

Building Information Modelling (BIM) is the Future

As the supervisor of construction projects, you know that they can get complicated. Juggling all the different elements of building construction—documentation, architecture, structure, offsite manufacturing, etc—can be mind-boggling.

Building information modelling (BIM) can simplify your juggling act and ease your mind by consolidating all the information associated with those disparate elements into one place. BIM allows the partners in a construction contract to generate a digital 3D model of the physical and functional characteristics of a project, creating a shared, easily accessible knowledge resource. Every stakeholder has access, meaning BIM serves as a reliable and central basis for decision-making.

If you have not heard of BIM, do not worry—you are not alone. Despite its numerous benefits and requirements for future use, only about one-third of construction professionals surveyed by the National Building Specification use BIM regularly. Be sure to assess BIM's risks now so you can reap the rewards.

Increasing Usage

Although BIM has yet to permeate the construction industry, its popularity is poised to grow. By 2016, the UK government will require all public sector construction projects to rely on level 2 BIM technology (the levels, ranging from 0 to 7, indicate the amount of information—the higher the number, the more levels of information).

In 2013 the government released four documents commissioned by the Construction Industry Council to assist with BIM adoption. The most important

document, 'BIM Protocol', lists all parties' obligations when transitioning to BIM-driven projects. You can find it at www.bimtaskgroup.org/bim-protocol.

BIM consolidates data from the various elements of building construction into one central repository. It's no fad; it's the future. Make sure your business is ready.

Benefits of Using BIM

From the design to the build stage, BIM's central source of data fosters collaboration, increases accuracy, reduces errors and saves time and money. BIM's numerous benefits include the following:

- **Advanced understanding.** BIM's 3D virtualisation allows all parties involved with construction to reference the same information-rich model at an early stage and thus accurately estimate costs, identify problems and clear up any confusion.
- **Increased collaboration.** Fostering the sharing of information between parties and increasing stakeholders' access to a central information resource helps reduce any mistakes arising from miscommunication.
- **Reduced waste.** By more accurately estimating costs at an early stage, BIM slashes waste expenses and contributes to a more environmentally friendly construction process.

Provided by Crendon Insurance Brokers Ltd

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- **Improved accountability.** BIM methods record meticulous notes on who does what for each step of the construction process, making it easy to identify errors and who committed them.
- **Streamlined supply chain.** Integrating BIM into the construction process can end up interconnecting the construction industry as a whole, promoting greater transparency between suppliers and their clients and creating efficient supply chains and lower costs.

Risks of Using BIM

The horizon looks bright for BIM, but it is not without its hazards. Consider these risks before committing to the technology:

- **Reconfigured training.** BIM is new, meaning you will need a large-scale training overhaul. There will most certainly be a learning curve, and those who are unfamiliar with technology will find it particularly difficult at first.
- **Prolonged planning.** Using BIM requires planning schedules earlier and for a longer period of time than what previous construction processes required. Without comprehensive planning and understanding, BIM is not effective.
- **Expanded budgets.** BIM is expensive—if any smaller stakeholders cannot afford access, the project could seriously suffer from a lack of cooperation.
- **Blurred boundaries.** Transitioning to BIM creates new responsibilities, such as managing the input and sharing of data, which may fall through the cracks unless they are directly assigned to someone.
- **Heightened cyber security.** Increasingly relying on technology such as BIM renders you vulnerable to cyber attacks and computer glitches—you will need to heighten your cyber security and bolster your computer systems.

Additional Guidance

Change is difficult, but energising. Let us help you navigate this exciting transition. We can keep you abreast of any new developments on the road to BIM implementation. Contact Crendon Insurance Brokers Ltd today for more construction risk prevention techniques.