The Facility Fusion Conference & Expo for 2019 was held in Atlanta, Georgia, April 8 - 10. IFMA does a great job of finding venues that work well for our events. The Marriott Marquis was able to accommodate attendees, the large power speaker sessions with groups of over 500 people, the expo hall, and the small to medium sized education and panel discussion sessions. There were also tours available at local landmarks including, The Fox Theatre, Mercedes Benz Stadium, The Porsche Experience Center, and Coca-Cola. It was a well-coordinated event, which made it easy for the attendees to get down to business.

Attending Facility Fusion was a fantastic opportunity to interact with approximately 900 other facilities management professions and vendors. The conference opening power speaker was Bill Stainton. Mr. Stainton was an executive producer for Seattle’s comedy TV show “Almost Live”, which introduced the world to Bill Nye the Science Guy. He also worked on other comedy shows such as, Seinfeld, Ellen, and The Tonight Show. His presentation, “Leading High-Performance Teams in a High-Pressure World”, was an informative and entertaining kickoff to the Facility Fusion conference.

Bill Stainton
If you were interested in attending the education and panel discussion sessions, there were plenty. Forty-five sessions were scheduled over seven different time periods, so you could choose topics most relevant to your interests. Mixed in between the education sessions were a few more power speakers during lunch breaks, and the final day breakfast. The last day of the session showcased power speaker Michael Daniel. Mr. Daniel was the special assistant to the president and cybersecurity coordinator of the white house, during President Obama’s term. His presentation on, “Building Your Cyber Toolbox”, was both current and informative.

Michael Daniel

Education and panel discussion sessions covered topics from, “Millennials in the FM Workplace: The Benefits and HR Pitfalls”, to “Recycling: The Right Thing To Do – Developing and Implementing a Workplace Plan”, and everything in between. There were sessions for everyone, both relevant to your work environment, and chances to explore something new. For those of you needing education credits and points towards renewal of CFM certification, Facility Fusion provides the same opportunities as World Workplace.

Having attended both World Workplace, and now Facility Fusion, I can say they are very similar in most events. The difference is the overall size of the conferences. World Workplace has an average of 4,000 – 5,000 attendees. Facility Fusion 2019 had 900 attendees. Although the number of conference events are relatively the same, the education sessions have a different feel to them. It is more of a large classroom setting at Facility Fusion, compared to a presentation hall at World Workplace. The smaller sessions at Facility Fusion have the advantage of a more casual and interactive format. While the larger attendance at World Workplace allows for a larger group for sharing ideas. Both conferences have their advantages, and present similar continuing education opportunities, just in different settings. By the sheer size of World Workplace, there and more opportunities to network and discover new vendors. I would suggest attending both, if you are able. There is equal opportunity to advance your knowledge, and remind yourself of the important role we have in our employer’s success as facilities managers.