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The SCIECONF aims at creating a forum for further and deeper discussion in a variety of research fields. It is a well established Virtual opportunity for contacting people, which are not only from single scientific area. The effective cooperation of researchers combining different fields can move advances in research forward.


More than 130 registered authors submitted their works in the SCIECONF 2014. Finally, 103 original research papers were accepted and presented during the conference. All accepted papers went through the double tier reviewing process.

The credit for the success of the conference is to be shared with many colleagues, partners, students, etc. First and foremost our thank belong to the International Reviewers and the Scientific Committee, whose members gave precious inputs and were always side by side with the Organizers.

Congratulations to all Authors and we are looking forward to see you in SCIECONF 2015.

Conference Editorial Board

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Contribution of Facility Management to Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility

Alexander Redlein
Vienna University of Technology, IFM
Vienna, Austria
alexander.redlein@tuwien.ac.at

Michael Zobl
Vienna University of Technology, IFM
Vienna, Austria
michael.zobl@ifm.tuwien.ac.at

Abstract - Facility Management (FM) is the management of a company’s infrastructure. Defining the company’s demands, sourcing, the controlling of the service provision and the constant adaption of all these steps to the continuous change of the company. FM focuses on how facilities can be managed to add value to the core business of a company. The focus on sustainability and corporate social responsibility (CSR) are other trends that, drives FM towards a focus on added value. This article describes the benefits which companies can generate through the use of FM.

Keywords - Facility Management, Sustainability, Corporate Social Responsibility

I. INTRODUCTION

In consequence of the economic crisis it has become extremely important for each company to save costs in every area. At the same time one of the main goals of a company should be reducing its energy consumption and increasing working (environmentally) sustainability. Connecting and fulfilling all of the above is the duty – beside many other tasks – of Facility Management (FM). The significance of FM has grown rapidly over the last years. This management strategy originally stems from America and has taken root in Europe via Great Britain and the Netherlands. In the USA the investment aspect of FM is more emphasized, whereas in Europe Facility Managers rather concentrate on operative processes. Therefore a wide variety of definitions of FM can be found in literature [1]. By a common definition FM is the “integrated management of the workplace to enhance the performance of the organization” [2]. FM is the support function coordinating physical resources and workplace, and support services to user and process of works to support the core business of the organization. The central issues of FM practice consist of place or facility, people or user of the building, and process or activities of the facility [3]. The most common definition of FM is the European Norm EN 15221. The main tasks according to this Norm are: FM is the management of a company’s infrastructure. Defining the company’s demands, sourcing (deciding if the services needed for FM should be outsourced or done internally and the selection of the supplier), the controlling of the service provision and the constant adaption of all these steps to the continuous change of the company [4]. Facility Managers must be prepared to turn their hands to an increasingly wide range of areas to allow the core functions of a company to function effectively. Facility Managers are being viewed as strategic managers of the organization they represent. They have always been seen as key members of the company’s team, but they are now being seen as having the ability to affect the bottom line in the company, rather than as a resource-sapping function. The strategic management of an organization’s assets during times of austerity in particular brings confidence to an organization, allowing the organization to concentrate on core activities rather than worry about peripheral (FM) functions. This can reduce risk to the organization while adding positive value to the organization. Also the role of sustainability manager is sitting within the facilities function. Social responsibility in the form of proactive sustainability can provide an added competitive edge to the organization [5]. Improvement of sustainability of an organization by implementing a life cycle analysis for the facilities is one of the main benefits of FM approaches according to the EN 15221-1 [4]. The main focus of FM has for a long time been on cost reductions, but in the recent years there is a change towards the need for FM to create added value [6]. The value adding by FM is seen as an optimization process, rather than only cost cutting [7]. Besides adding value for the core business of organizations it is becoming increasingly important for FM to add value for society, for instance in terms of sustainability and corporate social responsibility [8]. The value added through the use of FM is not only about monetary effects (cost savings, increase in productivity etc.). It is also about non-monetary effects related to sustainability and corporate social responsibility (CSR). This paper describes the benefits which companies can generate through the use of FM.

II. SUSTAINABILITY AND CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Sustainability is becoming an integral part of FM and most Sustainability Managers are now found in the FM or resources department. The concept of sustainability has become increasingly important in the last years as all try to reduce the resource intensity of the day-to-day lives. Improving the sustainability of the organization could inter alia bring the following benefits (to the company respectively to the FM department): reduce the carbon footprint, raise the profile of the FM department, save money (waste is cash intensive), reduce the long-term reliance on fossil fuels [5]. Sustainability means different things to different people. It can be defined as a goal that allows for the continuing improvement of standards of living without irreversible damage to resources needed for mankind to survive. It is also referred to as being “green” [9]. The World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) defines Sustainability as: "... meeting the needs of the
present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” [10]. An alternative definition of sustainability is: “Improving quality of life consistent with the capacity of supporting infrastructure” [11]. These conservation efforts were first known as recycling, but they have grown in scope over time. More public and private organizations are now taking the responsibility to be kinder to the environment. This is often measured by carbon foot-printing, which is a measure of the amount of carbon dioxide emitted through fossil fuel combustion. It is often expressed as tons of carbon emitted on an annual basis [9]. Sustainability has grown in significance across many public and private organizations. Organizations are concerned with the impact of their business activities on environmental, social and economic sustainability, as well as the impact of sustainability issues on their business. The perception of sustainability has changed over the years as organizations actively incorporate sustainability principles into their core business strategies. Organizations are now integrating sustainability issues into their corporate reports. They do this for several reasons such as complying with regulatory changes or improving their environmental, social and economic reputation. With increasing utility and maintenance/repair costs, coupled with legislative and regulatory requirements on energy use and carbon reduction, many organizations have developed sustainability policies as a part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) [10].

CSR covers a wide range of issues such as plant closures, employee relations, human rights, corporate ethics, community relations and the environment. The World Business Council for Sustainable Development defines CSR as: “... the ethical behavior of a company towards society ... management acting responsibly in its relationships with other stakeholders who have a legitimate interest in the business. CSR is the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large” [12]. In October 2011 the European Commission published a new policy on CSR. The commission defines CSR as “the responsibility of enterprises for their impact on society”. To fully meet their CSR, companies should have in place a process to integrate social, environmental, ethical, human rights and consumer concerns into their business operations and core strategy in close collaboration with their stakeholders. CSR concerns actions by companies over and above their legal obligations towards society and the environment. It enables companies to better anticipate and take advantage of fast changing societal expectations and operating conditions. It can therefore drive the development of new markets and create opportunities for growth. Through CSR, enterprises can contribute to the European Union’s treaty objectives of sustainable development and a highly competitive social market economy. CSR offers a set of values on which to build a more cohesive society and a sustainable economic system [13]. Margolis and Walsh (2003) described that an estimated number of 122 published studies empirically examined the relationships between CSR with financial performance during the period 1971-2001. The positive results revealed that corporate managers should routinely take CSR management into account in business decision making. Researchers have identified the reasons why organizations develop CSR strategies, such as reputation improvement, government regulations, competitive advantage, stakeholder pressure, critical events, and top management pressures. CSR strategies include investment in innovative activities regarding products and management, investments in human and ecological capability, policies with integration of economic, natural, and social capital. The reason most companies take CSR actions is either for the purpose of complying with (government) regulations or as a response to external constraints. Also competitiveness plays a critical role that leads companies to sustainability. To be competitive, companies also have to demonstrate the CSR management of business [14].

III. FACILITY MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY/CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Buildings contribute as much as one third of total global greenhouse gas emissions and the building sector has the most potential for delivering significant and cost-effective greenhouse gas emissions reductions in western economies. Over 80% of greenhouse gas emissions take place during the operational phase of buildings and is (or should be) under the control of FM. Sarajosa and Altonen (2012) studied environmental sustainability from the occupier organization perspective and identified in a case study the ways to create added value through greener FM processes. The study showed, that improving the environmental performance of facilities and (facility) services does not only decrease the energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, but also contributes to the organization in other ways. Greener FM services have a potential to affect employee/human wellbeing and productivity, improve image of the occupier organization, and last but not least decrease costs at the same time. With new technologies, the energy consumption in new and existing buildings can be cut by an estimated 30-80% with potential net profit during the building life-span [8]. Elmualim et al. (2010) and Shah (2007) emphasize that FM activities have a significant influence on how buildings and facilities are used and therefore are tasked to promote and implement the sustainability policies. Elmualim et al. (2010) highlighted in a study of the barriers and commitment of FM profession to the sustainability agenda that FM professionals, tasked with implementing and managing sustainability as a core business strategy, face many responsibilities as well as challenges. They also have the best chance to add value to their organizations and costumers through efficient and effective management of sustainability issues and practices. The efficient management of facilities and (facility) services do have a significant influence in determining profitability, productivity, energy management, waste management, employee wellbeing and public perception of an organization. The IFMA report (2007) based on a research examining the future demands on Facility Managers noted that sustainability was a key issue where Facility Managers had to develop their competencies to face the demands, challenges and opportunities of sustainable development and practices. The report stated that Facility Managers had to develop and implement programs to reduce, reuse and recycle waste, and work closely with end users to anticipate changes and conserve energy. The responsibilities include reviewing or monitoring amount of energy used by the
facilities, adopting energy efficiency measures like switching to efficient lighting equipment, matching heating and cooling ventilation equipment to facility loads to reduce energy consumption. Elmuamim et al. (2012) conducted a questionnaire survey of Facility Managers in the UK to identify drivers and issues that influence and support good sustainable practices. A total of 268 Facility Managers responded. The results indicate that legislation is the most important driver for the implementation of sustainable practices. Demand for efficient monitoring, management and reporting on environmental impact was not highly rated even though the top three issues of sustainability managed by Facility Managers are energy management, waste and recycling management and carbon footprint. Facility Managers are expected to take ownership of activities assigned to the reduction of carbon emission. FM will take a vital role in delivering a comprehensive sustainability policy due to the rising legislation, public scrutiny, as well as the needed business case for genuinely embracing sustainability. Facility Managers have a great role in advancing the sustainability agenda in the built environment through the practice of sustainable FM [10].

CSR is another area which is essential for FM to create value in the future. A growing number of companies disclose social and economical information. SMEs often communicate such information informally and on a voluntary basis. CorporateRegister.com estimates that about 2,500 European companies publish CSR or sustainability reports. In the German-speaking countries (Austria, Germany, Switzerland) the number of published CSR reports has doubled in the last years. These reports include the strategic goals of an organization in terms of sustainability. Also the operational implementation and the results of the various measures are presented. According to a MBA study of FuKe (2012) at the Vienna University of Technology about 97% of the CSR goals count to a Facility Manager's field of functions (e.g. environment, energy efficiency, transport, waste, cleaning, green building), but in only 12% of all these reports FM is mentioned [15]. This means that Facility Managers need to start taking on the role of a manager more strongly and the communication between FM department and the chairman should improve. According to the study of the IFM (Vienna University of Technology) in the year 2012 only about 13% of the surveyed companies (N=82) have notes or cross-references to FM in their CSR reports. The topics carbon dioxide and energy efficiency are the main goals of more than 90% of the analyzed companies. These are core functions of FM according to the EN 15221-4 and the GEFMA 100. Also the reduction of water and paper consumption is key objective in both the CSR and in the area of FM. In the last years cost reduction in the FM area was in the foreground. Actual results of the IFM (real estate and facility management) show that the goals/strategies sustainability, quality assurance and environmental protection are becoming increasingly important. There is thus a higher sensitivity to CSR and sustainability. Through methods and measures such as reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, waste management, sustainable use of resources, FM can directly influence CSR and contributes to social responsibility. Simultaneously FM achieves high sustainability effects.

IV. CONCLUSION

In most of the companies the topics sustainability, environmental protection and CSR are becoming increasingly important. This is also reflected by the increasing number of published CSR reports. Though, many of the topics fall within the competence of FM are not associated with FM. So there is still a need for action. Besides adding value to the core business of organizations, FM can also add value to society, in terms of sustainability, environmental protection and CSR.

REFERENCES

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Ing. Toni Soklevski PhDc
Senior lecturer of Operations and Project Management
Director of Business Academy Smilevski