

INTEGRATING BIM WITH CAFM FOR MEANINGFUL DATA



Service Works Group explain how CAFM and BIM can join forces for the better, ahead of the release of their White Paper, which offers greater detail.

Building Information Modelling (BIM) has a variety of often quite complex definitions. In simple terms, it is a methodology through which all the stakeholders can understand a building using a digital model. Digital modelling helps everyone to optimise their interactions with the building, resulting in a greater whole-life value for the asset. BIM has the potential to deliver more valued judgements and more sustainable infrastructures for owners and occupants.

In 2016, it will be mandatory for all public sector-procured projects to use fully-collaborative 3D BIM. Yet, many public sector FMs say that they will start to look at the technology closer to the time and private sector service providers – with some notable exceptions – seem to find the process challenging. Some have complained that the data is simply too rich and detailed for FM use.

When Cabinet Office Minister Francis Maude launched the Government's BIM strategy in 2011 he said it would "change the dynamics and behaviours of the construction supply chain, unlocking new, more efficient and collaborative ways of working." So what are the benefits for facilities management?

As well as reducing safety risk, as BIM allows crowd behaviour to be analysed, and fire modelling capability to be predicted so that designs can be optimised for public safety, giving greater predictability. Projects can be visualised at an early stage, presenting owners and operators with a clear idea of design intent so that the design can be modified to achieve the desired

outcomes. The recent substantial increase in the number of existing buildings scanned and converted to 3D models allows FMs to look at the impact of remodeling, refurbishment or extension options.

The BIM4FM task group survey in 2013 revealed a reasonable level of support for BIM among the FM community – 62% believed that BIM could support FM delivery. The key opportunities for BIM were identified around lifecycle management; specific comments noted that early FM involvement in design and performance for facilities would support this, delivering improved efficiencies and better reporting data.

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The survey disclosed several key concerns; cost of implementation was cited as a key barrier by half the respondents, with a similar number highlighting integration with current technology and CAFM systems as an issue.

WHY INTEGRATE BIM WITH CAFM?

FM professionals, both client and supply side, have numerous reasons to use BIM to increase their

operational efficiency, reduce costs and generate more useful, and standardised data. BIM and CAFM together are even more powerful.

Integrating BIM with existing FM software systems is the Holy Grail in terms of bettering the quality and standardisation of data, and improved reporting. It provides valuable operational FM information as well as more reliable data to report to the board. It allows FMs to take informed decisions though the whole lifecycle of the facility around areas such as space usage, floor planning, equipment and asset maintenance, energy consumption, and cost efficiencies.

An integrated BIM and CAFM system creates one version of the truth, when the BIM data is updated with additions, amendments and deletions from the FM software system. By having accurate, up-to-date and complete data ready when the building is handed over to the facilities and maintenance team, the cost of the traditional data capture, from design and construction information to FM data, is significantly reduced.

The FM team often struggles to get reliable, current data from a disparate set of resources to produce the reports required for the organisation. By leveraging the reporting capabilities inherent in FM software and integrating this with BIM data, information is stored in one place, making timely, accurate and in-depth coverage far easier and raising the profile of facilities management.

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