

CONCRETE FEATURES



BIM RINGS IN THE CHANGES FOR CONSTRUCTION

Times have changed a little since renowned architect Frank Lloyd Wright stated:

“You can use an eraser on the drafting table or a sledgehammer on the construction site.”

Digitalisation was beyond the realms of science fiction when Wright designed his masterpiece, the Guggenheim Museum – which opened its hallowed doors in 1959 - but is now the word on the lips of building contractors and their clients the world over. Building information modelling (BIM) is making a digital splash globally, with South Africa set to follow in the footsteps of trendsetters in Europe and America.

BIM, explains cidb's Research and Development Director, Dr Ntebo Ngozwana, allows architecture, engineering and construction role-players to collaborate and readily exchange project information, thus boosting productivity and coordination and forging mutually beneficial work relationships that result in successful

project delivery. The consistency brought about by BIM ensures accuracy, faster turnaround and improved precision.

Now, cidb stakeholders are being offered an unmissable opportunity to find out how BIM can transform the way built environment professionals do business when it is showcased at the third cidb state of the South African construction industry (SACI) conference, hosted in partnership with the cidb centre of excellence at the University of Johannesburg. Under the theme 'BIM diffusion', the event will get down to the nitty gritty of the approach, which is described by cidb CEO Bongani Dladla as a groundbreaking transformative tool, and explore its elements and benefits through the experiences of thought leaders and BIM proponents.

The concept has proved itself on hundreds of impressive and complex projects worldwide, from skyscrapers and airports to hospitals and wineries. It has been credited with, among other advantages, reducing errors through enhanced communication among project team members, assisting the client in maintenance planning and limiting contractual disputes through identification of design flaws.

The conference, however, will not plaster over the challenges peculiar to South Africa, such as lack of BIM awareness and competence by industry participants, absence of accessible education in local institutions and high implementation costs.

There is a tendency to view BIM as software when it should be understood as a process for improving project delivery efficiency, Ntebo explains. 'BIM-enabled software is the base for the development of BIM models, but it should not be seen as merely software,' she stresses.

It's an exciting time for the industry and for the cidb, which believes the challenges to BIM's widespread use are not insurmountable and foresees greater uptake, particularly given the plan to integrate it into the B.U.I.L.D Programme's funded development initiatives.

Currently, the organisation is soliciting knowledge, attitudes and perceptions from the industry, which will inform a comprehensive study aimed at contractors.

With its potential to speed up service delivery - which will greatly benefit the country, contractors, professionals, clients and, ultimately, the economy - construction professionals are likely to be singing from the same BIM sheet soon.

Be a part of the virtual SACI conference on 12 September 2024 at 08:00 to discover how BIM is shaping the future of construction. Register at:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdWgSV1bGSuAiMeXcT-XQgou752AfY2u1DgKfISkXDuydpM9w/viewform>