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## **The Difference is DFM: Five Ways We Set Ourselves Apart**

DFM, a remarkable woman-led integrated facilities management (IFM) company in Detroit is redefining the landscape of facilities management. DFM offers a wide range of services, including facility maintenance, space planning, cleaning, energy management, and more. DFM acts as a single point of contact, ensuring seamless coordination and efficiency across all aspects of facility operations. But what makes DFM different from other IFM providers? Here are five things that truly set DFM apart.

### **1. Commitment to the Customer**

One of the core principles guiding this woman-owned company is a commitment to excellence. However, their pursuit of excellence is not solely about achieving perfection; it's about empowering their clients and enabling them to thrive. Recognizing the unique needs and challenges faced by local manufacturers, DFM tailors their integrated facility services to specifically address the requirements of the client. "Everything from the finish on the flooring to access to the building," says TJ Couch, Operations Program Director for DFM. "Are they efficient? Are we able to access them to be able to sustain the lifecycle of the assets in the building. Every detail is considered." By understanding the intricacies of the manufacturing processes and the importance of minimizing downtime, DFM has become an invaluable partner to numerous automotive manufacturers in Detroit, including General Motors, Ford Motor Company, and Stellantis among others.

### **2. Safety at the Core**

Recognizing that a safe workplace is not only a legal requirement but also a moral obligation, DFM makes it their priority to implement robust safety protocols across all facets of their operations. From construction sites to office spaces, every aspect of DFM's services is guided by stringent safety standards. In fact, DFM's safety motto is "if it's not safe I won't do it and I won't let others do it." DFM employees live and breathe that every day. "Safety culture is truly important, it has to be there," says Melissa Czarnecki, EHS Director. "Even if nobody's looking over your shoulder, nobody's monitoring you – you're still making the right decisions every day. Without compromise."

### **3. Blurring the Yellow Line**

In facilities management lingo, the "yellow line" is about safety guidelines and protocols. About permissions – personnel allowed inside the yellow line are based on

title, expertise, or industry qualifications. Or machinery or equipment that poses potential risks – and requires skilled professionals to operate. Typically, the facilities management company will be outside the yellow line, offering 3<sup>rd</sup> party facility management and maintenance. And that’s where DFM excels. Their true strength lies in their ability to understand and align with their clients' goals and objectives. Going beyond the role of a service provider, stepping into the shoes of their clients, and becoming an extension of their teams. This empathetic approach allows them to identify and meet the unique needs of each client, creating tailored solutions that drive success. We call this “blurring the yellow line.”

#### **4. Manufacturing Mindset**

The automotive industry – like others – relies heavily on efficient operations and robust support services to maintain productivity and competitiveness. Integrated facilities management plays a crucial role in ensuring the smooth functioning of manufacturing facilities, taking over activities such as maintenance, security, cleaning, waste management, and more. DFM has created a stand-out reputation, known for their unwavering commitment to customer satisfaction and their manufacturing mindset. “Having a manufacturing background is very important because it brings credibility,” said Chris Johnson, DFM’s Managing Director. “When you stand in front of the customer you can speak their language and talk in technical terms. But more importantly, you have empathy for them.”

#### **5. The Lauren Factor**

Over the last decade, DFM has undergone some significant changes. New leadership, new branding, a new address, and an altogether new and exciting vision. The new executive team is committed to bringing innovative solutions to the IFM industry – and clients and employees alike attribute this refreshing new outlook to CEO Lauren Rakolta. “Lauren is tenacious,” said Stacey Hoffman, Finance Director of DFM. “She has big dreams, big goals, big personality.” Through her visionary approach, she’s revolutionizing the way facilities are managed, using automation, data analytics, and smart solutions to enhance operational efficiency and deliver exceptional results.

Under Rakolta’s leadership, DFM is setting new standards for the industry. With their integrated approach and future-thinking mindset, they’re not only transforming facilities management – they’re inspiring a new generation of women leaders in the industry.