

The Essential Guide to Facilities Technology: Tools You Need To Win The New Game

AI, Machine Learning, Smart Automation



Table of Contents

Introduction	02
<hr/>	
The Facilities Management Technology Adoption Landscape	04
Old Game vs New Game in Facilities Management	05
Smart Automation	07
Artificial Intelligence	09
Machine Learning	11
<hr/>	
Conclusion	13

Introduction

From Marc Balzamo, Founder of Fexa



As a long-time veteran of the facilities management industry, I have been on both sides of the table as both a consumer and provider of technology. I couldn't be more enthusiastic about the possibilities that new technology brings to solving real challenges for the industry.

There is a lot of buzz around how technology can help facilities management and asset management for multi-location businesses. And, as a long-time veteran of the facilities management industry, I couldn't be more enthusiastic about the possibilities. At Fexa, we are seeing the measurable results our customers are getting by leveraging technology available today in the Fexa platform.

As I look out more broadly in the industry, I draw on my experience within the industry and from the perspective of being both a consumer and provider of technology solutions. I bring a deep appreciation for the real challenges and opportunities faced by facilities management, operations management, and maintenance providers.

Technology alone does not create value in the business. When newer technologies initially become available, there will always be some barriers to adoption at scale. Over time, as the industry embraces the technology, those barriers to adoption are overcome. An ecosystem of both adjacent capabilities and different types of partners tends to surface over time that supports broader adoption of the technology as it matures.



While I am very bullish on technology that is currently available and maturing for our industry, I am also pragmatic about the need to meet customers where they are. Different customers tend to be at different phases of technology adoption across the facilities and asset management spectrum.

At Fexa, we work to bring our fundamental understanding of facilities and asset management challenges and opportunities to the engagement so that we can help our customers really put the technology to work for them to achieve measurable outcomes in efficiency improvements and cost savings as a result of the technology adoption. And, because we work with both the retailers or operators who orchestrate and consume management and maintenance services as well as the providers who deliver those services, we have a comprehensive end-to-end perspective on the business.



Marc Balzamo

Founder of Fexa



The Facilities Management Technology Adoption Landscape

We are seeing customer adoption maturity take a number of different stages, going from manual systems like spreadsheets and email all the way to mature data models utilizing AI, IoT, and Machine Learning.

The opportunities for significant savings in both time and money to businesses are available today. Taking even the first few steps of adopting technology that is mature, available, and affordable today can make a huge difference for facilities management and asset management teams looking to provide greater value to the business.

So when you hear about new technologies that seem like science fiction, know that they are much closer than you think to being a reality. However, also, be aware that there is a hype factor and buzz that are sometimes unwarranted as some providers use them to allure customers and investors.

As a long time veteran in this business, here is my take on the promises and maturity of several technologies based on customer adoption readiness that I've observed. The environment is exciting and dynamic, and surprisingly to many, as Covid 19 ravaged the globe, it actually had a silver lining of accelerating the efforts of many multi-location businesses to develop and act upon their digital transformation plans at the next level.

Old Game vs New Game in Facilities Management

OLD GAME		NEW GAME
Strategy	Centralize everything	Automate by default
Data	Benchmark = Answer	Input to a human-guided model
Provider relationships	Transactional	Partnership
Workflow	One size fits all	Bend to the operating model
Tech platform revenue	Extract margin from services	Pay for value
Sustainability and compliance	Reactive, nice to have	Proactive, must have

The facilities management landscape has changed, and the old playbook no longer cuts it.

Success in this new game requires a shift in strategy—from simply centralizing work orders to automating processes by default, and from relying on generic benchmarks to leveraging data uniquely tailored to your business goals. Today’s leaders treat providers as true partners, align workflows with their business’s specific needs, and demand transparency from tech platforms to ensure technology works for them, not the other way around. Compliance and sustainability, once afterthoughts, are now integral to operations.

To thrive in this new game, facilities teams are turning to advanced tools like AI, machine learning, and smart automation. These technologies allow for predictive maintenance, adaptive workflows, and deeper data insights, helping teams stay ahead of the curve and achieve efficiency, consistency, and growth.

This was previously discussed by current Fexa CEO Kurt Smith in a keynote presentation at FacilitiesX. You may watch it in full [here](#).

Facilities Management Technology Adoption



Mature Data Models & Partner with Providers & Suppliers to Leverage AI, ML, & IoT



Leverage Smart Automation for Facilities & Asset Management



Adopt & Leverage Purpose-Built Facilities & Asset Management S/W



Adopt Software-Based Work Order Management Solution



Spreadsheets and Email

Smart Automation

in Facilities and Asset Management

What is Smart Automation?

Smart Automation is the **ability to tap into data and business logic within a software solution** to determine the next step in automating a process.

How it Benefits the Work of Facilities Management

Provides nearly immediate **time savings and increases compliance, consistency, and overall quality** of work.

Customer Adoption Maturity

Ramping Fast.

Biggest Barriers to Overcome

Garnering executive support to make the investment in software through **understanding and communicating the ROI.**

Identifying the **right consultative partners** to help you identify the optimized workflow for your business and objectives.



Example Use Cases: **Smart Automation** in Facilities and Asset Management

There are countless use cases for this technological capability for facilities management and asset management solutions. Just some examples include:

Automating Facilities Maintenance Dispatch According to Work Attributes

Using business logic based on classification of work, location of work, and urgency to automatically dispatch a particular provider that offers the best cost/performance for that specific scenario.

Automating Compliance Gates Before Invoices Are Submitted for Work Performed

Requiring adherence to a specific set of criteria before a [provider can submit an invoice for work completed](#). Typical examples might include a requirement to attach a photo of before/after work and invoice costs by category across parts/labor.

Automating Vendor Dispatched Based on In-Warranty Status Scenario

Automating the assignment of any [reactive work associated with an in-warranty asset](#) to the appropriate vendor, avoiding unnecessary expense.



Artificial Intelligence

for Facilities and Asset Management

What is Artificial Intelligence?

Artificial Intelligence is the **use of computer systems able to perform tasks that normally require human intelligence**, such as visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and translation between languages. ([Source](#)).

How it Benefits the Work of Facilities Management

There are extensive opportunities for more sophisticated asset management of high dollar assets. Ultimately, AI will be employed to **accelerate and optimize day-to-day decisions** and trigger actionable next steps.

Customer Adoption Maturity

Still new, but ramping with specific use cases often as partnerships between OEM and large-scale purchasers.

Biggest Barriers to Overcome

A **study performed in 2020 by Deloitte**, noted that many businesses still face challenges in adopting AI due to challenges with critical predecessors to exploiting AI — data hygiene and data management.



Example Use Cases: **Artificial Intelligence** in Facilities and Asset Management

Artificial intelligence has received broad adoption with impressive outcomes for many industries today. Contrary to the images of cyborgs and science fiction, AI is employed every day to provide you with personalized experiences – whether it be through your latest google search, or the ads that fill your feed in social media, or a better experience with a call center based on speech recognition and language translations.

In facilities maintenance and management, the use cases are quite varied. Just some examples include:

Sentiment Analysis

A relatively simple application is around sentiment analysis in post work completion reviews – alerting facilities teams to areas where user dissatisfaction was particularly high so that they can quickly address the situation.

Visual Inspection

Sophisticated use of images and AI based visual inspection are increasingly present in manufacturing environments and will likely be extended to support maintenance and repair decisions in the future.

Speech Recognition

Speech recognition can be integrated into facilities and asset management workflow platforms to eliminate cumbersome manual entry of status updates, as example, for field technicians.



Machine Learning

for Facilities and Asset Management

What is Machine Learning?

Machine learning is actually an application of artificial intelligence (AI) that **provides systems the ability to automatically learn and improve from experience without being explicitly programmed by humans.**

How it Benefits the Work of Facilities Management

Benefits include (if the algorithms are properly trained) **continuous improvements in efficiency, efficacy, and outcomes for facilities management and asset management processes.**

Customer Adoption Maturity

Still new, but **ramping among the most digitally sophisticated companies.**

Biggest Barriers to Overcome

Time and investment required for data collection and funding the initiatives.

A **recent study** also noted remaining barriers of maintaining device security and device onboarding, testing, and certification.



Example Use Cases: **Machine Learning** in Facilities and Asset Management

Tremendous promise and likely new business models will surface for both facilities management teams and their service providers tapping into machine learning.

Some examples include:

Extending the Life Cycle and Performance of High Value Assets

For high value assets there is potentially significant value in predictive analytics and algorithm based maintenance using sensors, IoT (internet of things), and machine learning.

Automating Smart Building Adaptation to Environmental Factors

As buildings and spaces become more broadly equipped with sensors for everything from temperature control, healthy airflow assessment, stability sensors, and more – the ability to optimize the environment dynamically offers opportunities for enhancing customer experience and optimizing costs.

Highly Specified Proactive Maintenance Alerts for High Value Assets

Predictive maintenance alerts derived from dynamic recipes for every unique scenario of conditions in a specific supplier's equipment offering Facilities maintenance teams real-time recommendations for specific proactive maintenance.

Conclusion

It will take a community.

At Fexa, we are committed to delivering the best technology to our customers through our modern, innovative platform. But we also recognize that a truly comprehensive solution for our customers will require a community of partners working together.

We welcome ideas and collaboration from our current partners—and those we have yet to meet—to strengthen our shared community of facilities managers and providers.

No matter where you are in your technology adoption journey, our advice is to **keep moving forward**. Partnering with knowledgeable allies like us here at Fexa, where we view your success as our own, can make all the difference.

We would love the opportunity to work with you and your team to better understand your goals and identify ways that Fexa can help you save time, reduce costs, and succeed in today's evolving landscape.

About Fexa

Fexa delivers advanced facility management software tailored for multi-site businesses. Our highly configurable CMMS platform helps companies streamline operations, ensure compliance, and boost efficiency. Trusted by leading brands like Dollar General, Five Guys, and Crate & Barrel, Fexa supports nearly 2 million locations daily.

Request a demo at <https://info.fexa.io/lp/fexa-request-a-demo>.