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STOCKING UP – A ONE-STOP APPROACH TO EFFECTIVE FACILITIES MANAGEMENT PARTNERING

Facilities managers looking to keep pace with their clients' needs require a total 'proposition' at all times. So, how can this be achieved to include accurate cost control, forward-planning, product availability and consistency of service, to enable facilities management (FM) companies to meet the demanding needs of their clients and still remain competitive?

Stephen Henagulph, business to business manager, at Screwfix discusses how FM companies are increasingly recognising the benefits of a one-stop-shop approach to stock management, which provides access to a wide-range of essential products without delay, accurate reporting and forward-planning procurement strategies.

Today, running an effective and efficient FM service is big business. Clients who place their trust in external suppliers to make sure their operations run smoothly do so expecting the service they are paying for to really deliver. If not, there is plenty of competition from a growing outsourcing market to take their place.

For FM companies and their facilities managers, the need to provide a holistic service that meets and exceeds the requirements of their clients, while also driving profits for their own business is paramount. They have to be in control of many aspects including procurement strategies, stock management and control, budgeting, forward-planning and immediate responsiveness to situations as they arise. Keeping on top of such requirements can be a tall order, especially as facility teams have to contend with the plethora of daily operational demands they could face on site, be it a blocked toilet, faulty air conditioning or a simple bulb replacement. In effect, the team managers are running small enterprises and have to keep abreast of many aspects - financial, planning and delivery - so the end client is continually satisfied with the service they are paying for.

To help hard-pressed FM teams, the bespoke support provided by specialists such as Screwfix Business Services is growing increasingly popular. Designed to work alongside facilities managers, the service offers a one-stop-shop for quick and effective access to vital information and a broad product portfolio as and when required.

A case in point is the demand for critical procurement and stock level management information often required for reporting purposes. Knowing that this information is accessible seven days a week means that account analysis, financial commitments, stock availability, stock control and pricing is easily available. Large FM companies with responsibility for significant nationwide contracts are increasingly seeing the benefit of such an integrated partnership service, which provides them with the ability to negotiate bespoke trading terms at a national level, develop long-term partnering strategies and put in place contract agreements.

For those using a Business Services solution, dedicated account managers provide a consistent and expert service by understanding the particular nuances and requirements of the FM company. Backed by a cutting-edge product ordering service that can cater for next day delivery or store pick up just five minutes after ordering by phone or online, over 24,000 product lines including, trade tools, hardware, plumbing and electrical products are readily available, without delay.

In addition, for those using Screwfix's Business Services, the provision of a specialist ex-VAT catalogue, which is able to be uploaded onto the facilities team's procurement system, is another way to shorten turnaround times. This in turn reduces administration costs and supplier listings when it comes to getting the right product at the right time, whether that be a replacement light, new drill or simply cleaning supplies.

The simplicity of such a service is at the heart of its appeal. With many other challenges and pressures already impinging upon relationships between FMs and their clients, the knowledge that immediate access to competitively priced products across a range of categories, backed by accurate reporting information and dedicated personnel is available, is a real benefit to FM companies.

Ultimately, delivering service levels agreed with end clients is the core objective for facilities managers, so by freeing up time spent on stock purchasing and forward-planning of stock

procurement levels, they can concentrate on meeting these levels and therefore, remain competitive.

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Note to editors

About Screwfix:

Screwfix is part of Kingfisher plc, Europe's leading home improvement retail group and the third largest in the world www.kingfisher.com. Screwfix is recognised as being "where the trade buys" offering a straightforward and transparently-priced retail experience that enables busy tradesmen to shop 23,000 products over the phone, online, via their mobile or from their local store.

- From power tools and workwear to cables and pipe fittings, more than 11,000 products are available to pick up from the national network of over 344 stores. A further range of over 10,000 products can be ordered over the phone, online or from a local store for next day delivery, with orders taken up until 7pm to home or site.
- Screwfix.com attracts 1.5 million visitors per week and the Screwfix Click & Collect service means customers can conveniently purchase supplies online (or over the phone) and then collect from store just five minutes later.
- Customers can call the UK-based Screwfix Contact Centre 7 days a week (including bank holidays) from 7am – 9pm Monday – Friday and 8am – 6pm Saturday-Sunday on 0500 41 41 41, or on the mobile-friendly 03330 112 112.
- All of our 340+ stores are open 7 days a week and from 7am Monday to Friday, making sure we are ready when our customers are.
- 94 per cent of customers would recommend a friend to Screwfix.

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