks, shared areas, rest rooms, and other common spaces clean.

There's a ton of tech already in use to limit surface contact—think auto-flush toilets and motion-sensor light switches. But there's some cool technology out there you may not know about!

Photo Credit: Andrey Sukhachev, Adobe Licensed Image

Germicidal Ultraviolet Light
Ultraviolet light as a germ killer is no secret to scientists. In 2018, [Columbia University](#) researchers reported the use of overhead [far UVC](#) light bulbs "can kill airborne flu viruses without harming human tissue." Can far UVC destroy COVID-19? With a pathogen kill rate of 99.9%, UV light is great for disinfecting surfaces—COVID can live on some surfaces for up to three days. Applications include: [far UVC bulbs](#), [UV sanitizer wands](#), and [phone/personal item cases](#).

Photo Credit: AuthorizeID

Proximity Alarms
Social distancing is hard enough in our personal lives…imagine trying to keep 60,000 workers safe. That's why one [busy Belgian port](#) is testing wristbands that warn wearers when they're too close to a

co-worker. [Ford Motor Company](#) factory workers are testing similar devices. Developers are working on ways to use the wristbands to trace contact points if someone tests positive for COVID-19. Devices will only communicate with each other and not show the location of individual workers.

Photo Credit: Nischaporn, Adobe Licensed Image

Auto Temperature Measurement

One of COVID-19's key symptoms is a low-grade fever. As workplaces prepare to reopen, employers want sick employees to stay home. That's why some companies are using [thermal cameras](#) to measure human body temperatures from a distance. A Chinese startup is creating [thermal glasses](#) that can measure body temperatures of up to 200 people in two minutes from as far away as nine feet. A less-costly solution many businesses are using is [non-contact thermal thermometers](#) that gauge temperatures in less than a second from a safe distance.

Photo Credit: BradleyC5922, Reddit

Foot-Flush Toilets

Auto-flush toilets and urinals are nothing new. Do your business, stand up, and voila! KERFLUSH!!!! But not all buildings are up with the times. Manual-flush toilets are the norm in many countries. The [toilet flush handle](#) can contain up to 83 bacteria per square inch. Foot-flush handles are more sanitary because they keep germs away from your hands.

Photo Credit: folienfeuer, Adobe Licensed Image

Voice Assistants

"Alexa…disinfect my desk and check for COVID-19 germs." OK, we're dreaming here, but the use of voice assistants like Amazon's Alexa, Apple's Siri, and Google Assistant are seen as key for limiting physical contact with surfaces. Using a smart socket, Alexa can turn lights off and on with a simple voice command. Most voice assistants can interface with TVs and smartphones. Siri may not scan for COVID, but she can keep you from touching that icky remote or light switch of a thousand fingers.

Photo Credit: Miaza Mirrors

Smart Mirrors

How well do you really wash your hands? About [40% of U.S. adults](#) say they don't wash after going to the bathroom and [only 5%](#) scrub the proper way to eliminate germs. An Indian company has developed a [smart mirror](#) that recognizes when a person approaches, then provides step-by-step visual instructions on how to properly wash their hands. At an average cost of $400 per mirror, it's a great way to educate and help keep people healthy.

Photo Credit: CLeanTech

Full-Body Sanitation Units

Key workers at the Hong Kong airport are trialling a [disinfection booth](#) that uses "nano needles" to kill bacteria and viruses on the human body in 40 seconds. The company that makes the pods claims the antimicrobial material on the interior surface will eradicate harmful contagions. An Indian company has created a [full-body unit](#) that senses when a person enters and sprays a disinfectant for 10-15 seconds. Cost? About $1,300 U.S. dollars.

Photo Credit: LightStrike

Autonomous Cleaning Robots

Got an extra $125,000 to spend? You can opt for a [LightStrike robot](#) that automatically bombards an area with UV light. In six months of use at the Mayo Clinic, the infection rate dropped 47%. A variety of such robots are used in hospitals, airport terminals, and other high-traffic, high-risk spaces. Work on models for consumers and small businesses is underway.