A healthy profit margin is part of a good working partnership

In Brief

- Yellow Pages shows its colours
- Arseg plenary conference
- Affirming the social and economic roles of the work environment sector
- 20:20 vision
- Workplace configuration: how office design affects employee morale and productivity

EFMC News & Reports

- Reports from the Chairman and the Practice, Education and Research network groups
- EFMC News & Reports

Research

- Facility Management research in Portugal

Workplace advantage programme

The working conditions of tomorrow

by John Lenz, Microsoft; Ralph Englert, Sasse FM; Nora Hoffmann, Sasse FM

Microsoft Deutschland GmbH, together with its service provider Sasse Facility Management, received an award at the FM User Awards 2011 in recognition of the implementation of the global Workplace Advantage Programme (WPA) at its headquarters in Unterschleissheim.

Few companies implement changes in the world of work quite as consistently as software giant Microsoft. As early as the year 2000, Microsoft’s German headquarters in Unterschleissheim near Munich, with its campus structure and open space offices, was already at the forefront of modern forms of office working. It was focused on the needs of what Microsoft defined at the time as ‘residents’ in the workplace, i.e. employees who performed their work almost entirely on their own individual equipment and only used the Collaboration Areas for meetings. There they met with the ‘travellers’, who spent most of their working hours on the road and carried everything they needed for their work around with them. These employees spent most of their time in meetings and other forms of interaction. But these typical forms of working are now a thing of the past.

With the implementation of the global Workplace Advantage Programme (WPA) for the 180 employees at its headquarters, the company is now living up to its own slogan of ‘Be what’s next’. WPA meets the needs of the new world of work and the resulting working environments. On the one hand, we now have the comparatively non-mobile ‘anchors’, explains John Lenz, Microsoft’s Facilities Manager Germany. ‘They spend most of their day at one workstation. Their collaboration with others is generally virtual in nature. The Internet has opened up the possibility of using video conferencing tools and the like in order to be able to formulate indicators and ratios, which ought to lead to more effective and efficient services.

Besides the above mentioned advantages, there are, of course, barriers to global FM. First, global FM ignores cultural differences between countries. Why pursue uniformity in catering services when the lunch culture is completely different in France, the Netherlands and the US? Why pursue uniformity in security solutions when the security situations in South Africa, the UK and Georgia cannot be compared? Besides cultural differences between countries, we have to take into account variations in legislation which represent an obstacle to uniform standards. In countries like Sweden and the Netherlands, the culture of consensus has led to a situation where employees have enforceable rights with regard to their workplace – e.g. issues such as the amount of natural light entering the room and the floor space per workplace. Globally standardized workplace solutions are rapidly bypassed by local legislations. There is a third barrier which relates to the suppliers’ market. Global FM often, though not always, also leads to global contracts with service providers. Professionals with expertise and experience pose the question of whether the supplier market is ready for global deals. It would certainly be fine in the UK or France but is that also true for China and the Baltic states?

It is clear that globalization will inevitably continue, regulations will be harmonized, and global FM service providers will reduce cultural differences both locally and internationally, because people will come into increasing contact with other cultures. That is why the growth of global FM is inevitable. However, we have to be aware that only a small percentage of the global population actually works for multinationals. The great majority of organizations and businesses have nothing to do with global FM. Of course, they too live in an increasingly globalized world and learn from international best practice. However, global FM remains the preserve of multinationals.

Comment

George W.A. Maas
Managing Director of
newDirections
The Netherlands

‘Sedexo scoops pan-European Unilever deal’, ‘ISS and Barclays announce new global facility management partnership’, ‘Shell launches its Global Workplace Solution’, these are just a few recent headlines. Global FM and pan-European FM are concepts which we come across on a regular basis but what do they mean and what is their contribution to and significance for the future?

Many people consider that global FM is an outsourcing solution for large international companies such as HP, Shell and Barclays. However, this is too narrow an interpretation of the concept. Global FM is more than that. It stands for the organization of facility management on an international scale at globally operating corporations and it does not necessarily have to be an outsourcing solution. This is, in fact, how Google and Shell organize their internationally centralized and managed facility management, although there is no mention of complete outsourcing. After cost-cutting, the most important driver of global FM is the standardization of FM solutions. There is a demand for uniform and standardized workplaces for employees worldwide, in accordance with the corporate identity. That makes sense because there is no reason why the workplace of an employee of Shell in London should be different from that of his colleague in Dubai. A final argument for global FM is that it allows obtaining a better insight into costs, personnel, buildings and the like in order to be able to formulate indicators and ratios, which ought to lead to more effective and efficient services.

Besides the above mentioned advantages, there are, of course, barriers to global FM. First, global FM ignores cultural differences between countries. Why pursue uniformity in catering services when the lunch culture is completely different in France, the Netherlands and the US? Why pursue uniformity in security solutions when the security situations in South Africa, the UK and Georgia cannot be compared? Besides cultural differences between countries, we have to take into account variations in legislation which represent an obstacle to uniform standards. In countries like Sweden and the Netherlands, the culture of consensus has led to a situation where employees have enforceable rights with regard to their workplace – e.g. issues such as the amount of natural light entering the room and the floor space per workplace. Globally standardized workplace solutions are rapidly bypassed by local legislations. There is a third barrier which relates to the suppliers’ market. Global FM often, though not always, also leads to global contracts with service providers. Professionals with expertise and experience pose the question of whether the supplier market is ready for global deals. It would certainly be fine in the UK or France but is that also true for China and the Baltic states?

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Workplace advantage programme

continued from page 1

world to them. Their documents are stored in SharePoints and are made available for communal use.’ These employees may be contrasted with the ‘nomads’, i.e. employees who can work anywhere and at any time. They enjoy the freedom to collaborate with others without any barriers, and only take with them what they need in order to access their documents, or to make them available, on SharePoints.

On account of these new requirements, the workplace structures in Unterschleissheim had become outmoded. The division of the workspace was no longer providing optimum support for the working processes. Spread over more than three floors, there were long walking distances between employees and a lack of collaboration, as the exchange of information was limited. In addition, there were insufficient areas for collaboration or focused work.

In order to create a foundation for more effective collaboration in the future and to offer a large variety of communication channels, resources and environments, Microsoft’s FM department, with the support of facilities services provider Sasse, launched a project to implement the global Workplace Advantage Programme (WPA). The aim was to consolidate the workspace for approximately 120 permanent employees and 57 guest employees with a share ratio of 1:2 over an area of 1,080 m² on two floors, while offering a wide variety of different working areas. In addition to the 30% improvement in the use of space, the project managers also promised that there would be an increase in employee satisfaction.

‘Designing for people!’

WPA is a global programme from Microsoft Real Estate & Facilities focusing on creating a new workplace environment for Microsoft employees. It aims to promote innovation and creativity while at the same time reflecting Microsoft’s culture and position in the marketplace as a visionary technology company. The workplace design is individually tailored to the specific organisation in order to increase productivity. ‘Our employees need a varied range of functional areas to ensure more effective collaboration. This promotes team building and a sense of community in the workplace,’ says Lenz. At the same time, there is a major emphasis on people and their needs, in terms of factors such as nature, comfort, colours, noise and collaboration.

Microsoft’s new world of work is based on seven building blocks.

• The Neighbourhoods are a collection of functional areas which enable focused or individual working, as well as collective group work.
• The Phone Booth is available to all employees, as required, for making phone calls or for confidential conversations.
• The Focus Rooms can be used by all employees, as required, for a number of work processes, such as scheduled or spontaneous meetings, brainstorming or private conversations.
• The Breakout and Lounge areas have a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere. They offer employees the opportunity to relax, and serve as a meeting point to encourage ‘chance encounters’.
• The Small Conference Room is designed for scheduled meetings on a smaller scale. Equipped with the latest presentation technology, it is suitable for team and management meetings.
• The Quiet Zone offers compact workspaces for highly focused working. Soundproofing panels ensure privacy and reduce outside interference.
• The Hot Desks are open, informal workspaces for time-limited use, such as retrieving and dealing with e-mails. They provide a flexible workspace for freelancers and visitors.

Photo: Microsoft

Microsoft’s German headquarters in Unterschleissheim.

The workplace layout before (top) and after, showing the change from a mixture of open space, group and cubicle-style offices to the wide variety of workspaces offered by the Workplace Advantage Programme.

continues on page 3
Workplace advantage programme  
continued from page 2

Change management  
It is well known that fundamental changes in the workplace often lead to widespread resistance. ‘Individual perceptions, emotions, cultural differences and environmental factors need to be overcome, or it will not be possible to successfully integrate employees in the process of change,’ says Lenz. For this reason, Microsoft and Sasse Facility Management implemented a comprehensive system of change management to support employees and successfully involve them in the transition and relocation processes.

This consisted of talking to the relevant employees at various levels. The first step was to hold a ‘Site Leadership Discussion’, which gave senior management the opportunity to ask basic questions and express concerns. The WPA programme was then introduced to the entire workforce in the ‘Town Hall Session’. This gave employees the opportunity to provide direct feedback. This feedback was taken up by a ‘Workplace Input Team’ and then, after a workshop with workforce representatives, taken into consideration in the implementation of the programme.

According to Lenz, this approach ensured a high degree of acceptance among the employees. ‘The change management process proved to be an important factor in the successful implementation of the project. At the same time, the fact that senior management were prepared to lead by example was another key to its success!’, he emphasises. The third component of the project’s success was the training that was given to both employees and managers. Finally, there is freedom of choice in terms of rooms and areas, with no reservation system. New employees also receive a corresponding introduction to the system and assistance in using it.

The project, which was completed in February 2011, is already proving to be successful: ‘With the implementation of the WPA, we were able to adapt our workspace functions and requirements to meet the needs of our employees. At the same time, we now have a high degree of flexibility in terms of future process and organisational changes,’ says Lenz. Experience from projects that have already been implemented around the world has shown that an improvement in formal and informal collaboration of respectively 23% and 15% can be achieved. With regard to privacy and concentration, the new model performs 13% better and overall workplace satisfaction has improved by 10%. ‘And last but not least,’ adds Lenz, ‘we now have a showcase for demonstrating new technologies to partners and customers, such as cloud computing, Lync or RoundTable, and for showing them how they can be integrated into the world of work.’
Challenges for FM in Portugal

Inês Flores-Colen
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Paulo Carreira
Research member of APFM/Prof. at IST -Technical University of Lisbon

Facilities Management (FM) is a new field of expertise in Portugal. While businesses have been using FM for several years, the lack of competitiveness in the Portuguese economy has prevented Portugal from developing the professional management of its facilities to the extent of its European counterparts. In Portugal, there are several professionals who have been working in FM-related areas (for 20 years) but who are not recognised as Facility Managers. This situation is changing rapidly, however, leading to an improved recognition of this area of professional activity. In order to stay competitive, businesses and organisations are becoming increasingly savvy when it comes to managing their facilities and assets. Furthermore, buildings are becoming larger and more complex, they must be built in compliance with new requirements (e.g. sustainability and regulatory), and must meet increased performance and comfort demands, all of which calls for professional and integrated facility management.

When the Portuguese FM market situation is compared with the desired situation which reflects European trends (Table 1), it is clear that a number of important developments must take place. The main challenges that Portugal must overcome in order to benefit from FM are:

i) improve the recognition of the FM market and FM profession;

ii) increase the use of FM tools to lead to improvements in the core-business of organisations and increase the contribution of FM-related departments;

iii) implement educational training programmes for professionals in order to increase skills in relevant areas of knowledge.

The more developments that take place in the FM profession, the greater the reason to invest in FM research. However, these developments depend on whether there is an appropriate support framework in place in the form of FM educational programmes. The topics of FM research and establishing a national FM education curriculum are therefore closely related.

Current research areas and future trends

A number of researchers, mostly from the large public universities, and from a diverse range of backgrounds including management, architecture, civil, mechanical and electrical engineering as well as computer science, have been directing their research efforts towards FM-related applications. To promote joint research, researchers and groups become aware of each other, collaboration has also begun to take place. The national research efforts have mostly been concerned with:

- FM tools, performance measurement and indicators - through research focused on the advantages of applying FM tools, such as service-level agreement (SLA), and of using performance indicators to control service quality (Silva, 2011; Mauricio, 2011). A recent field study on the hospitality industry led to the establishment of a three-step model which proposes a simplified SLA for the technical maintenance services for hotel buildings (Gomes, 2012);

- Service-level agreement definition – aims to specify the requirements for services during the usage phase of the building (especially, maintenance services), applied to participative partnership contracts (PPP) (Cabaço, 2011);

- Assessment of buildings in use and client satisfaction – research on post-occupancy assessment (POA) methodologies aiming at improving the knowledge of the buildings in use and of their ability to fulfil user expectations. This research also aims at developing new methodologies and support tools to enable faster and continuous POA (Santos, 2008);

- Workplace management using structured occupation indexes - this line of research is still in its initial phases and aims to assess workplace performance, interaction between technology, environment and people, and also the approach to news ways of working (Santos, 2008);

- Service integration and building management systems - research concerned with the available technical and economic resources, improvement of building system performance, studies on usage costs and life cycle assessment of construction materials and building assemblies, eco-materials in building design, construction and maintenance, and compliance with sustainability requirements. This research also aims at enhancing interdisciplinary cooperation and collaboration in FM;

- Provision of IT for facilities – mostly concerned with finding low-cost and low-disruption IT solutions for ‘smart buildings’. Several research efforts are included in this category:

  i) interoperability and integration issues concerning digital building models and electronic product catalogues for use in Architecture/Engineering/Construction (AEC) and in operations;

  ii) decision support software tools to assist investment decisions concerning control technologies for retrofitting buildings (Uninova, 2012);

- III) Intelligent Building Systems and IT-supported Energy Efficient Buildings at the MIT Portugal Sustainable Energy Systems Group (MIT, 2012);

- IV) employment of advanced software engineering techniques for integrating heterogeneous building data and enabling the fast, low-cost development and commissioning of software for building (such as CAFM, BIM, EEMIS and BEMS) (INESC-ID);

- V) spatial organisation using constraint processing and quantitative and qualitative knowledge representation (Regateiro et al, 2012), which may contribute to future developments in FM tools;

- VI) integration of sensor and actuator networks with FM tools for the monitoring and control of various aspects inside buildings in order to meet comfort, cost or sustainability requirements.

Future steps for an effective education programme

FM, both as a profession and as an educational field, has not yet reached maturity in Europe or at national level in Portugal. Despite the fact that FM-related subjects have been introduced to real estate, engineering, architecture, or management courses, there are no FM-specific educational programmes to date. This absence of an integrated studies programme represents a major obstacle to the promotion of FM and consequently, to the development of FM research.

A field study was carried out in Portugal as part of the International Facility Management study at the Hanze University of Applied Sciences (Steenhuizen, 2011) in collaboration with APFM and the Technical University of Lisbon (IST, 2012). One of the conclusions drawn from this study points to the difference between European and Portuguese employees currently in the role of a Facility Manager, while Portuguese employees come from either an engineering or

Table 1 – The Portuguese FM market vs. desired situation, adapted from Steenhuzen (2011) and Carvalho (2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portuguese situation</th>
<th>Desired situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FM market and FM association</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tactical level</td>
<td>Strategic level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM department</td>
<td>good communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical issues (environment and processes) and workplace management (people) are separated</td>
<td>Integrated structure between Space &amp; Infrastructure and People &amp; Organisation (EN 15521)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrow-minded view of departments</td>
<td>Relations with other departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resistance to change ways of working</td>
<td>Flexibility to implement new ways of working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No legislation and no implementation of EN 15521</td>
<td>Implementation of and practice according to the EN 15521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational programme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different educational backgrounds within FM related departments/</td>
<td>Several educational FM programmes with different degrees and levels of knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no educational programmes specific to FM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialisation in other areas (technical or managerial knowledge)</td>
<td>Broadly-educated staff/increases skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

continues on page 5
For any company, an office move is always a critical time that is full of unknowns. Like any risky transition though, it also offers huge opportunities for growth and innovation. SEAT Pagine Gialle knows this very well. The telephone directory company has fully exploited all the transformational opportunities arising from the decision to bring together its various branches’ 850+ employees in a single new complex in Turin, on the site once occupied by the Officine Savigliano engineering giant. Giancarlo Beck – the Manager of HR Services, Corporate University, Learning and Development at SEAT – tells us about the project and reveals how the employees’ ideas and wishes have had a formative role.

How large is the new office?
It covers 26,400 m2 and comprises 300 offices, 50 meeting rooms and as many as 1,230 workstations. There is also a company restaurant seating 220 and an auditorium that can accommodate up to 99 people. The office is part of a complex that includes a shopping centre and a dining room, measuring about 750 m2, which was conceived with special emphasis being placed on colours and materials to make it a warm, welcoming environment; it also includes a recreation area.

Facility Management Research in Portugal
continued from page 4

Office-space reorganisations, especially radical ones, are often resisted by internal customers. How did you facilitate the transition to the new arrangements?
As discussed, company staff were directly engaged from the outset in the process of creating the new offices, through an internal survey. Then, during construction, we organised guided tours to show how the work was coming along and how it would continue. Employees also had the chance to follow project progress directly through a newsletter and a web TV channel. Some events planned in the run-up to the opening of the new offices – including a kids’ Christmas party and the get-together to thank staff for their loyalty – were held at the new premises, even though the move was still in progress, thus enabling employees’ families to see the new offices. Finally, when the work was finished, we held an official opening attended by civic dignitaries and all staff and their families.

Did you opt for personalised workstations decorated according to internal clients’ wishes or a standardised approach with the same arrangements for everyone?
We decided on a uniform approach to the furnishings, to ensure equal treatment for all staff. But employees could all express their creativity by choosing the colour of their seat and desk stationery, albeit from a set range. More generally, the choice of furnishings was also determined by the feedback from the staff survey, i.e. the desire for greater transparency and linearity. The colour set was then chosen to reflect those used in the corporate brand.

In recent years, the concept of work organisation is evolving, driven in part by major technological innovations. How did these technologies impact on the way you organised the space?
Our focus on technological innovation led us to create a high-tech internal computing centre with 10 multimedia rooms and video-conferencing systems available to all employees.

Do you think that reorganising space can help to cut costs?
Optimising your spaces certainly reduces waste in terms of electricity and air-conditioning. By choosing a single headquarters, for example, we reduced travel between office buildings. And by creating the open spaces, we provided more space for employees to communicate, with benefits for workplace wellbeing and hence productivity.

Acknowledgments
To Pedro Malheiro (President of APFM); João Carvalho (Professor at ISEG); Francisco Regateiro (Researcher from IST); Alexandra Santos (Workspace Strategy Innovation Consultant); and Jorge Renda (Researcher at ISE – University of Algarve).

References
The conference took place on 3rd April and provided an opportunity to debate on the social and economic roles of the work environment sector. At a time when France is questioning its economic future, Arseg organised the conference innovatively organised in two stages in order to enable a discussion on the social and economic roles of the work environment sector.

The first round table consisted of Chantal Labruyère, representing Cereq (Centre for Studies and Research into Qualifications), Nicolas Bouzou, essayist and co-author of La Politique de la Jeunesse [The Politics of Youth] with Luc Ferry, Pascal Loudet, France Development Manager at Vinci Facilities, and François Delatouche, Chairman of Arseg and Work Environment Manager at Bouygues Telecom, focussed on economic aspects. In his introduction, François Delatouche referred to the size of work environment managers’ budgets, i.e. more than 110 billion Euros, or just over 6% of companies’ turnover, and the total number of employees in the sector which equates to more than one million full-time employees. Facing a rapidly changing world thanks to accelerating technological innovation and a new global economic order, there is a tendency for organisations to want to make savings on their operating costs. ‘That is a mistake!’ warned Nicolas Bouzou. ‘By drastically lowering overheads, companies are also, in turn, reducing their customer base. In the end, this has a significantly negative impact on the economy,’ because, as he pointed out, this is a sector which supports many subcontractors. Furthermore, it is a sector with several significant advantages considering that jobs cannot be relocated, that it offers a variety of jobs and trades and that it has an environmental aspect, which should certainly be of interest for young people and for public authorities. Yet, still today, there are many jobs in the sector which remain unfilled, particularly in technical maintenance.

Attributing young people
‘Today, there is a great deal of talk about new buildings, but, as we often stress in Arseg’s Sustainable Development group, the real challenge is the 850 million square metres of existing buildings, many of which are poorly heated. There will be a need for competent people, and a good number of them, to accept this challenge in the coming years,’ said Nicolas Berthelier, project leader of Arseg’s Forward Planning Division. ‘We have a challenge to face: to attract young people to our profession,’ added François Delatouche. ‘In order to do this, we have to give some direction, demonstrate progress. Managing scarce resources within the economy is also a fundamental part of the work environment sector’s job and it is a way of attracting younger generations,’ added Nicolas Bouzou. ‘You must forge partnerships with existing degree programs in the administration and management fields,’ advised Chantal Labruyère.

During the second part of the conference, Gilbert Blaise, Work Environment Manager at SNCF and Bernard Van Craeynest, representative of the CFE/CGC, joined François Delatouche and Nicolas Bouzou to discuss the role of the work environment in organisations and, particularly, in relation to personnel. First of all, Bernard Van Craeynest pointed out that recent studies into the impact of psychosocial risks and stress at work estimate that the annual cost of these factors to our economy (absenteeism, medical consultations and care, etc.) is 3% of GDP. ‘Prevention is therefore essential, but it is not enough. Improving the quality of life at work is an important factor which is often underestimated. Changes in working methods and forms of organisation need to be supported by actions which reflect the current financial conditions. These are necessary for the company to demonstrate its commitment to, and its consideration of, its human resources,’ commented the representative of the CFE/CGC.

Gilbert Blaise confirmed that the impact of ill-being is closely monitored within the SNCF. ‘We are establishing a social barometer by monitoring several indicators which we call ‘irritants’. Our approach is experimental in that we ask our employees what improvements they would like to see first: painting of premises, toilets, rest areas, etc. We have observed a 10% decrease in absenteeism after carrying out these measures,’ he stated. Even though it is difficult to link this effect directly to these improvements, ‘there is very definitely a positive return on our investment for the company.’

‘Changes in working methods and forms of organisation need to be supported by actions which reflect the current financial conditions.’

However, would this approach not conflict with any attempt to make savings? François Delatouche commented, ‘It is our role and our responsibility, first and foremost, to seek the best price/quality ratio and consider actual needs. In our budgets, 50% of the costs are linked to square metres in the form of rent and maintenance costs.’ As regards the question of whether the primary objective for businesses isn’t in fact to reduce the number of square metres allocated to workstations, the chairman of Arseg replied: ‘Yes ... and no! Do you know that our office is unoccupied for more than a third of the time? Why don’t we reduce the number of workstations and use the resulting free space for new places dedicated to exchanges, relaxation and collaborative work?’

Bernard Van Craeynest stressed the need to ensure that the changes make sense. ‘There is nothing more demoralising than changing work facilities and/or workplaces every six months without any explanation other than reducing costs,’ he explained. The SNCF’s Work Environment Manager agreed with this observation, ‘Listening to needs and clearly explaining the reasons for establishing new facilities will prevent us from having to divide up open spaces systematically after we have created them. By ignoring cultural habits, choosing unsuitable environments and neglecting dialogue with those most concerned, we are straying away from our job which is to voice real needs, develop the most viable solutions and to support the organisation in these developments. In this context, Gilbert Blaise believes it is essential to work closely with HR managers, ‘on condition that the latter are able to understand the economic dimension of the work environment and do not hesitate to challenge the general management on financial management methods,’ he warned. ‘It is time to be daring, to make suggestions and to take risks by presenting and defending ambitious, well-argued projects in a language which will be understood by our management. This is our next collective challenge,’ concluded François Delatouche. And let’s hope that Arseg will be able to support the profession in their future objective.
FM World, the British Institute of Facilities Management’s (BIFM) magazine recently celebrated its 200th edition. Over these 200 editions, we have charted the development of facilities management through its practitioners and representatives. So how much has the sector changed since we first published? We asked specialists to look back at the last eight years—and ahead by eight more years to 2020.

The big issues

When London won the right to host the 2012 Olympic Games expectations were rife that the scale of the project in east London would allow for some excellent examples of where FM can add value—and so it proved in spectacular fashion.

The games themselves are still too fresh in the memory for us to be able to gauge their lasting impact on the profession. But in terms of innovation in design, sustainability of construction and fitness-for-purpose, few would argue that the Olympic legacy from an FM perspective is looking anything less than rock solid. The energy technologies used across the Olympic Park and beyond were indeed cutting edge.

What’s also remarkable is just how quickly the extraordinary has become ordinary. The tablet computers and smartphones used across the Olympic Park and indeed beyond were indeed cutting edge.

Perhaps the most glaringly obvious statistic was that the FMGs of 2006 were overwhelmingly male. Today, that is changing. Female FMs are increasingly represented and the BIFM’s Women in FM special interest group (SIG) is one of the institute’s best supported. Indeed, there have been nine BIFM facilities managers of the year since FM World first published; four male and five female.

Sustainability

The concept and practice of ‘sustainability’ surely vies for the title of the most important issue facing FM. But to what extent is sustainability now a mature concept?

Lucy Black, chairman of BIFM’s sustainability SIG: ‘There have been some significant changes since 2004. When the sustainability SIG was first set-up, it felt like we were very much outside the mainstream, pushing for the issues to be on the agenda within the profession. Since then we have seen sustainability as the key theme for at least two of the BIFM’s annual conferences, and with more than a quarter of BIFM members signed up to the sustainability network, its importance is clearly recognised.’

Black believes that the sheer scope of sustainability, and how it underpins all business operations, is not yet fully embedded in the FM function. ‘There remains a tendency to focus on energy management, which has increased with the influence of the low-carbon agenda. Finding ways to integrate the economic and social aspects of business with environmental concerns remains critical, as does the need for sustainability to be automatically integrated with all activities.’

2020 is a key year in carbon reduction terms. In the years leading up to it we could see increased scrutiny and regulation from governments reliant on individual organisations to deliver on the targets, leading FMs to focus on their carbon-producing activities.

One obstacle is the separation of capital and operational funding, says Black. ‘When life-cycle costs are considered, many features of projects that fall under a ‘sustainability’ heading make good business sense. However, when investment is separated from operational budgets, the very features that would enable the long-term running costs to be controlled are excluded to save short-term costs. For organisations creating a long-term sustainable business, sustainability in their buildings will play a key role.’

Building services

The distinction between hard and soft services in FM has matured over the past eight years, with perhaps an increased focus on the soft side. There’s an argument that the people-management issues involved in cleaning, security and catering receive more ‘air time’, at the expense of specialist engineering maintenance issues. Yet the need for mechanical and electrical (M&E) specialism remains.

One change we’ve reported on is the shortage of facilities managers with a solid building-engineering background. Geoff Prudence, the chairman of the Chartered Institute of Building Service Engineers’ Facilities Management group (CIBSE FM), believes that building-maintenance service providers are sometimes moving further afield to attract people with the necessary skillsets.

‘Getting people with the necessary skills remains an issue,’ says Prudence. ‘Finding good people with a strong building-service maintenance background has become tougher in recent years. We’re seeing outsourced M&E providers, attracting people with backgrounds such as marine engineering or the armed forces – places where they’ve gained a solid background in M&E and controls and operating processes. After all, these are transferable skills and FM is the perfect place for them.’

Prudence believes there’s a widening skills gap between engineering and management skills. And while plenty of FM providers are offering training, too few are offering management training specifically around building services.

Contract management

Has the way that organisations audit the performance of their FM contracts changed significantly? Phil Ratcliffe of Procore Consulting suggests that while the methodology of audit – via KPIs and SLAs – has not changed over the last eight years, ‘there is still a lot of confusion as to the definition of these mechanisms’.

Ratcliffe believes it would be interesting to ask 100 FM professionals to state the difference between a key performance indicator (KPI) and a performance measure, between an service level agreement (SLA) and a specification. ‘I wonder how many different answers would you get? The ability of FM service providers to demonstrate that they have delivered their services to the agreed standards they have committed to is still one of the great intangibles in the industry.’

Ratcliffe believes that relationships between organisations that outsource FM and their service providers have typically improved since 2004, partially continues on page 8
A healthy profit margin is part of a good working partnership
ABN Amro switches to results-oriented cleaning
by Gerard Dressing, Editor Facto Magazine

‘Of course, not everything went according to plan straightaway.
In the first few months after the start of the new contract, we sat
down with the suppliers several times, to make adjustments to a few
things. But I think the collaboration is now going very well, with clear
agreements and a positive impact on cleaning quality, plus increased
levels of satisfaction for the cleaners and the building users.’

These are the words of Jeroen Bruijgoms, Head of Product and
Contract Management at ABN Amro’s Facilities Division. His
department, as part of the Facilities Division, is responsible for
managing all soft services, such as cleaning, security, catering,
reception services and transport services.

20:20 vision
continued from page 7

the result of FM workforce mobility: ‘More people who previously worked
for clients now work for FM service providers,’ says Ratcliffe. ‘This
obviously must help, as they understand
the challenges from both sides – and that
can only improve respect between the
parties.’

FM is truly all about the people
when it comes to client/provider
relationships, says Ratcliffe. ‘The best partnerships exist between groups of
people not companies. The test in these
relationships is when people move on or
when a true problem occurs.

‘The “contract in the drawer” is still
talked about but this can be misleading.
It is inevitable that the contract will
“come out of the drawer” when a problem
arises. So the client and service-provider
relationship needs to be in accordance
with the contract so the partnership can
focus on the day-to-day running. The
courtroom is not the place to find out that
partnership is not contractual.’

Disability awareness

With the London 2012 Paralympics fresh in the memory, the question of
whether FM does enough for the UK’s
sizeable community of disabled workers
is worth asking. Susan Scott-Parker is
the founder and chief executive of the
Business Disability Forum (formerly the
Employers’ Forum on Disability).

She believes that the profile and human
potential of disabled people has been
enhanced by the Paralympics. But has
the last eight years seen the profession’s awareness of the potential of disabled
people in the workplace improve?
‘Large public and private sector
organisations routinely report that
their FM providers lack the disability-
specific expertise required to adapt to
how employees can be more productive,’
says Scott-Parker. ‘FM can take too
long to install basic changes to the built
environment, and does not know how
to deliver an efficient, lean process that
delivers adjustments quickly, efficiently and
cost effectively.’

According to Scott-Parker, Business
Disability Forum member organisations
find that FM is ‘often not clear about
who is responsible for what, and to
what standard, when someone needs
an adjustment – be that person an
applicant, employee or customer. Often
this outsourced process can involve
occupational health and IT as well as
FM – yet it’s often unclear how these
departments should collaborate to find
and deliver the solution, and who is
ultimately responsible for it.’

Scott-Parker believes that FM is
pivotal if disabled and older employees
are to maximise their contribution in the
workplace.

2020 vision

Many of the research projects
concerned with the world of work in
2020 point to the impact of collaboration
technologies on the world of work. It’s
surely true that new tools will arrive
with capabilities that we can only guess
at.

One thing that did not exist when we
first published (but seems unavoidable
at any conference these days) is social
media. The tools that enable social
media today will undoubtedly look very
different by the time 2020 comes around.
Perhaps the integrated communication
nirvana they hint at will have become
established by then, forging inescapable
connections between departments – and,
accordingly, establishing FM’s true
value beyond doubt.
do it for that?’ Not every supplier was mature enough to handle that question.’

Van Eck has this to say about the margin: ‘The question was primarily intended to make it clear to the companies that they should submit a price that allowed them to make a healthy profit. We want a contract that you can perform well, so that we don’t have to worry about anything. We also carried out a benchmarking process that was externally validated, so we knew what would be a realistic price.’

Good working conditions

As mentioned above, in addition to the profit margin, good working conditions were also considered an important principle in the tender. The bank wanted the suppliers to provide assurances in this area.

Bruijgoms continues: ‘Things like the minimum wage, training and acceptable workloads needed to be addressed satisfactorily. In addition, we made it clear that we expected more guidance and coaching to be provided in the workplace.’

The contracts specify that ABN Amro will immediately respect any wage increases resulting from Collective Labour Agreements. They also include a clause stating that, in the event of good cleaning results being achieved, the bank will pay a performance bonus to the suppliers, which must be passed on in full to their employees.

On the opposite side of the coin, there is also a potential penalty: a consistent failure to achieve the key performance indicators (KPIs) may lead to part of the work being transferred to one of the other cleaning companies.

Customer perception

Cleaning is performed for the customer’s benefit, so what customers think of the cleaning results is very important. Customer perception is therefore measured four times a year, as it is for catering, security and accommodation. This is carried out among a group of 2,000 bank employees, the composition of which changes each time. The technical quality of the cleaning is periodically audited by an independent third party.

Output-oriented

The transition from process-based to output-oriented cleaning certainly required close attention in the early stages, says Bruijgoms. ‘All the parties had a lot of experience with process-based contracts. But when you switch to output-oriented working, that’s a whole new ballgame. At the beginning of the implementation phase, everything went smoothly, which was quite a surprise for us. Then, however, there were a few setbacks. Take, for instance, something like estimating the amount of work and the hours required for it, or managing the cleaners on the premises. In a process-based contract, a planner draws up the schedule, which is then put into practice. With output-oriented working it is quite different.

‘We were able to make good use of our “look-think-do” approach’

Name: Rian de Jong
Position: Chief Operating Officer Organisation: Gom Cleaning

‘In the process of transition from process-based to results-oriented cleaning, we were able to make good use of our look-think-do approach (only clean what is dirty) for the instruction, management and supervision of our employees. The key learning point was a confirmation of our experiences in previous projects: switching from process-based to results-oriented working requires very open and good communication, both with our employees (the bank understood the importance of the Code at an early stage, and that has had a very positive impact) and with the bank itself (learn to really listen and address the question behind the question).’

This worked out well, at both central and decentralised levels, contributing to the success of the project; and also, of course, to the perception of cleaning quality among ABN Amro employees.

Security/reception services have been designed in the same way, i.e. output-oriented with a greater entrepreneurial element for the suppliers, who are seen as genuine partners rather than just contractors.

Learning points

What were the key learning points in the process? Van Eck: ‘Suppliers often say that reception-oriented contracts are a ‘piece of cake’, but that is not always the case. Switching to output-oriented working took more time than we thought it would. An important learning point for us was the guidance and coaching that had to be provided in the workplace. Cleaners need to learn that they should look at things in a different way, that rooms do not have to be cleaned if no one has worked in them. And that when they enter the premises, they should look at the lobby through the customer’s eyes, so they can make sure that the lobby area is absolutely spotless.’

Bruijgoms, looking back: ‘For me, the big challenge was to break the price spiral. By focusing on the three key principles, we succeeded in concluding a contract that has worked out well for us as the client and for the service providers. In the spring of 2011, the bank discussed this method of contracting with the FNV and CNV trade unions. The unions responded positively to this way of working.’
The office workplace within the United States has undergone monumental changes in the past century. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has cited that Americans spend an average of 90% of their time indoors. As human beings often spend a majority of the hours in the day at their workplace, more so than their home, it is important to understand the effects of the built environment on the US office employee.

According to the Commercial Buildings Energy Consumption Survey (CBECS) as of 2003, there are more than 4.9 million office buildings in existence in the United States alone. As there is a plethora of office classified buildings, it is beneficial for facility managers to understand ways in which workplace design can be improved, as a vast amount of time can be spent at one’s place of employment. Additionally, employee salaries and office real estate are the two largest expenditures in regard to a company’s expenses.

‘It is about understanding how space, the second most expensive resource an organization has (its people being the first), can be leveraged to help those people who work more effectively, and to attract and retain the right people in the first place’ (Becker and Steele, 1995). It is advantageous to investigate the ways employees function within their office environment to ensure occupants are able to be productive and morale is high.

History of the US office

Office building floor plan configurations in the United States have undergone several major transformations throughout the past century. From 1900 to 1950, national economic growths led to the introduction of reinforced concrete and the modular ceiling grid system, which provided greater amounts of leasable business space as well as the creation of several business opportunities (Henderson and Mays, 2003). People were able to meet in a central location which moved the emphasis on agriculture to business.

This also allowed for cities to become more densely populated, creating a need for downtown business facilities with ample transportation.

The time period from 1950 to 1970 promoted the expansion of corporate culture in which organizational space was allocated based upon an employee’s hierarchy. Job titles and ranking equated a standard amount of square footage per employee. Additionally within this timeframe, office environments were designed on the concept of open planning which positioned the entry level employees together based upon their function and department classification. Employees who possessed the ranking of a manager or supervisor were given the prime real estate of the office, which would reside around the building’s interior perimeter with window views. This hierarchy-based floor plan also allowed management to observe employees from their desk, as the open seating arrangement displayed no physical boundaries in eye’s way.

Following thereafter, the years of 1970 to 1990 took advantage of information technology and the stress on electronic communications (Henderson and Mays, 2003). The defined location of an office changed from being one distinct building to having multiple identities which ranged from the home, car, airplane and hotel. This shift in where the work-related tasks took place resided on the dependence of technology, placing a higher concern on independent efficiency. The furniture industry responded to this change in workplace with the creation of modular furniture systems which were flexible, easy to assemble, electrified and customizable.

From 1990 to present time, office environments still are stressing importance on catering to wireless technology, as well as new emphasis on adjustable settings to the user’s preference, environmental sustainability, and individual control over lighting and thermal comfort. Working hours have become integrated to accommodate any person anywhere on Earth, some businesses implementing 24/7 operations. Universal planning, telecommuting, hoteling, webinars, smart phones, remote workstations and downsizing are all buzzwords which became popular from the integration of technology into the workplace.

Psychological findings of office employees

Psychologically, if office employees are content with their working relationships and feel safe within the workplace, their work will yield favorable outcomes. Researchers Staw, Sutton and Pelled (1995) propose that employees who feel and display positive emotions and actions are more likely to experience positive outcomes within their careers. They state that positive emotion has desirable effects on a person’s relationship with their co-workers who promote greater task activity, persistence within challenging situations as well as enhanced cognitive
functioning. Additionally, office employees who often express pleasant attitudes are considered more likable and will be rated higher, as well as possessing the ability to cooperate well with others. The arrangement of the office can affect an employee’s opportunity to build a solid rapport with their co-workers and management team, as well as thwarting it.

Employees who feel safe within their workplace will be more productive than office workers who feel their life is at risk. The physicality of the workplace lends itself for employees to feel safe at their assigned workstation. Discrimination based on age, sex and race can all create employee stress which leads to emotional and behavioral side effects (Hinduja, 2006). If employees are situated in a configuration which does not discriminate upon these factors, the occupant will be more apt to produce higher quality work.

In an ideal office environment, managers and supervisors would be seated near their employees to observe any odd behavior which can negatively affect the morale of the team. Workplace violence is claimed to be the greatest threat to a company, followed by the theft of proprietary information (Carcione, 2000).

Organizational ecology of office environments
‘Organizational ecology’ is a term coined by ‘Workplace by Design’ authors, Franklin Becker and Fritz Steele, to reflect how organizations successfully operate in regard to space and time. This phrase describes the way in which employees are successful in their careers through the decisions of information technology, physical settings, furniture, work processes, human resource policies and hierarchy of management.

In today’s society, the two most popular types of office workstation configurations which are based off of organizational ecology are known as open office environment and closed office environment. Both classifications have advantages and disadvantages, and truly depend upon the specific company and group of individuals who reside in the space to quantify which is more necessary. Facilities in modern times typically are more characteristic of the open office configuration, placing employees in the same desk configuration with equal opportunities for all.

Closed office environment benefits:
• Ability to isolate oneself from visual distractions and audio interruptions;
• Individual employee pulls their own weight within the company;
• Privacy;
• Ability to personalize space; and

Spatially, to functionally tie with the hours equated with their use.

Through studying the patterns of the employees, the company headquarters was renovated to better suit the needs (Figure 2). The number of meeting rooms was increased to hold large groups, at least six conference rooms are able to fit 64 employees. The total seats within the space were increased by 35%, allowing for more creative areas for office employees to accomplish their work tasks, no longer allocating individualized workstations to each employee. The space per person was reduced by 26%, as personal workstation previously was not being occupied for the entirety of the work day (Real Estate Executive Board).

Procter & Gamble
Procter & Gamble (P&G) is a popular maker of products which are divided into three sectors: health and well-being, beauty and household care. Similarly, to the previous case study, P&G was looking to renovate its workplace to benefit the employees and further productivity. Space was rebranded, to introduce the importance of the workplace to employees. Five themes which were the main focus of the renovated space included: space’s function, proper scope, timing for change, scheduling and the bottom line. The values which P&G wanted to communicate to customers and its employees is that the workspace drives competition as it aids employees to be more creative and efficient. Physical space, technology and culture are all key elements to the success of how staff interacts. Figure 3 displays the spectrum of workspace in which collaboration and teaming range. The renovation in which Procter & Gamble pursued ranges on the more collaborative side, with a more uniform design of neighborhoods. This concept is characteristic of an open office environment.

Furthermore, P&G found it beneficial to survey different business units as the needs for each location differed. The Manila, Philippines, location needed to accommodate growth, improve well being while using high collaboration within teams. The Prague, Czech Republic, office wanted to focus on accommodating growth, boosting work effectiveness and allowing for movement across team configurations. As both of these locations projected different values, the space needed to reflect these concerns with the arrangement of space. Surveys then were sent out to understand how the different types of employees cherished their workplace. Through separating employees based on their location style, the importance of the workplace is able to be studied more in depth (Real Estate Executive Board).

Adapting for future generations
The open style office layout may be more attractive to recent college graduates, thus placing a different level of priority upon the configuration of interior space in companies. This incoming workforce is known as the Millennial generation, which includes people born between the years of 1981 and 2000. By 2010, an estimated 31 million of them will be in the US workforce, outnumbering Gen Xers and taking up the slack left by retiring Boomers (Lee, 2011). This statistic displays the importance of understanding the Millennial generation, as they will be dominating the workforce for years to come. Personality characteristics of the Millennial generation include the following: special, sheltered, confident, team-oriented, achieving, pressured and conventional (Howe and Strauss, 2007). This generation carries a sense of entitlement with them, and may not understand the placement of space through a hierarchy-based system which is seen in the closed office configuration.

Millenials are very assertive and are group oriented, believing in egalitarian leadership. This group may have different time schedules than the generations that came before them, operating on a 24/7 timeframe of accomplishing business tasks. Additionally, this generation is motivated to accomplish job tasks through technology, especially up to date smart phones, laptops and tablets. These personality characteristics are imperative for executives of corporations to take into consideration, as their company’s values may not align with the Millennial generation.

Therefore, drawing from this research about the Millennial generations, it is beneficial for companies to understand how their workplace communicates, specifically through spatial organization, technology, furniture choices and management techniques. Facility managers need to assess how the company’s goals are portrayed through the use of space, and ultimately what can better the morale and productivity of the building’s occupants.
The theme of the 2012 conference was FM: Global responsibility, local acting. Excellent facility management was provided in Copenhagen and an excellent service was provided by the hosting organisation and the Bella convention centre. FM was the topic of the business conference and the scientific seminar which featured excellent presentations on business, research and education.

Having last encountered our Members in snowy Kufstein, Austria, we now found ourselves in the comparatively tropical Copenhagen. A very well-organised members’ meeting was held in the beautiful city of Trondheim, Norway, where it was hosted by the NTNU, the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. It is here that FM is being developed using scientific methods, thanks to the work of Prof. Dr. Antje Junghans and Prof. Dr. Tore Haugen. As chair of EuroFM, I would like to express my gratitude to them for all that they are doing and providing for us.

A very successful EFMC 2012 was held in Copenhagen with more than 700 attendees. Excellently hosted by DFM, the City of Copenhagen, IFMA and EuroFM and professionally organised by Informa, the conference was held in a really exceptional venue. This universal and objective approach to organising a European FM conference ensures the contribution of FM knowledge and experience from all over the world, as is the case at the annual WWP conventions organised by IFMA in the USA.

Economic times are difficult in some parts of the world and, particularly, in Europe. But there are also a lot of countries where the economy is growing. In both situations, we, as Facility Managers, can learn from each other. Don’t make mistakes that have been made before. Instead, learn from new, different, undiscovered, innovative approaches to business-property management and leadership.

In my opinion, Basic and Applied Scientific research on the challenges and issues facing FM is a key success factor for developing FM as a profession and as an industry, and, indeed, an attribute to any organisation. It is an attribute that will make the difference between an organisation surviving and progressing in a sustainable way or simply dying out. Copenhagen and Trondheim contributed to this idea in a marvellous way.

And we are not stopping there. Form North to South, from East to West, EuroFM is working to consolidate the FM industry. We are all facing the same problems and challenges. EuroFM is not bounded by EU borders or regulations. We are all, as EuroFM members, working to develop our profession.

I am therefore very happy and also proud to confirm that the next EFMC 2013 will take place in Prague, Czech Republic, in close collaboration with the Slovakian FM organisation. This represents a historical, unique and emotional collaboration which proves that FM is reaching across borders.

Before that, the Bulgarian FM Association conference will be held in Sofia, in October 2012, where Keith Alexander will represent the EuroFM board and, at the same time, I will be representing the board in Istanbul for the first national FM convention in Turkey. Yes, we are growing and developing our FM profession all over the world.

However, before the meeting in Prague, the next EuroFM Members meeting will take place in Zurich, Switzerland, on February 7th-8th. It will be an excellent place to meet and make decisions on activities being organised by members of our Practice, Education and Research network groups.

EuroFM is undergoing great developments and will continue to do so. Join us to be a part of that.

I am looking forward to seeing you all in Zurich, Sofia, Istanbul and/or Prague.
Research Network Group

Antje Junghans, Chair

RNG meeting in Trondheim

The Research Network Group meeting took place in the context of the EuroFM meeting on 12th – 14th September in Trondheim. ‘Research, Innovation, Practice – The future of FM’ was the topic of the three day event, starting with a research workshop chaired by Antje on behalf of EuroFM and the Centre for Real Estate and Facilities Management at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU).

There were about 50 participants from 15 countries who participated in the meeting, representing research, practice and education. They received a broad insight into FM in Norway, in terms of both theory and practice, and participated in networking and round table discussions focusing on topics such as the ‘Future of FM research’, moderated by Tore Haugen (Dean of the Faculty of Architecture and Fine Art at NTNU), and ‘Research and innovation’, moderated by Susanna Caravatti-Felchlin (Chairman EuroFM PNG).

There were also visits, e.g. to the new building of Sparebank 1, guided tours and social events.

The RNG was able to further develop its strategy for research projects and publications, e.g. the FM special issue ‘FM research in Europe’. The next RNG meetings will be in Zurich in February 2013 and at the EMFC in Prague in May 2013. The RNG encourages researchers, professors, PhD students and professionals to actively contribute to the advancement of knowledge in FM.

Congratulations to Keith Alexander (UK) on being elected as the next RNG Chairman (2013-2014) On 14th September 2012, Keith took over as Chairman of the Scientific Committee and will now be responsible for the Research Symposium at the EMFC 2013.

I will hand over the RNG chairmanship to Keith at the beginning of 2013. Thank you all very much for your great support and cooperation over the last two years!

Kind regards
Antje
Information: www.eurofm.org/rng
e-mail: Antje-Junghans@eurofm.org

Research, Innovation, Practice – The future of FM

EuroFM meeting and research workshop were held in Norway

Approximately 50 participants representing 15 countries joined the three day event with the overall topic of Research, Innovation, Practice – The future of FM. The NTNU and EuroFM provided a framework for fruitful networking held in the inspiring atmosphere of the Faculty of Architecture and Fine Art at Norway’s largest Technical University - the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU).

The NTNU has about 20,000 students and is located in Trondheim, central Norway. The University environment provided an excellent setting for encouraging interaction and networking between researchers, educators and practitioners within the field of FM.

FM is a relatively new scientific discipline. The Centre for Real Estate and Facilities Management at the NTNU was among the first FM research centres to be established in a European University. At the event, EuroFM members from all over Europe met key players in Norwegian FM science and practice as well as representatives from the leading FM associations in Norway (NBEF - Norges Bygg-og Eiendomsforening, and NFN - Norwegian Facility Management Network). The three day event, held on 12 – 14 September 2012 proved to be a great success.

European Market Data Report, the group decided to alter their approach of gathering new data using a top-down strategy to a bottom-up approach using the area (m²) and cost (EUR/m²) for different sectors. It was also decided that it will be necessary to broaden research both quantitatively and qualitatively. Using the European standard EN15221 to define the different cost categories is still considered the best option. This standard will become the common framework for the Facility Management market in Europe and should be the general standard used for estimating and calculating the market volume for business.

The six representatives from six different countries also discussed the possibility of establishing a EuroFM Fellowship, as proposed by Prof Keith Alexander, RNG. However, for everyone involved it is very important that the prestige and honour are justified by practical evidence and work within EuroFM that all members can recognize.

The fact that EuroFM is a group of FM associations and not single professionals may also represent an obstacle to this proposal.

In their next meeting in Zürich on February 7th and 8th 2013 the PNG members will discuss what could encourage more practitioners to meet on a European level and what could make EuroFM more valuable for all.

Group of participants taking part in the guided boat tour

Practice Network Group

Susanna Caravatti-Felchlin, Chair

Only a small group of PNG members met at the NTNU in Trondheim on the morning of Friday 14th September 2012. The group started the discussion by considering how EuroFM can attract more professionals from different countries to attend the meetings regularly. Using the EuroFM homepage to display notes on the last PNG meetings and other relevant information is practical but does not facilitate contact between the group members. All representatives will be contacted concerning changes to their personalised access to the homepage which is hoped will encourage them to reconnect. A conference call combined with a live meeting is another form of communication the group will sample.

Concerning the project to update

Education Network Group

A.J.M. Otto MA, Chair

A total of 17 students participated in the Student Poster Competition at the EFMC 2012 in Copenhagen. At the end of the competition, there were only three finalists. The level of the presentations, the research and the posters was very high and the jury had a difficult job. In the end, the winner was Dore Steenhuizen (Hanze University Groningen) with 37 votes, just ahead of Angela klein Schaars (The Hague University) with 32 votes and Matty Kammenga (Hanze University Groningen) with 31 votes.

During the ENG meeting, there was an opportunity to evaluate the Student Poster Competition as well as the very successful Winter School ‘4D Leadership’. The next ENG Winter School will be held in Zurich, Switzerland. The members of the ENG would like to see more Education presentations by lectures and students during EFMC. There must be a better balance between Business, Research and Education. This September, in Trondheim, the ENG talked about creating more synergy between the different network groups and the ENG wants to establish a knowledge-sharing platform for Bachelor, Master and PhD students.
## Editorial Board

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