

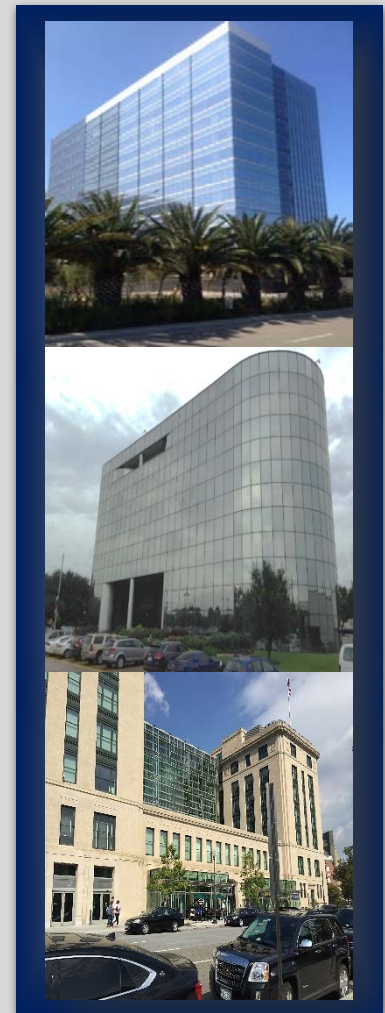
What is Facilities Management?

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Helping an organization acquire a building or a space is merely the initial step in the investment that clients will make in their facilities. It might seem obvious to most that physical facilities require ongoing maintenance and care, but the full extent of the client's facility obligations and concerns may be less apparent at first. Ensuring that a client understands what facilities management is, what it encompasses, its importance to business operations, and how Jorgensen can help fulfill the need will all add value to the relationship and strengthen our position as a trusted advisor.

What is FM?

If asked the question, many might respond that facilities management is about nightly janitorial services, day porter activities, and perhaps changing lightbulbs. Others might recognize the on-site building engineers or contractors who work largely behind the scene, mostly relegated to mechanical rooms, and who ensure that work spaces are comfortably heated and air conditioned. While these are obviously important services encompassed by FM, supporting the sustainability of the workplace, they alone fail to paint the complete picture.



So what is FM? IFMA defines facilities management as

*a profession that incorporates multiple disciplines to ensure functionality of the built environment by integrating people, place, process, and technology.*¹

The US Legal Dictionary puts it somewhat less tersely and perhaps more readily grasped as

*the coordination of the physical workplace with the people and the work of an organization. It is the integration of business administration, architecture, and behavioral and engineering sciences. In the most basic terms, facility management encompasses all activities related to keeping a complex operating.*²

The “management” in FM forms the crucial link between the core business operations of an organization and the reliability of the facilities for the users.

It furthermore states that

*it is the job of the facility manager to create an environment that encourages productivity, is safe, is pleasing to clients and customers, meets government mandates, and is efficient.*³

Distinguishing FM from property management is also instructive here. Property management is often defined as the management of

*all aspects of income and expense for their investor clients . . . On the income side, they work closely with leasing agents and brokers to ensure that their properties are fully leased at market rates . . . on the expense side, Property Managers contract for and pay for all operating expenses . . . deducted from the collected . . . [with] the surplus credited to the client.*⁴

¹ See <http://www.ifma.org/about/what-is-facility-management>

² See <http://definitions.uslegal.com/f/facility-management>

³ Ibid.

⁴ See “Is it Property Management or Facilities Management?” a Cresa Blog by Jim Ricker posted August 4, 2010 <http://blogs.cresa.com/corpblog/category/facilities-management/page/2/>

FM, by contrast, is typically defined as the management of a facility from the occupant's or business unit's (expense) side, also including "office services," such as cafeteria management, mailroom services, fitness center, and shipping/receiving.

Unpacking these definitions, then, FM is about all those services—both visible and invisible to the day-to-day building occupants—that ensure the building operates reliably and supports the business operations. It's about the janitorial and technical services (the engineering sciences) as much as it's about space planning, developing and managing budgets, utilities monitoring, mitigating impacts of government regulation, and reporting to upper management on the performance of FM programs and processes. Effective FM is about developing all of these and weaving them together into an integrated program that will clearly demonstrate value to the organization's core business and that supports its success.

The "Management" in Facilities Management and its Importance to the Business

If FM is about all the various services that support the facilities, and the integration of these

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services into a single program, then the "management" in facilities management plays a key role, as both of the formal definitions given earlier would imply. But the "M" in FM is probably the most over-looked aspect of FM. Facilities management is much more than employing a rolodex to keep track of various service professionals and contacting them as needs arise. The "management" in FM forms the crucial link between the core business operations of an organization and the reliability of the facilities for the users.

To begin with, management entails proper planning and coordination of service delivery—not simply the response to immediate issues that periodically arise. Pre-planning maintenance, as most already know, helps ensure the equipment's projected useful life is reached and the equipment's operation remains reliable. By contrast, unplanned-for downtime, or the strict reliance on reactive maintenance, can have a significant negative effect on the habitability of the space, resulting in closure and lost business time and revenue. Properly managed, both preventive and corrective maintenance should work to minimize disruption to the users. Management, here, is key.

Organizations often have many groups ancillary to the core business whose purpose is to support the core business pursuits. Typically included among these are Accounting and Finance, HR, IT, and FM. Since FM, along with the others, is not among the organization's profit centers, the organizing management principle and guiding philosophy of FM must never consider FM as an end unto itself. Everything it does should be in support of the business' goals in one way or another. When properly organized and managed, the members of an FM team must always deliver value to the business—whether through day-to-day tactical maintenance of the spaces ensuring that the facilities support the needs of the organization, or through long-range planning in conjunction with the organization's senior management and strategic goals.



Delivering both short- and long-term facilities-related strategies to the enterprise's strategic planners should also be a hallmark of an effective FM team. These strategies include options for re-investment in the facilities infrastructure and setting service levels that balance cost with user expectations. Knowing what your re-investment obligations ongoing annual expenses are well ahead of time allows managers to better prepare a response and to examine their options objectively.

How can Jorgensen Help?

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- Does the organization have its own team of technicians and a Facility Manager?
- Does it currently outsource, or out-task services?
- What is the organization's strategy when it comes to FM? Is it reactive, or is it proactive?
- What is their asset preservation strategy and is it aligned with corporate G&O?
- Are facilities viewed by management as a part of the organization's long-term strategic interests?

Jorgensen Facility Services offers our clients a full spectrum of facility-related services with proven results. Whether an organization has never before outsourced FM services, or if they currently do so but with less than adequate results, or if they simply need facilities consulting services to generate the programs and processes for in-house maintenance teams, Jorgensen can offer valuable advice to improve service quality and enhance the business operations.