

## Customer Story

**UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL  
ENTERPRISE CENTRE**



Nine start-ups. Scarce meeting space. RoomWizard to the rescue.

**Steelcase**

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*“With our previous system, it was a hassle for employees of our nine start-up companies to reserve a room. They would grab an empty room when they needed it, not knowing that someone else had reserved it. There were occasions where we had to bump people out so the rightful users could start their meeting. This was most unsatisfactory, especially when either party had visitors with them—very unprofessional.”*

— Peter Maxwell, Incubation Support Manager,  
University of Bristol, United Kingdom



The University of Bristol is known worldwide for its excellence in research and innovation and is committed to developing a dynamic transfer of knowledge from the laboratory to the marketplace.

### Nine start-ups. Scarce meeting space. (Sounds like trouble.)

Bristol Enterprise Centre (BEC) is a business incubator established by the University of Bristol to encourage the establishment and growth of technology-based businesses.

BEC tenants represent a full range of hardware, software, medical and scientific companies. The key business issue for all of the start-ups is getting established and building a sustainable business. They need fertile ground to grow new ideas. This means access to physical facilities, telephone, data, furniture, meeting rooms, etc. BEC caters to these physical needs in addition to acting as a mentor on developing business plans, financial plans, and fulfilling employment needs.

BEC fosters a vibrant entrepreneurial culture. It is organized as office space, with future plans to add scientific labs and research centers. There are 14 office spaces occupied by nine start-up companies.



### The problem: Room reservation hassles

The room reservation system at BEC required people to call Lucy Bedford, the central receptionist, to find an open room. Lucy would consult a paper diary to find an appropriate room for their meeting.

Sounds simple, but they encountered problems:

- Lucy found that more and more of her time was spent booking meetings. Calls often turned into long, complicated discussions about the availability of a certain room.
- The paper diary would occasionally get misplaced, or people would borrow the diary to check colleagues' calendars. They wanted some control over room reservation. Too often they forgot to return the diary, and time was wasted trying to track it down.
- The reservation process became a hassle and resulted in some people disregarding the system all together.



*“People would book a meeting for a certain date, scribbling their name with arrows. It was often illegible, and sometimes just a first name. Later, they couldn't tell which rooms were booked or who had a certain room on the day they needed it. They would continuously ask me.”*

— Lucy Bedford, Receptionist

## Supporting innovation.

Bristol Enterprise Centre—a melting pot of scientific innovations—needed to change the way they managed their meeting rooms, which are shared by multiple start-up companies. RoomWizard had all the right answers—it was easy to use, displayed meeting information, and had a high tech look.



*"It's really smart and easy to use. I didn't even need to go through the online demo, because it is self-explanatory really. I'm not good at computers, and can often not get the fax to work, but RoomWizard is easy."*

- Lucy Bedford, Receptionist

There was a frequent problem with users grabbing a room on an impromptu basis, while the person who actually made the reservation would need to scramble for another available room. If no other rooms were available, the culprit would get bumped.

- Many tenants don't know each other by name, and Lucy Bedford was continuously interrupted by requests to find out who had a room reserved later that day.

**The answer: RoomWizard**

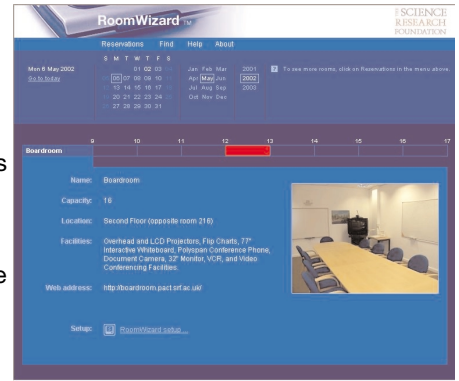
RoomWizard provided the solution BEC management was looking for. The start-up companies got used to the new system immediately. "I introduced RoomWizard to each company by email, and also face to face. There was no need to provide training," said Maxwell. "I simply directed them to the online demo\* of how to use RoomWizard."

Having a digital display right outside the room made everyone more aware of what was going on in the space. They now know when someone is scheduled to use the room next, so there are no more abrupt endings to their meetings—and fewer reasons to interrupt Lucy.

When it's necessary to grab a room for an impromptu meeting, they can tell which rooms are available by the red and green lights. The interactive display shows how long the room is available, and users can claim it for an uninterrupted impromptu meeting.

If one group finishes a meeting early, they free up the room for others to use.

RoomWizard generates reports that show 30% of all BEC meetings ended early since RoomWizard was installed, and resulted in over 78 hours of additional meeting time in their first four months of use. The rooms no longer sit empty. In fact, only 58% of all meetings actually ran for their originally scheduled amount of time.



**Users at BEC can reserve an appropriate room online from anywhere with access to the network. From each room's homepage, they can view a photo of the room, as well as the room's capacity and available equipment.**

**The reaction: Success**

BEC tenants say RoomWizard is easy to use and minimizes confusion. When multiple companies are sharing meeting rooms, displaying information about who has reserved a room results in better use of space and better meetings.

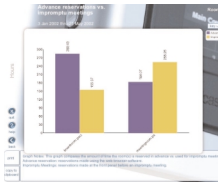
People rave about how RoomWizard gives them control over the reservation process. "One tenant was at a meeting in Los Angeles and booked a room here in Bristol for an upcoming meeting," says Peter. "He was astounded that he could book a room without assistance from overseas, regardless of the distance and time difference."

When Peter Maxwell leads tours of the BEC office space, he now has to allow an extra ten minutes because visitors want to see a demonstration of RoomWizard.

With RoomWizard, Bristol Enterprise Centre start-up companies avoid meeting room confusion, and instead can focus on getting their businesses off the ground.

**RoomWizard delivered:**

- better use of space
- better meetings
- more professional, efficient room management



**RoomWizard generates reports on actual room usage. BEC found that 53% of all their meetings are impromptu.**

