

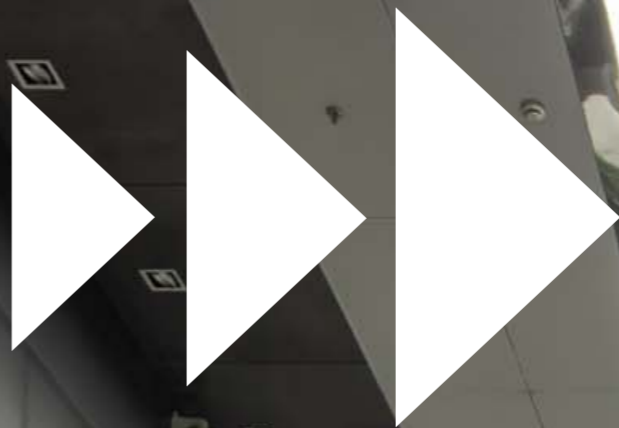
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“It is clear that Workplace Futures has cemented its place in the FM calendar as a touchstone for the views of the facilities services industry.”

“In many ways, convergence has already happened.”

Facilities Management is by its very nature a discipline focused on integration, convergence and collaboration. Our purpose is to join together the many strands of facilities activity that are required to support the organisations we serve and to contribute to their success. The earliest definitions of facilities management from over 30 years ago refer to the integration of people, place and technology, and every step along the evolution of modern FM has been about the progressive development and relationship of these elements with the workplace and the changing nature of work.

The difficult economic times we have seen in the last few years may have taken that progression off our radar for a while but things have not stood still. Facilities service providers increasingly offer real estate services; property companies are buying facilities service providers; technology has opened up whole new opportunities for FM information and service provision; and the importance of the people in our industry has never been greater: witness the BIFM collaboration with the CIPD and the growing pressure for every facilities organisation to pay the Living Wage or be left behind.

In many ways, convergence has already happened. But we need to debate as an industry what that means for us, for our clients and for our industry. The agenda at this year's Workplace Futures conference provided that

opportunity and was embraced by the attendees and by the many who participated in the parallel debate on Twitter. This year's conference was lauded by many as the best one yet and it is clear that Workplace Futures has cemented its place in the FM calendar as a touchstone for the views of the facilities services industry.

The keynote address by Paul Foster of Microsoft positioned the use of data as both a challenge and an opportunity. The danger of drowning in data is abundantly clear and the use of new technologies to identify and utilise the key data messages is the obvious way forward, but there are still too few best practice examples for others to follow. Delegates were quick to raise alarms over the possible loss of big-picture humanity that can follow too great a focus on detailed-picture data.

Technology is just one of the three components of our integrated workplace view. The second is, of course, people. In FM we deploy people to provide services to people, and our relationship with our fellow professionals in HR is key. An exhilarating presentation by Perry Timms provided the perfect balance to the idea of over-reliance on technology, although his advocacy of the 'curriculum of chaos' facilitated by social media neatly demonstrated how the one can enable the other.

Because of the vast numbers of people involved in facilities,

ensuring they always have the skills needed to carry out all of the services we provide to a variety of standards and service levels is challenging and the education and qualification frameworks can be confusing. Claire-Jayne Green from Servest Group emphasised the importance of management in the learning and development process arguing that active development builds loyalty and enables innovation.

Such a focus on the importance of people being supported by process lies at the heart of good relationship management, which was demonstrated in a case study presentation by VINCI Facilities and Lincoln County Council. Likening an FM outsourcing relationship to a marriage is not a new idea but the learning points are still highly valid. There is a lifecycle to be jointly addressed through courtship and engagement, through disputes to co-creation of value.

Speakers throughout the day returned to the idea that facilities management success is enabled by both people and technology with varying degrees of emphasis. The FM pillars of people, place and process requires the achievement of a sensible balance between the three for true success. Speakers from JLL, BAM and EMCOR added the place element to the debate with timely reminders about the cost, risk and impact involved in the operation of the built environment.

Tim Oldman from Leesman Index brought the whole picture together with a provocative set of high quality data that appeared to demonstrate the failure of the FM community to deliver workplaces

that are fully fit for purpose. If only 53% of workers believe that their workplace enables them to work productively there is a huge opportunity for improvement in the way such buildings are designed and operated.

The challenge was backed up by Debra Ward of Macro who criticised widespread levels of poor service that could be rectified by simple management actions - what Vicky O'Farrell of FMP 360 described as 'making performance management more strategic by aligning it with business imperatives'. That means listening to customers and team members in order to add culture and communication to that alignment activity, which was the strong message from Gary Kidd of ISS.

Such conclusions were also contained in the findings of some Mitie research shared by Ian Adams and the Workplace Management Framework developed by AWA. Their summary, that FM is becoming more strategic, is all about the people and depends on integration is hardly news, given the definitions commonly used since the 1980s - but this is perhaps a timely reminder that we must keep these things in balance and that service providers need to embrace such objectives in support of their clients, who have always had them.

Looking to the future, Mike Cant of Larch Consulting gave an inspirational talk predicting an increasingly integrated infrastructure model providing everything to the 'point of expertise'. This would go far beyond facilities, HR, IT, security and the built environment, providing a

fundamental realignment of blockers and interfaces facilitated by technology but led by behavioural management. He argued that this was the natural evolution of the DNA built into the FM paradigm.

Dave Wilson brought such visions back to earth with a stark reminder of the many historic but unresolved challenges the facilities sector still has to address. Issues of public image, blurred lines of representation and poor communication are still hampering our progress and contributing to the failure highlighted in the Leesman figures. This may seem at odds with the confidence and commercial optimism of the industry figures present but must be addressed if the vision depicted by Mike Cant is to be realised.

Once again I found myself leaving Workplace Futures inspired by the progress we continue to make but disappointed by the pace at which we make it.

Initiatives like the Workplace Conversation collaboration between BIFM and CIPD are very welcome and demonstrate what can be done when we put personal agendas aside and concentrate on maximising the contribution that well designed and managed facilities can bring to business, society and the economy.

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“Today’s FM organisations now have the keys to the metaphorical sweet-shop when it comes to technology.”

DOS, data and disillusionment

Technology hasn’t always played a prominent part in our evolving FM industry, with the most prevalent part of the technological boom happening in the last 30 years. Transforming the traditional FM operation with ‘baby steps’ initially, the implementation of technology was simply brought about by a need to swap manual methods for something faster, more elegant, more powerful and more cost-effective. As businesses grew, it became clear that increased scope equalled increased data, so many organisations made the transition from paper to computer with the implementation of the Excel spreadsheet, the floppy disk and other, now retro, data storage and manipulation solutions. At the time, this was a huge leap forward for FM organisations and it took many out of their comfort zone.

Flash forward to 2015 and, looking back on the previous 30 years, we now know this period to be just the start of the technological revolution that was to come.

Compared to the 1980s, when there was a relatively limited pool of adopters, creators and off-the-shelf options, today’s FM organisations now have the keys to the metaphorical sweet-shop when it comes to technology. A plethora of new sensor technology allows us to move away from people walking buildings and estates. Microsoft’s Energy-Smart Buildings system is an example of how the human can be removed from the mundane and applied to the ‘brain’ of operations.

Supplementing sensors, we are also better able to leverage information collected by social media, the mobile workforce and their smartphones and tablets, too.

Satisfying the appetite for more sophisticated solutions, today’s technology not only does the job, but it provides multiple layers of function that are designed to grow with the expanding scope of FM. There is increasing demand to remove expensive resources and eliminate business downtime, and the collateral cost impact that has, moving instead towards accurate real-time information and cost reduction, as well as meeting or exceeding customer expectations. As such, technology adoption and the data it generates are both on an exponential growth path inside the industry and more widely too. Technology is now a prominent component of a quality FM function.

This in itself presents another issue - what to do with ‘big data’?

Big data: also known as ‘the data deluge’

IT infrastructure is a bit like an engine in a car. You can have it on tick-over, or you can run it at different speeds. The more you stress it, the more often you have to carry out maintenance and replace parts, raising potential cost and cutting short its chronological life. The more you stress it, the more fuel and oil it uses, too. It’s complicated to operate, difficult to plan for financially and is often an inhibitor when you have large peaks of work to do despite its operating flat out. It

is with that basic premise in mind that many organisation now look to alternative ways for accessing IT muscle. Why do they need all this muscle? Invariably, the reason that they have so much to process is that they are buying more and more tactical applications that all generate data. So much data in fact that it is beginning to become difficult to handle and organise. The challenge comes with the exponential issues referred to above; they simply can’t catch up or keep up no matter how good an engine they have.

This brings us to the Cloud. It is well known but not well understood. So what is it? In short, it’s virtual computing space. It’s an answer to this type of issue and helps with the data deluge we are discussing here.

The Cloud provides readily available access to millions of applications that are optimised for this type of operation, but more importantly it also provides better options for data processing and storage too. If you’re looking for the most cost-effective solution these days, the Cloud is the way to go. Opening up a whole host of options and opportunities, the immense capabilities of the Cloud mean that FM service providers can use the technology as a turn-key solution. In just a few minutes an organisation can sweat the processing power of 400 servers sitting in the Cloud and simply PAYG for just a few minutes of computing muscle. Azure is a perfect example of this cloud flexibility. (<http://azure.microsoft.com/en-gb/>). Accessing flexible, powerful technology on demand, without the

“FM service providers have adopted and will continue to adopt increasingly complex technologies as their enterprises demand greater agility.”

management information to benefit the decision-making process? Many FM providers have a mammoth task to not only stay competitive, but to get up to speed technologically. A few are already stable and in control of this. Those who aren't there yet need to engage - and quickly. They need to understand both how and why an organisation needs the value added contribution that FM technology makes to the bottom line. In an industry with no room for error, zero tolerance for unnecessary expense and a continual drive for efficiency and controls, the name of the game for some is continuous improvement, and for others it's about survival.

It's about action, not just collection

When it comes to analysing data and then utilising that intelligence to improve a service or customer experience, Facebook, Google, Microsoft and Apple are the masters. Collecting and reacting to the responses that you make to adverts, offers and specific pages enables them to subtly transform your online and assistant experience. Through personalising the information that is presented to you, as a customer you begin to only be exposed to the things that you are interested in and that will resonate with you, keeping you actively engaged for longer. This example of exquisite data analysis and utilisation ultimately makes you happy ... and loyal. FM technology can do that, too. The methods are exactly the same.

These simple principles apply:

- Enter the destination of your journey, or at least as far ahead as you think you can plan. You start with what you want to achieve: i.e. the goal. You dial that in to all you're thinking. You now have a 'why'.

need to buy any additional equipment in, the benefits and cost savings are easy to imagine and easy to source.

Some FM providers are already on this technology journey. From physical, to virtual, to Cloud - FM service providers have adopted and will continue to adopt increasingly complex technologies as their enterprises demand greater agility, sometimes irrespective of whether or not a switch up in technology is actually needed.

With the rapid growth in unstructured data volumes, the issues surrounding effective data analysis become a strategic issue. How do you effectively sieve through the noise to capture the information that is important to you? How do you contextualise that data alongside other internal or external

- Break this journey into legs or segments. Make sure you can get to the next stopping point. Don't try and do everything at once at 100 mph. Plan your journey and drive safely. Decide when it's suitable to make a stop and check things, like your map.

- Make sure you are fuelled properly for the first leg or two of your trip. You look at the map / sources of data (often coming from applications you have or expect to buy) and understand what will emanate from these sources. Check you have what you need for the journey.

Keep checking your progress against the journey you set out on. Check your map at obvious junctions and make sure you haven't entered a cul-de-sac or missed the turn you wanted.

Simple stuff, really. Apply some fundamental logic and run this aspect of your business in the same way you would drive to another city. One mile at a time, in sequence and at a sensible pace.

Doing this will allow you to achieve and do more with your data and offer smarter, more respectful delivery of your FM services to your clients - be they your colleagues, your client's employee or the public.

Don't wait and get left behind. Catch up, keep up and if you can, get ahead.

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Larch Consulting was founded 20 years ago, when the FM market was still in its infancy. Since then we've seen the sector emerge and mature - providers come and go, fireworks and failures, boom and bust. We've seen what has worked well - and drawn together the good ideas. And we've seen what hasn't worked so well - so can help you avoid the pitfalls.

We understand that good FM is not about the over-complicated but the elegantly simple. Our clients value us for our independent, objective wisdom. **Our 20:20 vision** is about looking forward, looking wider, looking out for the new ideas and the best approaches. But most of all, we look forward to working with all of our clients, colleagues and friends in the industry for the next 20 years.

Lucy, Mike & Chris



20 years of insight
1 clear vision
...we call it





“The social isn’t just a fad in technology, social is our future.”

“Planning for, and importantly, creating the future is the responsibility of all of us and not just the academics, strategists, politicians and financiers.”

Lower than ever youth employment figures, challenges in education standards relative to the needs of a more changeable and volatile working environment and digital technology fuelled change add up to a storm of change that we absolutely need to be enlightened about.

Please allow me to get this out of the way first. Many people will roll their eyes at the ‘change like we’ve never experienced before’ expositions we hear so much of. We are, though, moving from early 20th century post-industrial work to 21st century digital evolution. And that’s never been seen before. So I really don’t buy into the ‘exaggerationalists’ argument. As author/researcher Frederic Laloux says: “There’s something in the air.” Much of that ‘something’ is about the human spirit and meaning derived from work. Laloux uses the word ‘soulful’. That word sums it up for me. So I say it again: do we

need more talks, books and articles on the future of work?

Well, yes, is my argument and I’m personally not going quiet on it. I feel the only way we’ll get the right things happening is if planning for, and importantly, creating the future is the responsibility of all of us and not just the academics, strategists, politicians and financiers.

In my working life I’ve found myself in the Human Resources profession. I don’t particularly like the term but I’m not certain that expert medical professionals like General Practitioner either - but it’s a term we’ve all become so used to it will be difficult to unstick it. So I’m HR, unashamedly so, and my mission in work is to make sure human resourcefulness is energetic, effective and most of all fulfilling. What I’m called doesn’t matter, it’s what I say and do that counts. HR’s not something you do; it’s something you are.

So the complicated area of the future, then? How do we create it?

I’m going to be brief about it because the answers are out there in all sorts of areas and there’s no simple definition. This applies to FM, HR and all people with an interest in their work

1. You have to want better for yourself and the future of you. Be active about it and don’t just do a job; create a purpose for you and live it.

2. Be curious about the future. Not just those published articles but the patterns you create in your thinking about the various changes you’re experiencing. Being tuned in is more important now than ever, with such a lot of information out there to sift through and consume.

3. Be creative and do stuff. Allow yourself to experiment with new life and work routines and tools. Let your ideas flow and be someone in a state of excitement and energy about even minor changes like a new app, a new book to read, should you buy a new sofa or find a local craftsman to make your existing one better. The future doesn’t mean disposing of the past - maybe repurposing the present?

4. Share with others. Even conversations and shared articles on social networks can help others do 1, 2 and 3 in this list, especially at work. Our social bonds are more important and we’ve lost that through post-manufacturing peak industrialisation. Now, we’re aiming to get that back.

The social (as in ‘social media’) isn’t just a fad in technology, it’s how we evolved from disparate bands of upright thinking beings. Social is our future.

4 A marriage made to last

Tony Raikes,
Managing Director, VINCI Facilities

“Of course, as in any marriage, to work properly it means nothing can be taken for granted.”

‘Convergence’ could be the title for the latest fast-moving science fiction action film starring Leonardo Di Caprio. The concept for the film might be the hard-working HR director of a county council being sucked into the industrial espionage world of global IT conglomerates struggling for world domination.

People want convergence to be far fuller of meaning than it really is. It can be a sexy business term; but the reality is rarely that exciting. Within facilities management convergence is not just about service disciplines working together to add more strategic value to the property portfolios of major organisations. It is not about big data, HR, technology or customer service. In reality, it is about the arranged marriage of different partners brought together to manage and maintain property and workplace. The goal for this marriage, and of convergence, is to enhance the working environment for the people physically using the capital assets, whilst optimising the cost benefits.

“Within facilities management convergence is about different partners brought together to manage and maintain property and workplace.”

Guidance

But, making that marriage work requires a balance of different skills and talents that will be far more of a test for the different players involved than any Di Caprio blockbuster. It is all about marriage guidance – right from the very outset, not halfway through a relationship. So, the new partnership between VINCI Facilities and Lincolnshire County Council is a perfect example of how convergence works in the real world – particularly the aim of placing the emphasis on people, positioning them at the heart of the solution.

In effect, the news at the end of 2014 that VINCI and Lincolnshire were working together via a joint venture with Mouchel was like the marriage banns being announced to the FM world. The lack of competitive dialogue in the marketplace had advantages and disadvantages; one big advantage was that VINCI could load its bidding team with operational staff to make sure the solution it proposed was practical, feasible and deliverable, and not just sales talk.

One disadvantage was that an arranged marriage was created without any courtship. But like in any marriage, the next step was to establish some ground rules. What was required was some form of pre-nuptial agreement – as a marriage of this scale means that everyone involved has, potentially, a

lot to lose and, whilst it might not be romantic and idealistic, having an agreed framework provides a solid platform from which a relationship can grow, strengthen and flourish in the longer run.

First off, VINCI needed to establish the key contract drivers for Lincolnshire: a safe, efficient and sustainable solution that allowed a great deal of flexibility. Once that was confirmed, its team also had to juggle the different requirements of the council’s stakeholders – councillors, heads of department, schools, council employees, the public and users of the council’s services. VINCI knew what Lincolnshire needed, but it also knew how it wanted to see things done. This openness and honesty is critical when you are embarking on a relationship that to succeed requires everyone involved sharing the same values and culture.

Lincolnshire CC was seeking to converge its property and FM requirements, and it needed partners that bought into the approach from the outset. Mouchel and VINCI had a record of working together, similar cultures and, what’s more, the nature of the contract reflected their combined skill sets perfectly. What Lincolnshire wanted was a cultural change in the contracting relationship and the move towards a VINCI Mouchel joint venture would trigger this and allow for a strong relationship between the client, supplier and end user.

Communication

This open exchange of ideas, the confirmation of a shared view, a shared culture and values together allowed all three parties to effectively unpack the initial pre-nuptial discussions and closely examine what was going to work for everyone involved. This was critical because in the first year of almost every facilities management contract the service provider does not make the return they planned for and the client does not always receive the package it had in mind. This is because they embark upon a contract assuming each has understood the terms agreed – when in fact, they probably have not and spend at least the first twelve months learning from each other and re-establishing ground rules they should have been working to from the outset.

The marriage and convergence discussions shared between VINCI, Mouchel and Lincolnshire at the mobilisation stage provided a kind of insurance that the first year's activity would be exactly what everyone signed up to. It allowed a solid and confident foundation to be shaped and agreed. Hence, the convergence, or marriage, is underpinned by a strong one-team principle: The Lincs CC Property Team, Mouchel and VINCI. More than that, the principle is confirmed via the NEC 3 form of contract that helps to embrace the principle of collaboration and reinforce the one-team approach.

How do you turn what looks great on paper into a true one-team

workplace delivery model? One word: continuity. Everyone involved in all aspects of the contract has helped drive the convergence of property and FM, and that in turn helped create the opportunity for efficiencies. The operations team involved on the bid are now wholly involved with the mobilisations phase. To keep everything on track, the team has set up a joint steering group to make certain everyone is crystal clear about their respective deliverables and to establish a collaborative environment from the start. The joint steering group also worked together to develop the shared vision, mission and objectives. Having these agreed, understood and shared at an early stage is a key success factor in achieving a fruitful marriage.

Solution

Because the marriage has been negotiated and discussed and everyone knows what each party wants, it might seem far from a romantic ideal - but it is a very workable, robust business concept. Then there is the attention to detail. Lincolnshire and VINCI Mouchel have set up service stream workshops to unpack the tendered solution to ensure that all of the key stakeholders understand the solution. Most importantly, the one-team approach has been backed up with everyone working at a single location. Knowing everyone is available means the collaborative spirit running through the project is almost guaranteed and there is constant two-way dialogue to bring ideas and solutions to life.

Of course, as in any marriage, to work properly it means nothing can be taken for granted. There are too many examples of suppliers and clients falling out of love with each other because of a lack of communication, or due to jobs being done in a mechanical tick-box manner with no desire to go the extra mile in the name of good service and furthering relationships. The key is to establish the objectives and agree the manner in which the contract will be managed. For VINCI that means using the V-Most framework whereby we work with our partners and clients to establish shared goals. This helps develop the common understanding we established at the beginning of our relationship; it means we always have a reference point to return to – it means we have no excuse for taking each other for granted.

It also means agreeing a shared vision. So, we might not be embarking upon a romantic adventure in the style of Leonardo di Caprio - but unlike one of his most famous blockbusters, because our FM relationships have clear and agreed expectations, our marriage will not go down like the Titanic.



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5 Convergence is coming to the FM sector

Kath Fontana,
Managing Director, BAM FM

“There are plenty of opportunities for FMs to raise their profile and be treated like the professionals they are.”

Construction companies are doing more facilities management. There is an ongoing shift from traditional outsourced stand-alone FM providers and towards businesses like BAM's that harness the potential of integrated FM. This convergence model offers services over a building's whole lifecycle from conception to decommissioning. Integrating FM expertise is delivering better margins and a potential for longer profit cycles from what we build.

This theme emerged when I spoke at the Workplace Futures Conference for the FM industry. It will require FM providers to think carefully about their business models. It has several implications.

Construction companies, and importantly clients, increasingly understand the value of involving facilities managers earlier in the project, and even throughout it, to create more efficient buildings. So FMs will no longer be required to turn up at the end and do what they can with incomplete O&M manuals, desperately trying to run a building that was not designed with facilities management in mind. Instead, facilities managers will be involved horizontally, across the building lifecycle, much like a surveyor or a sustainability advisor might be.

We're already beginning to see design and construction contracts that are building in maintenance for

an initial two or three years. And the new Digital Built Britain (<http://digital-built-britain.com/>) strategy clearly states the intent to align commercial and operational models for design, construction and FM.

Enabling this move into a cross-disciplinary model for facilities managers is our use of BIM. BIM has brought facilities management design decisions to the fore and made clients think about how they want their building to work (not just how it looks and how people will move through it) at the design stage. It's making construction teams consider services in more detail – not just that a specific room needs three sockets, but exactly how they need to build the concrete frame so that the sockets can come out at the right point for the kitchen's kettle or the CEO's phone. I'm not saying this doesn't happen already, merely that BIM is enabling these details to be considered and discussed earlier and more meaningfully.

BIM is also allowing us to gather more data about the buildings. That leads to another benefit: transparency. Capturing more data – and more usable data - about the building informs future FM strategies, ultimately making the building better. It becomes more efficient to run and requires engineers spending less time on-site fixing things.

BIM is allowing clients to understand what facilities management actually is. Everything will be increasingly recorded, and abnormalities in service flagged up – and that means we need to ensure our focus is squarely on service and delivery. You can panic about this and see it as a bit too 'Big Brother' but the transparency this data brings is a significant opportunity. If we're all working from the same Building Information Model with integrated FM data, then there will be much less opportunity to differentiate through cost. So FMs will need to do even more to add value and innovate. That's why the new role of FMs throughout the project lifecycle makes sense. We can add value earlier. We can innovate earlier. And we can do that by moving our profession from a separate 'industry' to an integrated discipline.

Is it the beginning of the end for the FM industry? Perhaps in its traditional silo models. But if so, there are plenty of opportunities for FMs to raise their profile and be treated like the professionals they are at all stages of a building's lifecycle. We just need to decide if we're going adapt and thrive.

A no-brainer really.

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“There will be one trillion rows of data expected to be produced daily by 2035, compared to one billion in 2010 – this is a thousand times greater. How do building managers make the most of more data rather than risk being swamped by it?”

With increasing recognition that “more” doesn’t always equal “better” in this era of ‘Big Data’, multiple data sets that should enable an improved grasp of the facts and, therefore, more accountability can often lead to the exact opposite. EMCOR UK brings customers, and the supply chain, an objective view on source systems. This independence means that we can identify the most appropriate solution from amongst many that, if implemented separately, can sometimes conflict.

There is a rapid evolution in progress amongst building managers regarding the management of modern workplaces, as organisations strive for continuous improvement in performance and efficiency. This process is being driven by a powerful combination of influences, including a desire to drive down building operation and management costs and a need to comply with an expansive and stringent regulatory framework. One result of this is that the distinctions between different aspects of building management such as security, facilities, and IT are becoming increasingly blurred in modern workplace buildings. In tandem, there has been a drive to generate more data, especially as assets become increasingly interconnected. However, there is a large risk that more data does not necessarily lead to better decision making. Indeed, this risk increases as the amount of data that is being produced grows exponentially. To put this into context, it is extraordinary to note that there will be one trillion rows of data expected

to be produced daily by 2035, compared to one billion in 2010 – this is a thousand times greater. How do building managers make the most of more data rather than risk being swamped by it?

When it comes to building management, facilities management operators such as EMCOR UK, are often at the heart of the data supply chain process. This gives us a first-hand understanding of the type and amounts of data being generated. For example, the data process will be notified as soon as an employee enters the building, with their chip card telling us that they have arrived on site. In addition, integrated facilities management will normally be monitoring the various physical functions of the building. This might include systems providing notifications that it is running low on water, or requires cleaning. But it also encompasses all the services required and expected of a modern working environment, including cloud-based data systems, fixed and wireless networks, and application interfaces that are customised to meet the needs of specific customers. All of this functionality has the potential to generate a lot of data, but its value is minimal if it cannot be rationalised and used to better inform a practical facilities management strategy.

A recent report by the International Data Corporation (IDC) estimates that by 2025, 40 per cent of the digital universe will be generated by machine data and devices. At the same time, the report indicates that less than one per cent of data being

“Multiple data sets that should enable an improved grasp of the facts and, therefore, more accountability can often lead to the exact opposite.”

collected is actually useful or being analysed by organisations. This is the reality of living in an era of ‘Big Data’, where data sets are becoming so large or complex that they are difficult to process using traditional data processing techniques. Therefore, a key challenge for facilities management operators, like EMCOR UK, is to make our customers’ lives easier by adapting the way we analyse and interpret data in order to identify the data that is most valuable to them.

EMCOR UK focuses on finding practical and bespoke solutions to data management issues for building management. Experience has taught us that, where possible, the key to getting immediate benefits is to design a process that ensures all relevant data is collected into one central point. In this way we can analyse accurately how the performance of one building management function impacts on the delivery of another – either directly or indirectly. In doing so, we can set efficiency goals and strategies that have a greater chance of being delivered, simply because they are properly integrated.

EMCOR UK advocates a simple approach to the provision of data by recognising that customers and supply chain partners increasingly want to work with a common set of data. This facilitates more accountability, greater collaboration, and quicker shared learnings – a combination that should lead to finding better solutions, faster.

In addition, a key value that EMCOR UK brings to customers and the supply chain is that we have an objective view on source systems. This independence means that we can identify the most appropriate solution from amongst the many on offer that, if implemented separately, can sometimes conflict.

To conclude, there is an increasing recognition that “more” does not always amount to “better” in this era of ‘Big Data’. Multiple data sets that should enable an improved grasp of the facts and, therefore, more accountability can often lead to the exact opposite. The key is to keep your eyes focused on what really matters and to ensure that important data information is protected and not missed.

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“Property has for far too long been measured in overly simplified terms.”

The sooner we face the stark reality the better - for a great number of employees, the workplace provided by their employer is hampering their personal productivity. This failure is not isolated but of pandemic proportions. Workplaces in the public and private sector are failing to fulfill their basic operational requirements.

Like for like?

The British Broadcasting Corporation was in the cross-hairs of the UK's National Audit Office (NAO) in February for its apparent poor use of public funds. The NAO holds UK government departments and public bodies to account for the way they use public money, so 'safeguarding the interests of taxpayers' with a remit to 'help public service managers improve performance and service delivery'. The NAO was dissatisfied that New Broadcasting House, the BBC's new London headquarters, has running costs 'three times higher than comparable buildings' and 'almost double that of similar central London properties', sucking a third of the corporation's annual UK property bill, but accommodating only a fifth of its staff.

The BBC's riposte was that New Broadcasting House 'makes around half of all BBC output, houses the biggest newsroom in Europe and broadcasts globally 24 hours a day ... requiring unique levels of technology and security'.

The detailed defence is impressive. Six thousand employees in 93,000 sqm working there night and day, producing radio and TV broadcasts and online services. The newsroom creates news content that is accessed by 300 million people worldwide every week; 82% of UK adults every week access BBC News, across radio, TV and online; around 25 million UK browsers use the BBC News website each week; 12 million people follow @BBC Breaking on Twitter; 32 million UK adults watch BBC News every week; and over a quarter of a billion people access weekly the BBC's Global News services.

I wonder, then, which Central London buildings do the NAO consider similar or comparable in operational requirements? And which benchmark are they using for their comparison? The other London-based broadcasters would, I'm sure, schedule far more differences to New Broadcasting House than similarities.

So perhaps the NAO is looking at New Broadcasting House simply as a 'corporate centre' or HQ? Worth noting then perhaps that Westminster City Council struggled to classify the extensive redevelopment project within their traditional planning categories (retail, office, commercial etc), choosing instead the generic term 'sui generis' - a Latin phrase meaning of its own kind and 'unique in its characteristics'.

“That’s just 54% of employees who agree that the design of their workplace enables them to work productively.”

The NAO acts independently of government, but reports to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), chaired by Labour Member of Parliament Margaret Hodge. Her view? That the BBC’s costs were ‘ridiculously high’ and in matronly, finger-wagging manner, she called on the corporation ‘to explain itself’.

In 2010 the NAO got the same treatment from Hodge when it spent more than £60m on refurbishment works to its Grade II listed art deco offices in central London: “I’m taken aback,” she said then. “We have to look at the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisations that are responsible for scrutinising other bodies.”

But the PAC is hardly bullet-proof. Portcullis House, the building in which the committee sits, completed in 1992, was to have cost taxpayers £165m. But after building cost inflation and delays, the price escalated by a staggering 42% to £235m. An inquiry into their breath-taking over-spend was completed in 2000 but the report was never published. Funny, that.

Hodge’s ‘efficiency and effectiveness’ comments in 2010 do chime well, though, with the ‘functionality and effectiveness’ requirements now built into the government’s Soft Landings framework. So why have the PAC or NAO not moved from a one-dimensional cost per square metre assessment approach and applied this multi-dimensional functional performance measurement thinking to the public sector properties in their sights?

Property has for far too long been measured in overly simplified terms: what it costs to build, what it costs to fit-out, what it costs to run, what it later costs to refurbish. Oh, and what the investors who own the building are earning along the way. But we think we’ve proven it’s time for a new dimension to be measured, understood and analysed - what a workplace contributes. The days of property and workplace as the risk-laden liability, depleting profits like some sort of built-environment black hole are far from over; but we do genuinely see a new breed of workplace advisors who are talking about how the workplace can be a tool in competitive advantage.

High flyers

The champions for this new thinking are management consultants – those from disciplines who give little for what a space looks like and who are considerably more interested in what it can do to leverage the competitive position of their client. These consultants are flying at an advisory altitude that few if any can comprehend amongst those presently advising on design, FM or even real estate management – whatever some of them might like to think.

To put this in context, you have to understand that these consultants are advising on technology strategies, tax mitigation strategies, resource strategies, procurement strategies, as well as workplace strategies. They have coloured belts and hats. They are probably already the client’s retained auditor and have swarms of junior consultants imbedded within the fabric of the client body. They use

phrases like ‘human capital optimisation’. Some of them will even advise the remuneration committees at the highest executive levels. When these advisors engage in debate with a client that shows how workplace can become a key component in operational effectiveness, the exec boards listen.

The BBC’s operational requirements, against which its operational effectiveness should surely be measured, are well defined. A Royal Charter sets out six ‘public purposes’. They frame ‘its mission to inform, educate and entertain’. Should the NAO not then be judging the effectiveness of New Broadcasting House to support employees in that mission, not simply on whether its space costs more or less than its corporate neighbours?

In the time since Hodge called for a ‘focus on efficiency and effectiveness’, Leesman has grown to offer the world’s largest independent insight database on the efficiency and effectiveness of corporate and public sector workplaces. Our data covers offices in 47 countries with insights from 87,000+ employees. Their average productivity agreement sits at 54%. That’s just 54% of employees who agree that the design of their workplace enables them to work productively. This position is neither effective nor sustainable.

In the worst cases, these spaces are not fit for purpose – if a car you owned failed to complete 46% of its journeys, you would trade it in. Yet 46% of employees cannot agree that their workplace

supports their workplace journey. Worrying. Offices clearly have a series of basic functional requirements. Some, like the BBC’s, are hugely more complex. But the primary requirement is surely to allow occupants to work productively? Fail in this basic objective and the workplace is neither fit for purpose, nor operationally effective.

In the UK the government seems shy to address this paradox - that effectiveness goes way beyond the workplace cost or its utilisation. So in April this year we are going to make it even simpler for Ministers and building management professionals to understand with the launch of a new report and recognition system we are calling Leesman+.

Leesman+ is simple: accept that the purpose of a workplace is to support employee productivity and so support organisational performance. Measure effectiveness in operation (operational effectiveness) and you are measuring the workplace fitness for purpose. By identifying a threshold on our linear measurement scale beyond which we establish ‘high performance’, we aim to provide a focus point that building management professionals can aim for.

In the private sector that is a point that says this workplace proactively supports employees and is an asset in competitive advantage. In the public sector, that point could mean workplaces that actively ‘improve performance and service delivery’, meaning first-class broadcast media for wider audiences. Or perhaps in central

government buildings, better government policies, made and implemented faster? Something taxpayers should rightfully expect government departments and public bodies to be safeguarding? We think so.

“Effectiveness goes way beyond the workplace cost or its utilisation.”



“We have needed to rethink our contract performance and move the focus to a strategic level to demonstrate the value of FM for some time now.”

Performance measurement in FM is and has been stuck in time, for far too long.

The fundamental performance management of FM services has relied far too heavily on SLAs and KPIs, since the early days of FM which is around 30 years ago. It's time for a more fully rounded appraisal system of what makes truly effective FM. It's time to go from a two-dimensional model to a three-dimensional one - or the equivalent of going from analogue to digital.

What business processes still exist in the same format three decades on from when they were first implemented? Very few indeed! Moreover, very few FM requirements stay static - even over the duration of a contract, unless it's a one-year term which is a rare thing these days. With the typical term being 3 or 5 years, or even longer, clearly there's a premium on flexibility and responsiveness.

SLAs and KPIs should evolve and change as the requirements do, and if they don't then one really needs to start asking the question why not. One fact that the past decade has reminded us of in no uncertain terms is the need for business strategy to flex and change. Thus it is critical that the service delivery reflects organisational and, in turn, FM priorities. It is also critical to remember that the K in KPI stands for 'key': the performance being monitored should reflect the top priorities, perhaps up to a dozen and certainly not a seemingly endless checklist.

Getting to true teamwork

Of course, there are good examples of where SLAs and KPIs have been used effectively. But in the cases where they have led to a tick-box approach the focus is generally on tasks and process rather than alignment to business imperatives. In most cases, this leads to neither client nor contractor satisfaction. Both parties can feel that the contract is not working as successfully as it could. Whilst a service provider could be scoring 99% on its KPIs, the client may still not be content with the service provision - I'm sure that this will resonate with stakeholders on both sides of the fence.

I'm not suggesting that there is not a role for KPIs and SLAs; only that there is a need to change our level of support for and reliance upon them. We need to implement other methods that are more rounded in identifying both the successes and weaknesses of the FM service delivery being provided.

There are of course many tools out there to capture data and report on it in order to measure performance in FM. But we are really looking at what most businesses define as their most important assets - their people. There aren't good pro-active tools that monitor people's fail rates as there are in terms of, say, machinery - so we need to apply a different style of monitoring and measurement, one that ensures the focus of the client and the delivery team come together to support a true one-team approach, working together towards the same objectives.

“Clients have a profound ability to make or mar the service delivery or contract performance through their attitudes and behaviours.”

Service delivery teams working in any of the FM business models (TFM, best in class, bundled, in-house etc) need to be open with the client and flexible enough to change priorities if the business strategy has to change with either internal or external pressures. Honesty over any constraints within their own business or team which could create barriers to this alignment will enable positive discussions and creative solutions which work for all - and especially the organisation that is served. Regular measurement keeps the direction clear.

So what happens if we continue the way we are? Too many clients will remain dissatisfied with their service delivery. Ultimately, they will seek to find new service providers – typically ones that will deliver cheaper, but perhaps no better, as we aren't clearly articulating and measuring the right attributes. They are equally unlikely to be able to report clearly to other stakeholders in the business on all the benefits and value that FM is providing the organisation. Clients will continually re-tender contracts, or look to another provider that delivers its services through a different model. There are plenty of models out there, and whilst the choice may be important, it is not as important as ensuring that the FM services are aligned to business needs, and measured as such.

A better way

There's a new way to meet this challenge, one that has been carefully developed and implemented successfully in some very high-profile organisations. The system is based upon the human resources model of HR360 – and it's called FMP360. The approach has been developed around three core

elements: people, process and technology. Each is important in creating what we define as the 'relationship bridge' that will empower the contract and stakeholders to view and measure the contract performance in a different way.

In this approach, experienced and independent consultants follow a proven process, working together with stakeholders to identify the success factors that are critical to each organisation. The relevant questions are then embedded into the performance analysis system so that each quarter groups of stakeholders from both the client and supplier are surveyed, measuring each other's perception of performance. A gap analysis is formulated, with qualitative data as well as numeric, so that context can be added to the results.

Identifying and measuring the critical success factors for each contract in this way ensures a dialogue that can remain positive as well as challenging, delivering continuity of quality and innovation. It will help raise the competence of operational FMs to a strategic level. In simple terms, it allows both parties to openly discover and recognise where the specification isn't adequate and to collectively work towards a solution that is aligned with expectations and requirements.

We believe this is a game-changer, which will enhance the professionalism of our industry in the eyes of senior business people and the wider community over time.

We have needed to rethink our contract performance and move the focus to a strategic level to demonstrate the value of FM for some time now. If we can achieve goals, measure performance and prove the strategic alignment between business support functions and the organisation they serve, we can demonstrate the true value of FM.

Keeping the channels open

True collaboration requires commitment from all parties and stakeholders. The measuring of the contribution by the service delivery team enables clients to understand perceptions on the delivery side and thus create change and improvement. This is vital to ensuring an essential part of the success path – that the direction of convergence is towards the business imperatives at all times.

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“A satisfied customer is the best business strategy of all’ - Michael LeBoeuf.”

The service industry affects everyone, so the convergences we have are numerous and there are multiple stakeholders. We can conceptualise all we like but as a company within this industry we must ensure our employees are motivated, educated and have a full understanding of their purpose and that of their customers.

Theory is splendid, but until it is put into practice it is valueless! As such, the FM Model of the past (from 1999) is nothing like the FM Model of today: continual practice and refinement of operation has changed it over time, and will continue to change it as the marketplace and customer expectations change.

At the same time, traditional employee engagement surveys, which serve as an annual HR measure, need to be replaced by thinking of engagement as a continuous, holistic part of one's business strategy. This then affects the whole business continuum -

Engagement = Motivation = Performance = Productivity = Profitability

How do we know this? ISS is the 4th largest private employer globally, employing around 517,000 people in over 75 countries. People are only asset, and the way they deliver services is our only measurable touchpoint for the quality of our 'product'. In doing their jobs they are the first line of customer interface, and the way our services are consumed affects our customers' customers.

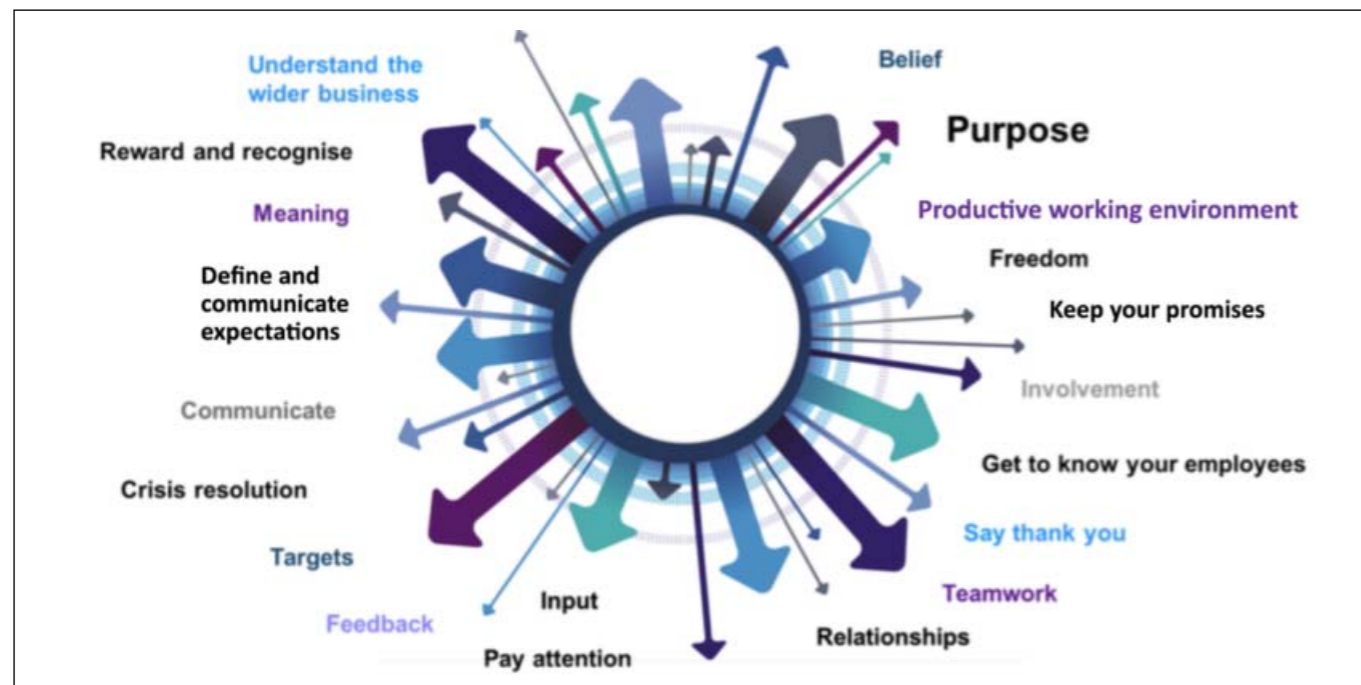
So we strive for global consistency. How? Through an empowered culture.

Culture will eat strategy for breakfast everyday

It's not really strategy versus culture, but an aligned strategy and culture that matter. People bring about convergence, therefore enriching people's attitude is vital and this can only be achieved through constant engagement.



“Enriching people’s attitude is vital and this can only be achieved through constant engagement.”



How do we actually engage?

There are thousands of explanations, theories and reasons for why engagement is so crucial, but the truth is it's not one special ingredient - although some are more important than others. In fact, it's a whole bunch of things and what works is different for every single person. That's the interesting and sometimes challenging thing about people - we are all different. Different things work for different people but there are common things that as humans we all respond to, that you just have to get right. At ISS, we concentrate on a few fundamental people drivers:

- Purpose and Pride
- Leadership

Purpose and pride

People are not just our most important asset - they are our only asset. If we agree that business is built on satisfied customers then, in our experience, it follows that satisfied customers are created through motivated, happy employees delivering against or above customer expectations.

In order to understand our customers, we need to understand the specific purpose of the specific task of each specific customer.

Finding purposes and taking pride in delivering on them will drive employee satisfaction and deliver quality business performance. Therefore understanding your customer is a lengthy and essential investment. And as a customer's needs will change over time you will also need to be agile to respond to these changes.

'A satisfied customer is the best business strategy of al.' - Michael LeBoeuf.

Extending the culture

In our business, very often a picture is painted, a vision that often comes from the customer or the ISS sales team. Through experience and best practice we listen to our team and to our customer and an operational model is then created specifically to address this vision, which is subsequently implemented. And the change begins...

Change cannot happen in a vacuum and a key enabler for change is communication. The change is clearly communicated to everyone - customer, team, managers and service partners; clearly, consistently and repetitively detailing what the changes are, how they will impact all staff and the benefits it will bring.

The second key enabler is that we listen. The customer is at the heart of what we do, and where service challenges exist, we talk and decide the best resolution to the situation.

In summary:

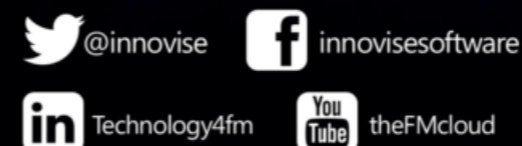
- Take a balanced approach
- The most important two things in what we do are:
 - Our Customers
 - Our People
- Build a sense of community
- Spend time with your people
- Communicate

'People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.' - Maya Angelou.

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“The agility offered by new wireless technology and mobile devices has torn up the rule-book on office design.”

In 2013 and 2014, Mitie commissioned independent research programmes to find out how senior property and facilities management directors were reacting to changes in their respective sectors. In 2014 we widened the remit by including a large quantitative element through working with the organisers of the Facilities Show.

One interesting dimension to arise from conducting two complementary pieces of research was an apparent disconnect between the two groups. While in many cases the results for both groups were similar in recognising trends, when it came to strategic thinking there were notable discrepancies between the business and the ‘troops on the ground’.

The research identifies a time of unprecedented change, which is having a massive impact not just on where and how we work, but also in the support mechanisms and infrastructures that enable us to work. It also identified that attitudes to workplaces are changing, as indeed are the workplaces themselves, and we are seeing a growing demand for a new and integrated approach to all aspects of workplace management.

Workplace trends

Although there is a general optimism about economic recovery and financial growth, none of the senior directors we interviewed mentioned increasing headcounts and property growth as factors driving their property strategies. Across our sample, the overwhelming trend is for property consolidation, driven largely by economics. On average over the

past six years, we have seen reductions in property portfolio footprints of 45% in the qualitative survey group.

There are a host of other factors linked to organisations’ strategic objectives and future growth ambitions that are driving change. Some companies are relocating to centres of expertise enabling them to access the optimum talent pool. There is a refocus on London as the key location to base offices at the expense of regional towns and cities. One in four of those we interviewed commented that their strategy now is to focus on larger, prestigious ‘mothership’ offices in London and southeast locations, with regional presences being much reduced or removed and maintained by agile staff.

The move to flexible or agile working is at the heart of the workplace revolution that is now taking place. The agility offered by new wireless technology and mobile devices has torn up the rule-book on office design and the geographical constraints on where and how we work. People are working very differently in a more fluid, dynamic way. The ‘office’ now fulfils a more specialist need of acting as a meeting place for more collaborative work activity, and over 75% of the interviewees in our research commented that their premises either have changed significantly to reflect more agile working practices or are in the process of doing so.

Wherever you are in FM...

“The emphasis switches from cost of service to improved quality of service and a realisation that we’re not there to look after buildings, but the people in those buildings.”

The implications of workplace change on FM

In this rapidly changing workplace, numerous companies are now investing in high quality, agile workplace environments that support and inspire their people. In just about every case, people are being placed right at the centre of the strategy, because company leaders believe that it will provide a differentiator and a competitive edge. Property and FM are therefore having to change their mentality, too, dropping their pre-occupation with infrastructure and assets and becoming more focused around the customer and their needs. If we can achieve this transition, FM will become an integral element of business strategy and assume a more strategic role in leading and shaping this whole change process.

There is overwhelming consensus in our research that FM is already moving from being a commodity service to a strategic enabler. 57% of end users in our quantitative research believe that this is the case, as did the majority of participants in the executive interviews.

With the workplace assuming a strategic dimension, organisations are looking at significant changes in the way workplace services are managed and delivered. In the traditional office, business support has been provided previously by four separate and distinct departments, Property, HR, FM and IT, each of which has its own area of responsibility, cost centre and budget. However the executive research interviewees all commented that the evolution of more agile workplaces means that all four of these departments now have a proactive and important role in shaping and implementing the workplace strategy. Across the research sample, around a quarter of those we met were in organisations where ‘workplace’ is now viewed as a strategic function with a single voice on the board that brings together two, three, or even all four of the traditional support functions. Across those interviewees there was a general view that workplace will become a single function, while the majority predicted it happening within the next five years.

On a day-to-day level, there is a demand on the FM company to provide a ‘great workplace’ for people to be creative and productive. This requires a much more holistic

approach to FM service delivery, with the focus shifting from simply cleaning and maintaining buildings and infrastructure to an approach that asks: “What do the people in the buildings need to achieve their goals?” Businesses are less interested in what the FMs do and how we do it, but are interested in the benefits we are bringing to the organisation to support their people and generate profit. That means really understanding the core strategies and objectives of the client company, and aligning the FM service accordingly. This may necessitate delivering a completely different mix of higher quality and higher value services such as agile worker engagement, hotel and concierge services, IT support, fine dining, 24-hour catering and continuous cleaning routines to support this.

Ultimately, the emphasis switches from cost of service to improved quality of service and a realisation that we’re not there to look after buildings, but the people in those buildings. The implication of this approach also extends to the construction of FM contracts where the measurement and reward mechanisms will need to be realigned on (client) outcomes rather than the more traditional, task-based KPIs.

Inspiring change

These changes in the world of work are exciting. The FM industry has the opportunity to lead this, but do we have the desire, ability and credibility to do so?



www.i-FM.net





“Effective management of the modern workplace requires the coming together of professionals from a number of different disciplines working in harmony.”

The effective management of the modern workplace requires the coming together of professionals from a number of different disciplines working in harmony to design ‘workplace experiences’ linked to their organisation’s priorities.

Back in 2013 Andrew Mawson and Graham Jervis, longstanding colleagues at AWA, decided that to assist in professionalising the ‘workplace industry’ a ‘standard’ was required to harmonise the endeavours of all professional disciplines associated with managing the workplace.

The standard that emerged was based on Graham Jervis’s book ‘Moving on... From FM to Workplace Management’ and recognised a series of shifts in practices and attitudes:

Andrew and Graham got to work on this and with the help of an enthusiastic cross-disciplinary group produced the Workplace Management Framework over 18 months of hard work. The Framework had the following objectives:

1. To create a common language to aid dialogue between occupiers, consultants and service providers
2. To define the required management disciplines
3. To maximise the strategic and economic benefit of the workplace
4. To enable the development of best practice, organisational and people capabilities
5. To communicate the management requirements needed to deliver the effective workplace
6. To measure the effectiveness of the organisation (internally and via service partners).

The 55-page document is now being seen as an important cornerstone in the professionalisation of the ‘workplace management industry’ and has been shared with CORENET UK, The Building Futures Group, BIFM and CIOB.

From:	To:
Property management	Experiences
The building	Wherever people work
Bricks and mortar	Technology, work, policy, space
Responding to the business	Influencing the business
Tactical compliance	Business professional
The world will remain the same	Pre-empting change

“A charitable foundation is being established to provide a home for the Framework. It will be accessible by all at no cost.”

This Framework articulates ten key management disciplines required for successful workplace management:

- Strategic Management
- Client relationship
- Performance
- Capacity
- Change
- Improvement
- Project
- Resource
- Risk
- Supply chain.

In a short chapter on each it sets out a definition, best practice and outputs to support an understanding by the user of current strengths and areas for focus and improvement. The Framework is designed to be used in a number of ways, including:

- Development of a plan to move to excellence
- Supporting supplier procurement
- As a training framework
- For benchmarking
- Encouraging innovation.

It will have uses in a variety of contexts including:

- Enabling suppliers to demonstrate compliant process and good practice
- Helping define requirements in a procurement process
- Shifting the focus from cost to value
- Demonstrating management competence.

The Framework is available for all to use and will continue to be revised and improved as a living document. As such, all feedback is welcome.

So what next?

A charitable foundation is being established to provide a home for the Framework. It will be accessible by all at no cost.

To support use of the Framework, an online assessment tool is being developed and will be launched soon.

A Business User Group is to be established.

Call to action

You can help to make this tool a common language and a benchmark for our complex and ever changing industry.

Please download the Framework and give your feedback. You will find it at www.wmframework.com.

Register an interest in the online tool on the website and you will be notified when it is live.

If you are interested in being part of the Business User Group, please get in touch with Andrew Mawson amawson@advancedworkplace.com.

www.FMP360.com
the relationship bridge



FMP360 is a groundbreaking assessment and development system.

Make your facilities management strategic. Discover the benefits of measuring business imperatives and relationships rather than the usual reliance on the contractual SLA's and KPI's.

Research from both the BIFM and independent specialists has found that trust and confidence levels in FM are frequently lower than in the other professional services - often by a significant margin. FMP360 works to address this problem, ensuring better understanding and reporting on the progress being achieved.

In order to focus both the client team and the service delivery team on working together to support the organisation they serve, the process relies on identifying critical success factors – the factors that will drive efficiencies in both cost and quality of service.

Our leading FM consultants will work with you through a carefully designed process, hosted on a bespoke technology platform, to assess

client/service delivery relationships with the ultimate goal of ensuring better collaboration between all stakeholders for optimum performance on FM contracts.

It is the independent approach of highly experienced consultants that create the relationship bridge and ensure a strategic approach is achieved.

We can help clients and their service providers at every stage of their FM journey - whether you are in-house, just entering into a new contract, mid-way through or coming to the end and planning the next step.

So get in touch and find out how we can improve your FM service delivery and contracts. Call Vicky O'Farrell on 07976 963889.





“Asking the right question is now firmly on the comeback trail.”

For those of us who have had various minor operations (or even important ones) this experience is usually both stressful and calming in a rather odd way. Anaesthetist and colleagues are steady, focused and working as a team. Theatre staff are wearing laundered gowns. Scalpels, sutures and surgical equipment are handed around between the team, but the surgeons concentrate on you. Only you. The room is clean, ordered. They are confident and professional. Experts.

As a freshly qualified architect (I admit a while ago) I was fortunate to be able to go and see how it all worked in reality. My visits to operating theatres where I stood right at the ‘table’ a foot away and watched a liver transplant - and even someone being stitched up having been stabbed in the throat - made me realise how extraordinary these teams and individuals are. The skill, concentration and sheer determination is something one can only admire. Expertise at its most meaningful.

You could equally be at your dentists’, in a research laboratory or a university business school. What you experience as the ‘subject matter’ is largely perception based on a whole raft of inputs that can sometimes dwarf your senses – sight, sound, touch and especially smell.

What I didn’t fully understand at the time was the sheer complexity, and the subtle distinction between the elements and their component parts. How all the pieces fitted together – and why – was a mystery to me.

So how do we fill the gaps? I was told in those days one needs to understand businesses and the markets to get to grips with how architecture fits into economy and society. I could understand how the processes convert into stacking and blocking, space needs and reporting lines. How the space is filled and used. But how a business actually works from a day-to-day operational basis was not clear.

So one needs to dig under the façade - from a corporate perspective. What does an organisation need, how does a day in the life of a retailer, hospital, bank, or even a mine work; and how does that fit into the wider economy and society?

Asking questions

There has been a steady shift over recent years, largely driven by the impact of the 2008 financial crisis and organisations having gone through the whole ‘outsource/insource’ experience and then wondering what’s next.

Clients are now increasingly asking the right question, which is ‘What should we be asking – what is the right question to ask?’. It’s pleasing to see clients are asking this, rather than saying ‘We want to outsource – now what is the question?’ Asking the right question is now firmly on the comeback trail.

So let’s get back to the operating theatre. What is the core function - and the attributes - of each of the players? What’s ‘in attendance’ and ‘not in attendance?’ You can start to

“Middle management will be a fast-diminishing layer as margins and technology eventually deliver the promise. .”

see the infrastructure element is actually the vast majority of everything we see, experience and don't experience. The application of scalpel and suture on my knee was the surgeon's. The rest is (merely, but essential) supporting infrastructure. Infrastructure brought to the point of activity or activity brought to the point of infrastructure.

Replacing knees or undertaking heart transplants exists in similar contexts. Pre-op, anaesthetics, staff, beds, trolleys, operating rooms to a high level of sterilisation, and equipment, medicines and materials etc. But the way it is created – the planning, expertise of the team, processes undertaken and even time – differ fundamentally.

So what do we do in the future? And what skills or attributes do we need to address the challenges? We are not the architect. We are not the engineer. We are not the surgeon. But we are an essential part of all the rest.

It's about ...

- A reversal in the concept of business as it relates to infrastructure and facilities management. The economy will increasingly be focused around the 'scalpel and suture' elements. The value as at the point of impact – which centres on the specific and specialised 'Point of Expertise'.

- This evolution is taking shape and will re-shape the way the FM market responds.

- Brands will mutate.

- Generalist will evolve to specialist:
 - Hospitals (knees)
 - Shopping centres (boutique)
 - Universities (research v academic learning).

Refinement – specialisation – simplicity – elegance

The future embraces cross-economy infrastructure models that are integrated at the strategic and senior management level but distil down into more specific specialist areas with a mixed in/out economy and depending on regular rather than intermittent demand (like the surveyor, architect or engineer service sector).

Technology is an enabler, an efficiency benefit, a quality improver. But it seldom represents 100% of the service, although increasingly more vital as an enabler. We need the operating theatre lights and equipment, but they don't mend the patient.

FM is a sub-set of our corporate and social infrastructure. Whether we like it or not, FM has evolved as a sub-set of a wider, and more relevant, part of our corporate and

social environment. Part of a much bigger picture. The senior partner in the future.

And finally - if we think the proliferation of 'generalist' overarching managing agents, managing contractor, lead agent, FM integrator etc is sustainable, perhaps think again. FM and infrastructure services will increasingly distil towards a behavioural-led expertise rather than specifically technical. Middle management will be a fast-diminishing layer as margins and technology eventually deliver the promise.

FM is sometimes a little like that. Sometimes it works OK. Sometimes not. And the big lesson, and one we are all trying to not see, is that designing, implementing and operating FM – whether retail, leisure, education, finance or other sector - is not a formula or series of action lists or processes – but something far more complex.

It's in the DNA ... a single, integrated and complementary DNA ... and not just the bits and pieces glued together for commercial convenience.

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“We believe that the connection between people and place is the best place to start.”

The only constant in life is change. How you respond and adapt to that change is crucial so we need to embrace it and tackle it head on. One thing that has changed significantly, particularly over the last few years, is the way we work. In fact, the word ‘work’ itself has become more fluid and vague during that period.

In the past it was a destination, somewhere we clocked in at nine and clocked out at five. All the tools that we needed to carry out the tasks we were paid to do resided there. Some places were better to work than others but that didn’t impact hugely on our decision on where to work. In fact, it wasn’t unusual for someone to only ever work with one organisation their whole career. Those days have gone.

Socioeconomic forces have played havoc with how we conduct our modern lives. One thing, I believe, that sits at the heart of this is technology. It seems simple to say but I don’t think you can talk about the evolving nature of work without being drawn to the topic.

The recent technological boom has been fired up by developments in hardware. Devices are becoming smaller, quicker and more powerful. The kit needed to power them has become so small that all of a sudden we’re carrying around technology in our pocket with the potential, and power, comparable to that which filled a fair sized room only a few decades ago. The level of

connectivity this permits has had a huge impact, particularly in globalisation. Someone could develop a hugely successful, global business from their kitchen table: the sky’s the limit.

All of a sudden ‘work’ can happen anywhere. Give me my tablet, WiFi access and possibly a power socket, and I’m away. I can teleconference, email, scribble notes and even book a taxi for my next meeting through a screen. In fact, sometimes I’m much more productive doing that in a café than I would be if I was in my office which inevitably sees me drawn into conversations and meetings. It is worth saying, though, that at times that connection with my teams is crucial; one thing that technology won’t ever take away is the subtleties of human interaction.

Then there was the recession. Of course there have been other recessions and each one impacts life in a different way, but after the crash of 2008 we saw organisations tighten their belts, understandably, and scrutinise everything they do.

One area where this was prevalent was the assessment of the amount of space organisations were using. The technology boom described previously meant that you were hearing more and more people saying that they’re going to work from home. Suddenly assigned desks were left empty and questions were asked about how often people actually sat at them.



“Give me my tablet, WiFi access and possibly a power socket, and I’m away.”

The recession also boosted an already thriving outsourcing market. Non-core business services were farmed out to suppliers and savings were made across the board, although that was to have a long-term impact as the savings were pushed for year on year and the resulting commoditisation of these services now leaves us in a position where margins are tight and ultimately value is being overlooked.

So huge change, and that is only looking at it from a ‘place’ perspective. Those looking after the ‘people’ had their own set of challenges. Increasing legislation, changes in culture and a potential skills gap have left our counterparts in HR facing their own challenges.

But should we be tackling all this in isolation?

Both FM and HR professionals are concerned with enablement of work, but the connection between the two is too distant. What could these two communities do if they worked together, had a common language and aligned strategies? Who knows? Who else should be involved? Certainly the IT community, but what about the marketing teams trying to embed their brand values across an organisation; and there is certainly a financial element that needs to be considered.

That said, we believe that the connection between people and place is the best place to start. The Workplace Conversation is a result of our collaboration with CIPD to look at how FM and HR can work with each other and aims to bring people together to look at what is holding us back in achieving better workplaces; and then turn our attention to how we tackle those challenges. It is a democratisation of the problem.

What do the people at the front line see as the barriers? Over time we hope that the conversation evolves beyond the initial three-month insight project and we hope to see solutions, generated from the crowd, which can be applied practically. We look forward to more professional communities joining us in reviewing the problem; only when we all start singing from the same hymn sheet will we truly see workplace strategies embedded in organisations and the benefits realised - but there are a number of steps needed to bring the masses together.

We hope The Workplace Conversation is one of the steps that will get us there.



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**“Why on earth isn’t
our market value
seen as a bellwether
figure?”**

When someone suggests that an entire industry needs a ‘call to arms’ that rather implies some deep-seated lethargy or, worse, complacency. It’s quite clear in FM that individuals and some companies don’t suffer from those conditions; but I have thought for some time that, as an industry, we are unclear about what we do for our customers and unclear about our status in the world of business.

Firstly, let’s get some perspective. The UK retail car industry, often cited as a barometer of our economic well-being, sold £104bn of new cars in 2014. The UK FM market is worth an estimated £107bn. Are car dealerships in crisis? Do they need a call to arms?

More importantly, why on earth isn’t our market value seen as a bellwether figure? What is spent on FM and related services is, after all, directly related to the economic health of our leading companies. As an indicator of how confident businesses are feeling, their spend on FM is actually really reliable because so much FM spend is both discretionary and outsourced – and thus one of the first things to change when a client company’s revenues begin to drop.

But if we accept the premise that FM is still not adequately recognised, and still not confident enough as a profession or an industry to shout out it’s worth, we have to ask what needs to change. And we need to be self-critical rather than self-congratulatory – something which makes some people uncomfortable, but is nonetheless necessary for our future success.

Why are we failing to realise our

collective potential? Are we failing to grow as fast as we could? If that is an industry problem, rather than one for individual professionals, how closely are those actually linked?

Clearly there are some common themes and issues which get raised. It is often suggested that we lack recognition for what we do, although it’s never clear what recognition we expect to get, nor from whom. That seems to me to be a common problem for the support services – I’m sure HR and finance feel the same – so maybe it would be more mature of us to learn to be content with our own sense of satisfaction in the contribution we make.

Of course, there is always room for improvement. There is no question that FM suffers from a lack of consistency in delivery. As I said here two years ago, we must develop more confidence in both our industry brand and our company brands; and learning to say ‘no’ to some opportunities would be one step in developing that brand consistency (and that might help with customer recognition, too).

But it’s not just the supply side that needs to change – buyers, too, need to be more realistic and more consistent. That’s one reason why I have high hopes for the Workplace Management Framework that’s been developed in the last year (see page 42) and for the imminent development of an ISO management system standard comparable to ISO9001.

“As an industry, we are unclear about what we do for our customers and unclear about our status in the world of business.”

I have asked more questions than I have provided answers so far. But once you start looking for answers, it's difficult to see what hasn't already been advocated or attempted:

- International standards
- BIFM qualifications
- New IFMA credentials
- International FM body (eg Global FM and EuroFM)
- Trade body consolidation (BFG, Action FM)
- RICS push for 'strategic FM'
- Constant demands for 'FM on the Board'
- Workplace management.

Some of these might still actually work! But there has been a pattern of failure over the years, perhaps characterised by over-reaching for big solutions when the real problems are more prosaic. In other words, what turns on our industry leadership doesn't seem to be 'sticking with the knitting', but making the grand gesture.

It is also often suggested that we fail to recruit the right talent, across the board from young people to experienced professionals, and that this is in some way related to poor career prospects. That's not helped, in my view, by our associations' continuing failure to consolidate or at least cross-reference the professional credentials that exist. And the pointless competition between groups which are supposed to be focused on promoting the profession rather than their own institutional interests continues to annoy me greatly.

But having said all that, there is no question that FM must continually consider its place in the competitive market. As has been said before, we really do face some challenges, and although I've no desire to protect the institution of FM (such as it is), we do need to look at those challenges if we are to understand how the service offer that we currently represent might change.

If I could change three aspects of our professional brand presentation, I think I would focus on getting these messages across to our customers and colleagues:

- FM is not outsourcing – that's just one (highly visible and important) means by which the discipline of facilities management can be applied
- FM is not single-service provision – it is a discipline which integrates processes towards achieving organisational goals with a focus on delivery of multiple services to people using the built environment – so it is a coherent and coordinating discipline, not a series of separate services

- FM needs to cooperate with supply chain management to jointly deliver the best organisational solutions.

To do all that there are a number of possible actions which would move us forward.

We could:

1. Rebrand as 'workplace management' – as a large part of the industry and profession is focused on that aspect of our customers' needs
2. Merge our associations into a single industry body representing suppliers, and a single professional body representing practitioners - and don't mix the two up
3. Drop the 'British' from BIFM and be as international as the market is – or better still, find a formula to merge IFMA and BIFM together
4. Agree and promote what it is that we do for, or add to, our customers' lives
5. Step away from service delivery, which is commoditised, and focus on management, protecting the FM brand against watering down by single service suppliers.

Critics will argue that some of these actions might be mutually incompatible. But at least they could form the basis of a plan. It seems that's what this industry desperately needs, and the sooner the better.



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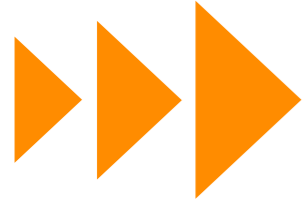
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15 Acknowledgements



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Each Workplace Futures conference programme since the launch of the series in 2007 has tackled a different issue in the FM sector; but an underlying theme throughout has been the comparatively low 'name recognition' that continues to characterise facilities management, along with the associated tendency toward under-appreciation of the value it both represents and contributes to UK plc.

The goal of the conference series, and each post-event White Paper, is to address these challenges by fostering education, discussion and positive action that supports the growth and development of FM.



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