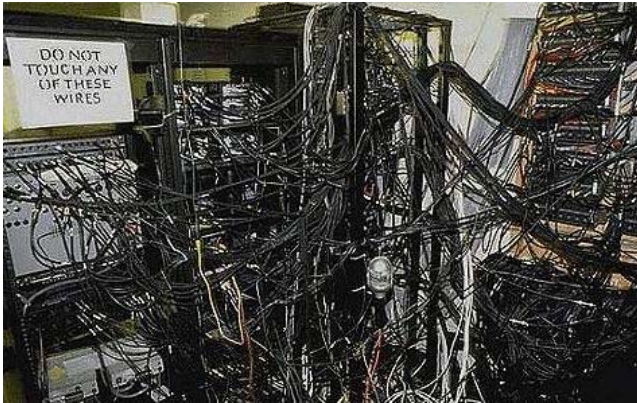


FIVE REASONS WHY TECHNOLOGY NEEDS TO BE PART OF A FACILITY CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT



Large organizations with multiple facilities typically go through a process of assessing the conditions of their facilities. The assessment typically identifies deficiencies in the facilities, the cost of addressing each deficiency, and the priority of the deficiencies. It may also analyze the annual repair and maintenance needs of each

facility, the life cycle of the facility, the need for new facilities, etc. The conditions assessment serves as a database from which a facility plan and more specifically, a funding or bond program will develop.

Technology needs of a facility have traditionally been ignored in these assessments. But planners, architects and engineers are increasing aware that technology is part of the facility and needs to be included in the conditions assessment. Here's why:

1. **Technology Will Eventually Be In The Construction Documents** – The MasterFormat now contains a stand-alone division on communications and technology. The construction documents that will address deficiencies found in conditions assessment will include technology. So even if you're conducting a conditions assessment now, you'll need to include technology as part of the eventual construction documents.
2. **Delaying The Assessment Of Technology Will Wreck Havoc** - The number one error in our list of the "Seven Most Common Errors leading to Poor Technology Design" is technology being considered late in the process. It wrecks havoc on several fronts, especially with other professionals involved in the assessment or eventually a design. The planners, architects and engineers hate to hear things after the fact, like the equipment rooms are too small and in the wrong locations, or there needs to be additional air conditioning, grounding, power, etc. Not including the technology component in the conditions assessment simply delays its consideration.
3. **You'll Avoid Surprises Related To The Total Assessment Cost** – Error #2 in our "Seven Most Common Errors leading to Poor Technology Design", is no budgets, unrealistic budgets and late budgets for technology. If you don't include the cost of correcting technology

deficiencies in the conditions assessment, your client gets unpleasantly surprised later.

4. **Technology Is Part Of The Facility** – The architects and engineers deal with those elements of technology systems that have the longest life cycle. These are things like the space for and location of equipment rooms, cable pathways, etc. For example, many cable manufacturers now warrant their products for 15-25 year time periods. The decisions regarding technical infrastructure topology have long lasting implications because the components are part of the facility. Even those components of technology systems that may not necessarily be infrastructure or part of a facility (personal computers, network equipment, etc.), are important because the potential users and occupants won't occupy a facility without the technology systems that are embedded in our businesses and organizations.
5. **If You Leave It Out, You'll End Up With A Dissatisfied Client** – From a business perspective, when you're doing a conditions assessment for a client you're "swimming upstream", meaning you're involved early on with a client. That's good. You get to work with the client in the process on identifying and prioritizing their facility needs and funding options. If the facility program based on conditions assessment is adopted and funded, you're in a perfect position to assist the client by managing the project or designing the facilities. With that kind of upside, you don't want to make a mistake in the conditions assessment, by leaving something out as important as technology systems.

A complete conditions assessment will ensure the integrity of the facility, the facility plan and the eventual architectural designs. For more information about smart buildings or technology systems design services email me at info@smart-buildings.com.