

Use the Serviceability Tools and Methods for productive and cost-effective workplaces

Corporate management, shareholders and occupants expect workplaces and corporate real estate executives to meet rigorous, consistent and **measurable** demands for quality and functionality.

In the early 1980's, work started explicitly to create and standardize tools and methods to meet that need. The result is now known as the **Serviceability Tools & Methods (ST&M)**. By providing knowledge about what occupant groups require and how a portfolio of assets supports the goals of the organization, ST&M establishes the foundation for portfolio and asset management strategies.

New ASTM and ANS standards

The first comprehensive kit of tools and methods were approved as ASTM standards in 1995 and were accepted as American National Standards (ANS) in 1996-97. Corporations and governments have pilot-tested them and are adopting them. They are being taught and used in several countries.

What is ST&M

ST&M provides a broad-brush, macro level method, appropriate for strategic, overall decision-making. ST&M deals both with **demand** (occupant requirements) and **supply** (serviceability of buildings). It can be used at any time, not just at the start of a project.

ST&M includes two matched, multiple-choice questionnaires and scales, formats for describing the organization, and function-based tools for estimating how much floor area an organization needs.

One questionnaire is used for setting workplace requirements for functionality and quality. It describes customer needs - **demand** - in everyday language, as the core of front-end planning. The other, matching questionnaire, is used for assessing the capability of a building to meet those levels of need, which is its serviceability. It rates facilities - **supply** - , in performance language, as a first step towards an outline performance specification.

Both cover over 100 topics and 340 building features, each with levels of quality calibrated from 0 to 9 (less to more).

It is particularly suitable as part of the front-end for a design-build project,

and for comparing several facilities on offer to buy or lease.

At the heart of ST&M is the process of working with the occupant groups. This process of communicating with the other stakeholders, of valuing their input, of being seen to be responsive, is often as important as the outcome itself, and will often determine the acceptability of the results.

Each set of scales can be used separately and independently of the other. Each can be used to add understanding and information about the other.

ST&M was designed to bridge between "functional programs" written in user language on the one side, and "outline specifications and evaluations" written in performance language on the other. Although it is a standardized approach, it can be easily adapted to reflect the particular needs of a specific organization.

For organizations with many facilities that house similar types of functions, ST&M captures a systematic and consistent record of the institutional memory. It speeds up the functional programming process and **provides comprehensive, systematic, objective ratings in a short time.**

ST&M includes several kinds of methods and tools, along with documents and computer templates for using them. These are:

- 1) Functional requirement barchart profile.
- 2) Building serviceability barchart profile.
- 3) A match between these two profiles.

4) Descriptive text about the organization, in a standard format.

5) Quantity spreadsheet profiles.

6) Building loss features (BLF) rating table.

7) Footprint and layout guide.

Why use ST&M

By using these new standard tools and methods to specify workplace functionality and serviceability:

- (1) senior business and government executives can enhance organizational effectiveness,
- (2) corporate real estate and facility managers can enhance their credibility when proposing more functional and appropriate facilities to corporate senior executives,
- (3) the occupant groups, who are the knowledgeable "customers" and the ultimate drivers, will better understand the costs and benefits of more functional and humane facilities, and know how to demand them.

The ST&M approach has been explicitly designed to:

- Enable senior executives, and the managers and users of workplaces, to demand that ST&M be understood and used by their facility managers and real estate professionals.
- Enable facility managers and real estate professionals to procure and manage ST&M.
- Enable property and facility professionals, and all stakeholders, to become proficient in using ST&M.

It is also straightforward, easy to use and update, and simple yet comprehensive and systematic.