

## **Boom times ahead for buildings management industry**

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**FM Expo, the Middle East's leading facilities management event, opens tomorrow May 24, 2009 with organiser Streamline Marketing Group, boasting a 30% increase in the number of international exhibitors compared with last year.**

Louisa Theobald, Group Exhibitions Director of Streamline Marketing Group, organisers of FM Expo and the Property and FM Conference, said:

'As the boom in construction across the region begins to slow and the number of completed buildings increases, the facilities management industry is beginning to show the much anticipated signs that it will eventually surpass construction.'

FM Expo, the leading event in the region dedicated to property and facilities management, continues to grow with the regional market estimated to be worth \$704bn over the next 25 years by Middle East Strategy Advisors.

'The facilities management sector is increasingly buoyant as property owners become more aware of its importance to their bottomline,' said Theobald.

Theobald added, 'The introduction of facilities management from conception is now seen as essential in keeping subsequent maintenance costs to a minimum. It has been estimated that the initial development cost of a facility is only 20% of the total money spent across the lifetime of a building with facilities management and maintenance making up the remaining 80%.'

'Integration of facilities management in the early stages can save developers millions of dollars in the long-term. New green building and property management regulations along with energy management demands are all adding to the growth of the sector,' added Theobald.

Mick Dalton, General Manager at Abu Dhabi-based Marafeq Facilities Management and a past chairman of the British Institute of Facilities Management, is chairing the two-day Property and Facilities Management conference taking place from 24-28 May at the Al Murooj Rotana Hotel, Dubai. Dalton believes green building regulations will reduce utility bills and create managerial, technical and general jobs in the facilities management sector at little or no extra cost to building owners.

A keynote address on facilities management strategies to overcome current challenges will be delivered by Stan Mitchell, CEO of Key Facilities Management International, and founding Chairman of the Global Facility Management Association.

He will be urging public and private property owners and developers to realise that facilities management can help soften the impact of the economic downturn as well as help to preserve the region's global reputation for iconic buildings that attract tourists and business.

'The facilities management sector has a huge part to play not just in supporting the real estate industry throughout the Middle East, but also in assisting the region to extend the life cycle of its iconic structures,' added Theobald.

Platinum sponsor for FM Expo 2009 is Etisalat Facilities Management, which is also supporting the conference.

(AME Info)