

## **FM leaders call for strategic partnerships and performance-based contracts to drive innovation**

### ***New research from SoftBank Robotics reveals need for new commercial models in cleaning in the wake of COVID-19***

**12th May, London and Amsterdam** – The vast majority of FM leaders across the EMEA region believe that technology suppliers should offer performance-based contracts in order to improve the success rate of innovation projects within facility management and commercial cleaning.

New [research](#) from SoftBank Robotics EMEA, reveals that 89% of supply side and 78% of demand side FM leaders think that performance-based contracts are positive for the cleaning industry.

More than half (57%) of FM leaders would like to see performance-based fees, 46% would like gain-share models and 44% would like some level of commercial and operational risk-sharing when entering into a contract with a cleaning technology provider.

The research is presented in a new white paper, [The Cobotic Evolution in Cleaning](#), published today. It highlights the need for a new approach to innovation within commercial cleaning, with 81% of FM leaders reporting that their innovation projects have failed to deliver on expected outcomes over the past two years. 66% state that innovation in cleaning is long overdue.

The majority of FM leaders believe that future innovation strategies need to be more holistic in their approach, with 76% stating that it is as important to innovate their business model as it is to innovate with technology.

FM leaders want suppliers to offer procurement models which make new technologies more accessible and affordable, and minimise their financial risk. 70% of FM leaders state that a leasing model that reduces their financial risk would make the adoption of new cleaning technologies more attractive. This figure rises to 73% within supply side organisations.

Nils van der Zijl, VP Sales & Marketing, SoftBank Robotics EMEA, said: “There is clearly a real appetite for partnership models within facility management and cleaning, where technology providers work closely with facility management service providers and businesses to deliver innovation, with shared goals, risks and rewards. It’s understandable that in an industry that has experienced significant challenges in delivering successful innovation programmes, there is a certain amount of scepticism and uncertainty when it comes to technology adoption. FM leaders need to ensure they get the advice and support they need, working collaboratively alongside trusted partners to develop the right innovation strategies.”

The research shows that FM leaders are enthusiastic about the introduction of cobotics into commercial cleaning. Cobots are collaborative robots which work alongside cleaning teams and undertake repetitive and time-consuming tasks such as vacuuming, freeing up staff to

focus on other tasks such as the deep cleaning and sanitisation of hard surfaces which is critical in the fight against COVID-19.

As well as driving cleaning performance and operational efficiency, FM leaders are also attracted to the commercial model of cobotics, where cobots are deployed in a highly agile and scalable way through month-on-month operational spend.

This eliminates the need for large capital expenditure to access new technologies, one of the major barriers to innovation in the cleaning sector. Indeed, 86% of FM leaders point to the high capital expenditure involved in current cleaning approaches as a major operational challenge.

FM leaders believe that the introduction of cobots into their operations can deliver the technological and operational transformation they need. 93% report that cobots will increase the quality and consistency of service delivery within commercial cleaning, 77% state that cobots can drive productivity, and 76% predict that cobotics will lead to healthier workspaces for all employees.

Innovation remains a key strategic objective within the facility management industry, with 90% of FM leaders citing it as a top business priority. It is seen as critical in attracting new customers, providing a differentiated customer experience and improving productivity.

Van der Zijl concluded : “Successful innovation depends on a lot more than simply having access to the very latest and most impactful technologies; it’s about developing the business models, processes, skills and understanding within the organisation to integrate new technologies in an effective and sustainable way. It’s crucial that FM leaders, whether on the demand or supply side, find strategic technology partners that can help them to implement the wider operational and cultural changes that are so critical to delivering innovation and real commercial impact.”

The full research findings can be found in the white paper, *The Cobotic Evolution in Cleaning*, available [here](#).

## **About SoftBank Robotics EMEA**

SoftBank Robotics EMEA delivers innovative automation and cobotic solutions to a range of industries in the EMEA region. Our cobots (collaborative robots) are designed to support and empower people in their work, removing the strain of repetitive and time-consuming tasks and enabling staff to focus on higher value activities which makes a real difference to clients.

Within the facilities management and commercial cleaning industries, our automated cleaning products enable contractors to adopt a smarter, more sustainable approach to service delivery, through new technology and agile business models. Our products are designed to free up cleaning teams to focus on added-value tasks, whilst driving greater performance and consistency in specific areas of service delivery.

SoftBank Robotics EMEA is part of SoftBank Robotics Group, a worldwide leader in robotics solutions. SoftBank Robotics is constantly exploring and commercializing robotics solutions that help make people’s lives easier, safer, more connected, and more extraordinary.

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