

Integrated Facility Management – evolution or hype?



Integrated Facility Management (IFM) is more than a trend. It is the next evolutionary step to ensure that facility management in companies is optimized, adding real value.

But why is IFM becoming more and more popular? Some advantages are obvious. An IFM model bundles a wide range of services from a single source. Companies have just one central contact who coordinates everything across sites, regions, or countries. They can rely on centralized processes and standards. This reduces complexity and companies can focus on their core competencies. IFM also helps to increase plant availability and create a better workplace experience.

IFM for the factory

But not all IFM is the same. Many service providers come from traditional facility management focusing on buildings. However, there are completely different requirements in manufacturing. In factories, it's all about asset optimization, higher productivity and mitigating the losses incurred by downtime. To do this, service providers need a depth of technical understanding, must know every plant component and the conditions on site, and understand the special production challenges.

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This is where another current issue comes into play: industrial companies are having major problems recruiting and retaining qualified people with technical skills over the long term. Outsourcing to a specialized service provider is one way to counter the lack of skilled staff.

Strategy, technology, and processes

What does it take to really take facility management to the next level? Implementing an IFM model means a more strategic alignment of the requested outcome of the services in scope. Tailored IFM concepts manage technical and administrative processes equally.

The basis for this is sound technical know-how and consideration of the entire site, not just individual orders. Production is viewed as a holistic end-to-end process, where the risk of failure must be minimized, and the whole life cycle of the facilities must be simultaneously maximized. This is the only way to create an optimal IFM package that includes both hard and soft FM services.

The way to IFM

Integrated facility management is a model that often cannot be achieved in one step. The specifications and requirements of the sites are usually very different. Most often, companies start by bundling services into packages before fully outsourcing all FM activities to one service provider. Or IFM is first introduced at one site and then expanded step by step across several sites, regions, in one country and finally even across countries.

By switching to an IFM model, companies can achieve savings of up to 25% over the contract period.

Not only does the level of IFM maturity vary among companies, but there are also differences between sectors. While the awarding of IFM services has been widespread and very mature for some time in the consumer goods or pharmaceutical industries, for example, IFM is only now gaining momentum in the automotive sector. We are convinced that the future belongs to integrated facility management.

initial 5 steps for a successful IFM

1. Start bundling services into packages and find a reliable outsourcing partner with the right set of skill.
2. Establish a roles and responsibilities matrix and utilize kick-off meetings to get team engagement.
3. Identify the main site requirements but allow flexibility for the partner to deliver the right results.
4. Develop a contract model that meets your requirements and drives the right outcomes.
5. Use a CMMS system as the backbone for managing service performance and tracking KPIs.



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