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**Global FM International Workshops in Brazil and USA
Discuss “New Economy” Theme**

BRUSSELS, Belgium — (05 December 2011) IFMA’s World Workplace 2011 Conference & Expo hosted the latest in the series of Global FM International Workshops in Phoenix, Arizona on 28 October 2011. Well over 100 people joined the workshop where Global FM put together a panel representing several countries and continents as well as different perspectives on facilities management.

Philip Lo, CEO of LEXCO, started IFMA’s Hong Kong chapter in 1992; Steve Jones from the U.K. represented Qube Global Software, Peter Ankerstjerne, ISS and Yannick Annezo, Vinci – all three Global FM sponsors; Susanna Caravatti-Felchlin is a board member of the Swiss FM association; Brazilian FM association ABRAFAC was represented by Mauro Campos and Ondrej Strup partner at Hein Consulting Group spoke on behalf of some of the eastern European countries.

Global FM Chair Teena Shouse presided as the panel discussed the 2011 workshop theme - “The New Economy: The Right Time and the Right Place for FM.”

Lo recalled that people really appreciated the value of FM in 1997 when the economic crisis hit but he believes FM can thrive in better economic times as well as during adversity. He sees tremendous opportunities in Asia: “The emphasis has been on speed of development but in the next phase it will be on quality.”

Caravatti-Felchlin was clear that FM is making strong progress, with new FM divisions established at the same level as core functions in many organisations: “FM can influence profitability through optimising space and services,” she said.

There are two sides to the FM story, said Jones. While outsourcing of FM has picked up in some markets, capital projects are being pulled on a regular basis.

Strup explained that in the Czech Republic and other countries there is confusion and potential conflict with asset management. For him it is clear: “the problems of people in buildings are for FMs to deal with.”

Citing research undertaken with the Copenhagen Institute of Future Studies, Ankerstjerne said sustainability is moving from “something talked about to something we live on a daily basis.”

The 2014 World Cup and Olympics two years later will raise the profile of FM in Brazil said Campos. FM is still not really recognised in the country but ABRAFAC is working hard to change that. Of the 250 people attending the international workshop in São Paulo, held the week before World Workplace, for maybe a third it was the first time they had connected with FM.

The wide-ranging discussion following the opening shots from the panel touched on the potential conflict between FMs wanting to take a longer-term view and a C-suite focused on shorter-term returns; the commitment of governments and business to sustainability in the face of cost pressures; and the merging of FM and real estate.

Duncan Waddell explained that Australia's carbon tax and restrictions on letting poorly performing buildings were now a reality, increasing the cost of doing business. He urged FM professionals to coordinate on a global basis to ensure governments take action that is well thought out.

"This well attended session is testimony to the fact that facility managers around the world face similar issues and events like this enrich their competencies. Many agreed that FM professionals are indeed in the right place at the right time to have a positive impact on their organizations," commented Shouse.

During the ABRAFAC Congress in October, Prof. Moacyr da Graça (from University of São Paulo), Celina Antunes (CEO for South America – Cushman Wakefield), Teena Shouse, Global FM Chair, Stan Mitchell, CEO Key Facilities Management International, and Alex Lam (OCB Network Inc) all shared their reflections on the workshop.

Alex stated, "Over 30 years of FM development in the industry has resulted in a well-disciplined profession and has provided major contributions to a better workplace environment."

"In order for the profession to meet the needs of the future with the exponential advances of technology and the influence of a global economy, we must step out of our technical mindset to innovate and align ourselves with the business world."

His panel contribution was motivated by the Disruptive Innovation Theory developed at Harvard; an attempt to stimulate our creativity to explore the future of FM.

Shouse's approach to the subject was fairly straight forward, "This new economy is part of the business cycle as it helps us to "reset" or re-calibrate what's important. It is also a very good opportunity for elevated stature for the facilities organisation as companies are looking for efficiencies and new operational opportunities."

It was no surprise that Prof. da Graça gave us a glimpse of the future of FM by taking us back in time and then connecting the current advancements to the future of FM. This approach complemented Mitchell's views on how standardisation is so necessary for the future to meet the challenges in a way that is scalable and economical.

Antunes agreed with the other presenters but added the necessary layer of intelligence from the outsource provider standpoint. She said that the expectations of the clients do not always match the finances available for the effective operation of the facility. The session was well organised, attended and received.

The next Global FM International Workshop will be held during the MEFMA Conference, 13-14 February 2012 in Dubai, UAE.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

About Global FM

Global FM is an international not-for-profit organization based in Brussels, Belgium. It represents a worldwide community of organizations that provide leadership in facilities management. Global FM's vision is to achieve Global recognition of facilities management profession and its mission is to promote the strategic value and progress of facilities management. For more information, visit www.globalfm.org.

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