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FROM THE CHAIR



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Futures thinking

All organizations are focusing on the unpredictable future. This unpredictability forces us to seek opportunities, interpreting issues not visible to us, yet, or enhancing the abilities to identify things unsaid or written in between the lines.

When thinking about the future of EuroFM, we have decided to go back to our mission and start the futures thinking from there. EuroFM is there to advance knowledge in FM and ensure its effective application in practice, research and education. We want to offer a platform to all actors interested in FM, no matter where they come from. We are not an association of associations, but a forum for individuals, institutions and organizations to connect with each other – and more importantly – to stay connected.

The cultural diversity of Europe and the versatility of the FM community set high demands even for organizing conferences and networking. During these decades EuroFM has been able to establish a sound, well known and attractive conference tradition as well as a platform for all actors to join.

However, there is still a huge need for more visibility and understanding, what FM really is. Our colleagues in the US and Latin America have similar needs. Therefore, I would like to see more integration and cooperation within the FM actors and FM conference organizers globally. We should be able to establish partnerships like EuroFM and CIFMers, or IFMA and RICS, which are based on mutual trust and shared goals. If we can show to the rest of the world that we are united and share the aligned vision within the industry globally, the better chances we have in getting visibility and understanding from others.

What future?

Nancy van Elsacker, the CEO of TopDesk USA, sees Facility Management as the binding factor between internal and external, between the organization and the market. She demands more collaboration of organizations, opening our doors to others, not reinventing the wheel over and over again and finally sharing our knowledge in order to make great progress.

Similarly, The ISS Group, one of the forerunners in the FM industry's futures thinking predicts, that by the year 2020 expanding technologies, stricter government regulations and increasing customer expectations will reshape the facility management industry.

Already in 2007 McKinsey consultants predicted that top management of organizations should put emphasis on mobilizing their

“mind power of the workforce” and reaching to their “underutilized talents, knowledge and relationships and skills”. They saw needs for organizations to open their strategy processes and to share their ideas with a broader audience.

In order to stay future-oriented, a constant change in education is also required. Educational institutions should be able to proactively “read” the developments within the FM industry and transfer that knowledge and know-how into curricula in an enormous speed. Universities should be able to deliver FM professionals of the future with futures thinking mindset, not with yesterday's knowledge. Focus should be on skills development, not on degrees.

Within the FM Industry we should not see each other as competition. Actually, competition and demands for change come from the outside. Instead of focusing on finding the alignment within the industry, we should focus on things happening outside our FM scope.

FM Thinking instead of FM Doing!

During the past years lots of effort is put to defining, what FM actually is? Along with the initiatives like “Define FM”, we should start analyzing, what is “FM Thinking”? In Finland, like in many other countries, StartUp-environments are developing in an enormous speed.

“The mind power” – the mindset of young entrepreneurs is a powerful driving force of new businesses. Should we be able to intervene in these types of actors outside the FM industry and enhance the understanding of what FM Thinking is? Obviously, FM Thinking is different from FM Doing, and we as FM Professionals should first be able to distinguish between those two.

Service Design Thinking is a phenomena that has become a popular topic within the service industry. There are network organizations that have started mentoring programs for StartUp-companies in order to help them adapt Service Design Thinking already in the very early stage of their business. Global Shopping Center actors have also started their mentoring schemes amongst their potential future work force. Many other fields of business have started similar developments.

EuroFM is willing to act as a connecting body for these types of initiatives. If you have ideas of FM Thinking-mentoring schemes, share your thoughts with our network professionals. The EuroFM member universities could play a major role in these developments. They have hundreds of thousands of potential students and future entrepreneurs within their reach. In other words, we already have a platform for FM Thinking-mentoring scheme.

In EuroFM we understand that building a platform and acting like one is not enough – nor is it a final goal. We are part of a FM

journey, which has had and will have its ups and downs. In order to succeed, we need open and transparent communication, willingness to share our knowledge, a mindset open to new ways of thinking and an ability to come out from our comfort zones – meet the unknown with a positive mindset.

The 2017 EFMC in Madrid is a good opportunity for us to start this Futures Thinking. Join us and share your knowledge for the prosperous future!

FROM THE EDUCATION NETWORK GROUP



Olga van Diermen
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Education Network Group: a joint brand name

The exciting elections in the Netherlands were just decided last month, on March 15 2017. During the election campaign, the Dutch newspapers published lots of articles on every possible political subject, to inform the Dutch voters. However, I read the most interesting article several days after the election results: an interview with the man who is responsible for all relocations at the Binnenhof, the Dutch Houses of Parliament. His challenge was to solve the jigsaw puzzle of square meters in order to accommodate every (new) member of Parliament. A challenging FM task!

Not only the Dutch government, yet more and more organisations worldwide are realizing the value of smooth operations for high performance. FM seems to be a strategic asset. Just as important as the employees of the organisation, data storage and exchange and budgetary means.