



FM - time to take responsibility (2)

In recent years, facility management (FM) has developed into a discipline which is increasingly able to extend its contribution to the valued added chain of business, healthcare, public administration and other sectors. FM is being integrated more and more into the core processes, thereby generating increasing value and no longer representing a simple cost factor. Ronald Schlegel, director of Vebego Switzerland and visiting lecturer at the ZHAW Institute for Facility Management, writes the second of a two-part feature for ECJ. The first part was published in the February/March 2107 edition.

In recent years, facility management has developed into a discipline which is increasingly able to extend its contribution to the valued added chain of business, healthcare, public administration and other sectors. Facility management is being integrated more and more into the core processes, thereby generating increasing value and no longer representing a simple cost factor. This brings with it greater responsibility on the part of facility management for the success of the enterprise as a whole. Are we ready to take on this responsibility? Which direction should research and development take and how should education and training be geared to meet these new demands?

Facility management faces both opportunities and responsibilities. The first of these is Digital FM. Data relating to the operation, use and user of a property converge in facility management and form the basis for sustainable operation. They are however at the same time of great value for the entire value-added of a company.

The integration of facility management into the overall value-added chain can open up access to important customer information. The interconnection of systems and instruments from various parts of value-added forms the basis for integrating facility management into the value-added chain.

Digital facility management brings these tasks together within the area of facility management and integrates the relevant systems. One of the key tasks here is to integrate the systems and bring together usage and users. Facility management must take on responsibility for this.

Digitalisation must create added value for investors, users and operators, since these are, as the beneficiaries, the ones who will ultimately have to pay: the wishes and needs of users and tenants will be met with considerably more speed and cost-effectiveness, the needs of tenants will be better recognised and products developed to meet these, life-cycle and ancillary costs will be reduced and profitability will increase.

Energy transition as a practical contribution to sustainability

Why don't we realise the potential of saving over 20 per cent energy? The technical means are available and are constantly being further developed. Building technology can provide devices and systems which are certified as guaranteeing minimal energy usage. Building automation gives us the means to achieve optimum operation of buildings and individual rooms. In spite of this, even buildings with the most recent certificates use far too much energy. Buildings and systems are not operated on an integrated basis and optimisation is therefore either not implemented or not possible. No-one in the property planning and development process is responsible for the integrated operation and optimisation of buildings.

Some individual builders are now adopting approaches whereby general contractors are given the responsibility and have to provide evidence of contractual per-

formance over several years in operation. In these models, facility management is integrated and planning data are actually reduced by optimisation.

The Institute for Facility Management, with the support of the Swiss Federal Office of Energy (BFE) and the Zurich Cantonal Office for Energy, Water and Land Management (AWEL), has carried out a well-documented building optimisation programme, with the following findings. The building was handed over to the clients in 2013 in accordance with contractual terms and conditions. The energy consumption was much higher than planned. In winter and summer the users complained of too low or too high temperatures respectively and in winter they complained about humidity which was between 10 and 20 per cent.

Proper commissioning and optimisation led to a reduction in energy consumption of over 50 per cent as a result of correct parameterisation. No physical adjustments to the system (eg replacement of pumps) were necessary to achieve optimisation. The success of this exercise was based on analysis of measured readings and readjustment of target values, configuration and optimisation over the building management system. The individual components were aligned with each other and now work together in harmony. The potential of the inherently efficient individual components has now been realised thanks to correct commissioning and optimisation.

Facility management can play an important role in implementing the energy transition strategy. The 20 per cent reduction in energy consumption by buildings which can be achieved by operational measures would, with minimum costs, lead to a reduction in total energy consumption in Switzerland, for example, of eight per cent. The only costs to be incurred would be those of proper commissioning and optimisation. In most cases, only minor additional investment would be necessary

Continued page 60

FM - time to take responsibility (continued)

and the technical means are available. In order to achieve this, incentives must be applied in such a way that those who take responsibility for implementing the necessary measures can also benefit. There will need to be changes in responsibilities and skills and models will have to be developed to enable and encourage this.

Facility management must continue to develop as a discipline if it is to take on appropriate responsibility in these new models. There is a vital need for research on models which allow for planners, builders and operators to accept liability for consumption and emissions over a longer period following the completion of the building. What sort of incentives can be applied, who can influence them and in what way? Which regulations, laws and standards will have to be changed to create these incentives? How will the different roles be defined and how in particular will the role of facility management as integrator be defined?

Demography as opportunity

In order to benefit from the opportunities arising from demographic changes and to make a significant contribution to the management of these changes, facility management must make full use of modern technology. There must be significant investment in the integration of these technologies into facility services and relevant innovations must be encouraged. In parallel and as an equally high priority, employees at all levels must be trained for these demanding new tasks. The self-image of the sector has got to change. Activities in certain sectors of facility services frequently do not at present require professional training. Specific programmes

and training courses are therefore needed to enable these employees to undertake new roles.

Summary

The quality of employees must be systematically raised through continuing further education and training and new technologies must be used. Modern technologies require investment and in many areas a much more "industrial" approach. Services must increasingly be delivered with as little effort and expense as possible. Institutionalised innovation processes will help to drive the sector forwards. This all requires companies in the facility management sector to be able to make the necessary investments and generate the margins which will allow this to happen.

An industry can only get established and grow if it is in a position to generate these margins. Without this capability, facility management will not be able to take on the responsibility which it deserves. The industry should therefore be even more proactive in seeking success. Innovative contract models which are more performance-oriented and geared to the creation of added value are needed: these will allow companies which are delivering operational excellence with commensurate success to improve their margins. Clients would thereby also transfer the risks to the companies who are better able to control them. This should consequently also enable the clients to improve their own margins.

Challenges for training and research

Facility management is a management and a social science which brings

together different sectors and disciplines. FM training is therefore a form of management training which covers various topics in depth while at the same time delivering the knowledge and skill to think and act as a generalist.

The key areas of training are: business topics, facility services, such as the operation and maintenance of technical systems, hospitality management, catering, cleaning, safety and security, economic and financial control etc, personnel management, management and leadership, service management, systems engineering and project management, etc. With the bachelor's and master's programmes, and in continuing education and training, the aim is to achieve professional competence. At the same time, talented and ambitious students must be given the chance to become drivers of industry and to push forward the developments described above.

As far as research is concerned, in addition to basic facility management topics such as digital FM, sustainability and benchmarking, research targeted at important economic sectors should also be pursued. The Institute for Facility Management is concentrating on workplace management and facility management in healthcare, assisted living and consumer facility management, in addition to more general topics.

With the integration of the Institute for Facility Management into the Department of Life Science and Facility Management of the ZHAW in 2007, this sector now has its own faculty which will enable it to drive forward training and research in this discipline and develop it still further.

Ces dernières années, le facility management est devenu un discipline toujours plus capable d'apporter une contribution à la chaîne de valeur ajoutée du commerce, de l'industrie, de la santé, de l'administration publique et d'autres secteurs. Le facility management se trouve intégré toujours plus dans des processus centraux, générant de ce fait une valeur accrue et ne représentant plus un facteur de coût simple.

In den letzten Jahren hat sich das Facility Management (FM) zu einer Disziplin entwickelt, die ihren Beitrag in zunehmendem Maße auf die Wertschöpfungskette des Handels, des Gesundheitswesens, der öffentlichen Verwaltung und anderer Bereiche ausweiten kann. FM wird verstärkt in Kernprozesse integriert, und dadurch trägt es verstärkt zur Wertschöpfung bei und stellt nicht mehr einfach einen Kostenfaktor dar.

Negli ultimi anni, il facility management (FM) si è trasformato in una disciplina incredibilmente in grado di estendere il suo contributo alla catena del valore aggiunto delle imprese, del settore sanitario, delle amministrazioni pubbliche e di altri settori. Il facility management (FM) viene sempre più integrato nei processi primari, generando quindi ulteriore valore e non più rappresentando un semplice fattore di costo.