

**Title of Dissertation:** Facilities Management within the Irish Construction Industry

**Sub Title:** The application of Facilities Management as a business strategy throughout the Construction Management Stage in reducing sustainability impacts and whole life cycle costs for the Client.

This dissertation examines the profession of Facilities Management in regards to its current and potential role within both the worldwide and Irish Construction Industry. The main research purpose of this dissertation is to examine the claim that by introducing the Facilities Manager throughout the Construction Management Stage instead of just as an operational tool after construction, can ultimately result in significant savings throughout the life cycle, and therefore play a substantial role in the overall business strategy for the Client.

Throughout the course of the literature reviewed there were split opinions towards the current and potential role of Facilities Management. On one side of the argument there are scholars such as Amaratunga and Baldry (2003) who believe that Facilities Management is a core business strategy and has provided a new cost focus for buildings. This is strongly contested by Jay and Ooi (2001) who state that Facilities Management is routed to an operational tool and has done little to deserve the accreditation of the word profession. There are other academics as Shah (2007) that claim that the Facilities Manger if integrated early into the construction process can help maxamise sustainability and construction potential. This once again is contested by Price (2004) in that Facilities Management has developed into a cost cutting exercise, with its main focus been concerned at an operational and not strategic level.

In order to investigate these contrasting claims the case study of the Sports Surgery Clinic Santry was selected, as at present there is an aggressive savings programme been introduced based around better energy management. This case study was selected in order to investigate through in depth research and further interviews, that if the Facilities Manager was introduced into the Construction Management Stage that

the Better Energy Management Plan could have been realised during the construction process. There was a resounding agreement established between all the interviewees, in that if early collaboration occurred between the Facilities Manager and the Design Team that costs over the Clinics lifecycle would have been reduced, with the need for the Better Energy Management Plan becoming redundant as the Facilities Manager could have used their practical knowledge to highlight these savings from the start. The current Facilities Team also provides a vital experience to external visitors and contributes significantly to the business strategy of the Clinic. Despite these benefits the Facilities Team due to a lack of knowledge from other professionals within the Clinic is only viewed as an operational service.

The questionnaire gathered additional primary research information in regards to the opinions of different professions within the Irish Construction Industry towards the current and potential role of Facilities Management. The questionnaire found that 88% of the respondents believe that Facilities Management should be applied as a business strategy. The results also show that 98% of all the respondents either fully or partially agree with the claim that the Facilities Manager can play a key role in maximizing sustainability and construction potential if integrated in an early capacity. The questionnaire also explored the current construction ethos towards Client's needs, and suggests that a more innovative approach in matching these needs was through the partnering of the Project and Facilities Manager along with the Design Team throughout the Construction Stage, which resulted with 92% of the questionnaire in agreement. Despite these encouraging results, 86% of the respondents claim in part that Facilities Management is not viewed as an actual profession.

The results from the primary and secondary research strongly advocate that Facilities Management should be applied as a business strategy throughout the Design and parts of the Construction Stage, as so to reduce possible sustainability impacts and life cycle costs for the Client. This approach would maximise the buildability of the structure and make sure criteria that is usually overlooked at construction is properly addressed i.e. sustainability, space planning, plant room design, etc. Despite the outlined benefits, the profession of Facilities Management still faces an identity crisis and will be confined to the shadows of the Irish Construction world unless it begins to aggressively assert and promote its true potential.

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