



Dr Anne Kemp

is an Atkins Fellow, and Director, responsible for BIM Strategy and Implementation across the UK, and part of its Global BIM Strategy team, and also Chair of the UK BIM Alliance. Photo: GeoConnexion

As we approach the second anniversary of the Government mandate for BIM Level 2 in April 2016, I wonder what impact this has had on you within the geo sector: any ... some ... a lot?

One of my colleagues at Atkins told a research group last week that the biggest impact on his geospatial business over the past few years has been BIM. And my interpretation for the reason behind this is that it is as much about the additional skills he can offer to clients as it is about the potential convergence of geospatial and BIM.

Cross-industry movement

I am chair of the UK BIM Alliance¹ – a cross industry movement to help all parties working in the built environment to understand and implement the principles of BIM Level 2. This includes clients, the supply chain, software and hardware vendors, and data providers – and covers the whole life cycle of the built environment – from strategy and planning, through design and construction, to operation and maintenance and ultimately de-commissioning or refurbishment.

It is as important for manufacturers and facilities managers, as it is for architects and engineers. But we aren't anywhere near achieving the 70% implementation target that we originally set ourselves when we started to come together two years ago.

Why is this the case? For a start, we need to be much clearer about what BIM Level 2 entails – and provide practical steps to achieve it. While the principles are sound, getting a diverse and disparate industry to adopt it in practice through procurement and contractual agreements has proved more tricky. But there has also been a shortage of skills and people to help in this process.

Having a fundamental understanding of data and how to manage information from a wide range of disciplines and sources is bread-and-butter for the geospatial industry. So for me, this remains largely an untapped resource.

Differing demands

Another reason for the challenge is the apparently differing demands of infrastructure (read transport, utilities, environment) compared to buildings. And the need to make better information available for operating and maintaining assets – in use, and in context - by people, for people. Again, this is the familiar territory for the geospatial industry and one in which it is active.

Anne Kemp believes that, together, industry can break down the barriers to BIM Level 2 adoption. Apart, it will continue to struggle

So much of what holds us back is around difference in technical speak, in software, and in standards. What we do need to remember when bringing different disciplines together is to remember to respect each other's backgrounds, skills and views. One would hope that that would be the default position, but I'm afraid it's not always so.

The Integrated Built Environment Working Group [IDBE WG – oh yes, more acronyms, don't we just love them!] is a collaboration between buildingSMART International and Open Geospatial Consortium (bSI and OGC) [no further comment ...] to break down the barriers and find use cases to test, flex and adapt existing standards and discover new ways of solving the problem. We are looking for volunteers. DO get in touch if you think you can help.

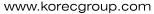
And the moral of the story? Just because "BIM" appears in the project or job description, DON'T switch off. Sit up and take notice. Get curious and put yourself forward.

BIM needs YOU!

In working towards what I prefer to call "Better" Information Management, it's something where, together, we can surmount the Level 2 challenge. Apart, we will, I suggest, continue to struggle.

1. www.ukbimalliance.org









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